



Healthy Meal Planning for Busy Professionals





Hello!

- Elaine Brisebois, CNP, B.Comm
- Certified Nutritionist and Wellness Consultant (TriFit)
- Social Media: @elainebrisebois
- Web: www.elainebrisebois.com
- Email: elaine@elainebrisebois.com



Overview

- **Balanced Plate Formula**
- **Meal Planning Tips**
- **Grocery Shopping Guidelines**
- **Meal/Snack Ideas**
- **Buying Lunch/Dining Out**

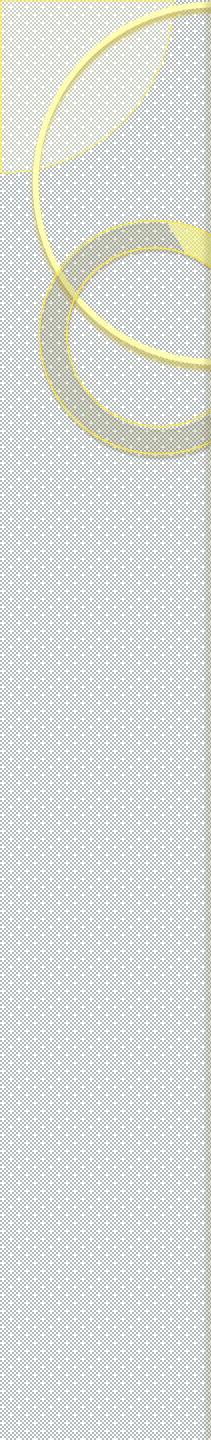
° **BALANCED PLATE FORMULA**





Balanced Plate

- Nutrient dense (i.e. vitamins, minerals, EFAs, phytonutrients)
- Satiating/Hormonally Balanced
- Includes plenty of whole foods (less processed)
- Individual: food preferences, dietary restrictions, nutrient needs, activity level, body type, etc.



Balanced Plate (3-4 components)

- Colorful vegetables – at least $\frac{1}{2}$ plate @ L & D
- Quality protein
- Healthy fat
- Nutrient dense carb (includes starchier vegetables and fruit)



Vegetables

- Greens (spinach, kale, mixed)
- Broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts
- Bell peppers
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Tomatoes
- Carrots
- Celery
- Onions
- Mushrooms



Quality Proteins

- Fish (fresh and canned: wild salmon, sardines)
- Poultry (chicken, turkey)
- Beef, bison, lamb, pork chops (lean cuts)
- Eggs
- Lentils, split peas, sprouted tofu, tempeh and other beans and legumes
- Plain, unsweetened dairy products (i.e. Greek yogurt, kefir, cottage cheese)
- Raw Nuts/Seeds (hemp, pumpkin)
- Protein Powder (whey or plant-based) → quick option



Quality Fats

- Avocado
- Raw nuts and nut butters (walnut, almond, pecans)
- Raw seeds and seed butter (chia, flax, sunflower, hemp)
- Coconuts and coconut oil
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil and olives
- Grass-fed or Organic Butter (choose unsalted)
- Wholefood form is better!



Nutrient Dense Carbs

- Root Vegetables (sweet potato, yam, red/yellow potatoes, parsnips, beets, carrots)
- Winter Squashes (Butternut, acorn, spaghetti)
- Fruit (berries, apples, banana)
- Beans and legumes
- 100% wholegrains(i.e. quinoa, sprouted grains, brown rice, millet buckwheat, oats) + food made from them (pasta, tortilla, bread)



Seasonings

- Garlic
- Ginger
- Sea salt
- Fresh/dried herbs

MEAL PLANNING TIPS





Meal Planning Tips

- Considerations:
 - What does your week look like; where will you be eating?
 - Take an inventory of your current stock → can you use up what you have?
 - Schedule grocery shopping and meal prep time (Sunday afternoon/night? In the morning before work?)



Meal Planning Tips

- Think of your Refrigerator as a “Salad Bar” → ingredient prep rather than meal prep
 - Prep veggies: cucumber slices, carrot sticks; roasted bell peppers, sweet potatoes, cauliflower, etc, and store in separate containers
 - Cook a large batch of grain (quinoa, brown rice) for a quick salad topper or side-dish



Meal Planning Tips

- Cook proteins ahead of time
 - ground meat with onions and garlic → chili, tacos
 - baked chicken → sandwiches, soups, stir fries
 - hardboiled eggs → quick breakfast, over a salad @ lunch
- Freeze meat in small portions for easy defrosting
- Marinate meats ahead of time so they're oven ready when you get home



Meal Planning

- Cook once, eat twice! (double or triple recipe)
 - Stews, soups and casseroles are great freezer dishes
 - Undercook veggies (to avoid mushiness)
- Multi-task food prep with other household chores



Meal Planning Tips

- Keep a well stocked pantry of healthy versatile ingredients → dinner on the table in minutes
 - canned beans, salmon, sardines, tuna, wholegrain pasta, jarred pasta sauce
- Have a quick go-to or fallback meal
 - Something quick and easy (i.e. omelette w/veggies)



Meal Planning Tips

- Theme Nights to make menu planning easier
 - Meatless Monday, Taco Tuesday, Fish Friday
- Crock-pot/Slow Cooker
 - Bonus: just one pot to clean!
- Consider Recipes for Inspiration (swap ingredients)
- Share the work (ask for input; first home starts dinner)

° BE A SAVVY SHOPPER





Grocery Shopping Tips

- Shop with a list based on your meal planning (choose 1-2 simple recipes)
- Don't shop hungry and avoid rush-hour if possible
- Aim for Variety
 - Switch up proteins, try a new veggies
 - Stock up on healthy canned goods when on sale (i.e. fish, beans, tomatoes)
 - Buy dried goods in bulk



Grocery Shopping Tips

- Choose fresh, whole food ingredients as much as possible
 - Buy less packaged/processed food items and more single ingredient items (i.e. eggs, apples)
 - Shop the perimeter (fresh produce, meat, dairy eggs)
- Be a Detective
 - Focus on ingredients vs nutrition fact box
 - Beware of “health washing” (i.e. “natural”, health check)



Grocery Shopping Tips

- Choose local and seasonal produce when possible (freeze for winter)
- Choose organic when necessary
 - Download the Dirty Dozen/Clean Fifteen Pocket Guide: <http://www.ewg.org/foodnews/>

Grocery Shopping Tips



° MEAL IDEAS





Quick Breakfast Options

- Plain Greek yogurt parfait with berries, ground flax seeds, and pumpkin seeds
- Smoothie (i.e. frozen berries, ground flax or chia seeds, protein powder, and unsweetened almond milk)
- 2 eggs + piece of fruit
- Sprouted grain/wholegrain toast topped with nut butter and sprinkled with hemp hearts (+ *plain yogurt & berries, or a smoothie*)



Quick Breakfast Options

- Plain Oatmeal topped with ground flax/chia seeds/pumpkins seeds/nut butter and berries
- Piece of fruit and plain yogurt
- Healthy muffin + piece of fruit



Meal Ideas (Lunch/Dinner)

- Baked Salmon with quinoa and asparagus
- Veggie and Chicken Stir-fry
- Frittata (or crustless quiche) w/ a side of arugula salad and roasted baby potatoes
- Beef or Turkey Burgers with sweet potato mash and green beans



Meal Ideas (Lunch/Dinner)

- Crockpot chicken with roasted carrots, onion and a side spinach salad
- Vegetable lentil soup
- Turkey chili
- Spaghetti squash pasta topped with beef bolognaise and garden salad
- Salmon, avocado, and veggie wraps (whole grain tortilla, nori sheets, or lettuce wraps)



Big Salads

- Start with a leafy green base
- Add a variety of chopped vegetables
- Top with protein and healthy fat (avocado, olives, nuts, seeds and/or dressing)
- Homemade salad dressing (store in small glass jar)
 - EVOO + vinegar; herbs, spices, sea salt, stevia or honey

Mason Jar Salads





Quick Snacks Ideas

- Veggie sticks or wholegrain crackers with hummus or nut butter
- Handful of raw nuts or seeds (i.e. almonds, walnut, pumpkin) or trail mix
- Apple slices with almond butter or a few pieces of cheese
- Ants on a log
- Energy Bites
- Roasted Chickpeas
- Plain Greek yogurt with berries
- Fresh fruit



Equipment

- Blender
- Crock-pot/Slow Cooker
- Glass dishes for storage/heating (Pyrex)
- Large salad bowl
- Small glass jars for dressings, dips and other small portions
- Thermos (heat food in the morning)

BUYING LUNCH/ DINING OUT





Buying Lunch/Dining Out?

- Salad Bar
- Hot Buffet Table
- Sandwich Counter
- Restaurant



Salad Bar

- Build a delicious salad by choosing a mix of these ingredients:
 - Leafy greens
 - Vegetables (raw, grilled or roasted)
 - Fresh fruit
 - Beans/Legumes (chickpea, black bean, kidney or lentils)
 - Tempeh or tofu
 - Hard-boiled eggs
 - Whole grains: wild rice, quinoa or barley
 - Raw nuts or seeds
 - Add small amounts of vinaigrette or olive oil based dressing



Hot Buffet Table

- Choose these options more often:
 - Dishes made with plenty of vegetables
 - Baked, grilled or steamed fish
 - Grilled/baked chicken
 - Stir-fry dishes with brown rice or whole grain pasta, plenty of vegetables, lean meats, fish or beans/tofu and just a little sauce
 - Lean beef, turkey or veggie burgers



Hot Buffet Table

- Whole grain pasta and noodle dishes with tomato-based sauces
- Vegetarian options (chili, baked beans, tofu, lentils, chickpeas)
- Lower sodium, broth based vegetable soups (instead of creamy ones)
- Pizza with thin whole grain crust, vegetable toppings and small amounts of cheese
- Choose dishes that are baked, broiled, grilled, roasted or steamed instead of fried.



Sandwich Counter

- Build a healthy sandwich with whole grain breads, protein-rich fillings and plenty of veggies.
- Choose these options more often:
 - Whole grain bread, buns, pitas or tortillas
 - Vegetable fillings (lettuce, tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, onions)
 - Roasted or grilled lean meat (beef, turkey, chicken, pork)
 - Eggs
 - Natural nut butters (peanut, almond)
 - Hummus
 - Small amounts of cheese
 - Small amounts of condiments, dressings and sauces.
Choose lighter options: mustard, salsa, hummus, pesto



Restaurant

- Watch Portions
- Make Healthier Choices
- Get Informed



Watch Portions

- **Keep it small**
 - Ask for half portions, share a large meal, or pack up part of your meal to take home.
- **Divide up dessert**
 - If you're still hungry, finish your meal with fruit or sip on a plain cappuccino sprinkled with cinnamon. If you really want a rich dessert order one and split it.
- **Avoid super-sizing**
 - They might seem like a good deal, but they're often high fat, calories, sugar and/or sodium.



Make Healthier Choices

- Ask for more vegetables.
 - For more fibre, ask for extra veggie toppings on wraps, burgers, pizzas and sandwiches. Order sides of leafy green salad or cooked vegetables. Substitute your fries with vegetables or go half and half.
- Go for whole grains.
 - Look for dishes made with whole grains such as quinoa, brown rice, barley or oats. Many restaurants now offer whole grain options (i.e. pasta, pizza crust, tortilla wraps) upon request.
- Get sauce on the side.
 - Sauces, condiments, dressings and spreads can add fat and sodium to your meal.
- Skip sweet drinks.
 - Drink water instead of sweetened drinks such as soda pop, ice tea or lemonade. Try sparkling water with lemon or lime wedges.



Get Informed

- Ask how food is prepared
 - Order foods that have been steamed, baked, broiled, grilled, or roasted. Fat and calories add up quickly when food is fried, deep-fried or breaded.
- Plan ahead.
 - Visit the restaurant's website ahead of time. Look for healthier options that are higher in protein, fibre and veggies and lower in calories, fat, sugar and sodium.



YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT.
SO DON'T BE
FAST, CHEAP, EASY, OR FAKE.

