

5 Easy Weeknight Meals

Quick, Realistic Recipes for Busy Families

Busy Life Planner Hub | Diana

Tools That Make Life Flow

Weeknights can get chaotic fast, and the last thing any busy parent needs is a complicated dinner. These five meals are fast, flexible, and family-friendly — each one designed to get dinner on the table in 10–20 minutes with minimal prep and minimal cleanup.

What You'll Find Inside:

- - 10–20 minute meals
- - Simple ingredients you already have
- - Kid-friendly flavors
- - No-fuss instructions
- - Options to customize

MEAL 1: 10-MINUTE CHICKEN & VEGGIE SKILLET

Serves: 1; Prep time: 3 minutes; Cook time: 7–8 minutes

Nutrition (without rice/pasta): ~420 kcal, P/C/F: 40g/12g/22g

Ingredients:

- - 6 oz (170 g) **boneless, skinless chicken breast**, diced
- 1 cup (150 g) **frozen mixed vegetables**
- 1 tbsp **olive oil**
- 1 clove **garlic**, minced (or ½ tsp garlic powder)
- ¼ tsp **salt**
- ¼ tsp **black pepper**
- **Optional:**
 - 1 tsp **soy sauce** *or*
 - 1 tsp **fresh lemon juice**
- **Optional for serving**
 - 1 cup cooked **white rice** *or* **pasta**

Instructions:

1. Heat a medium skillet over **medium-high heat** and add olive oil.
2. Once oil is shimmering, add diced chicken in a single layer.
3. Cook **3–4 minutes**, stirring occasionally, until chicken is mostly cooked through.
4. Add garlic and cook **30 seconds** until fragrant.
5. Add frozen vegetables directly to the pan (no need to thaw).
6. Season with salt and pepper. Stir well.
7. Cook **3–4 minutes**, until veggies are heated through and chicken reaches 165°F (74°C).
8. Finish with soy sauce or lemon juice if using.

9. Serve alone or over cooked rice or pasta.

MEAL 2: ONE-POT PASTA

Serves: 1; Prep time: 2 minutes; Cook time: 12–15 minutes

Nutrition (per serving): ~480 kcal, P/C/F: 18g/65g/14g

Ingredients:

- 2 oz (56 g dry) pasta (penne, rotini, or spaghetti)
- ½ cup jarred marinara sauce
- 1½ cups water
- 1 cup (30 g) fresh spinach
- 2 tbsp grated Parmesan cheese
- Optional: pinch of salt, red pepper flakes

Instructions:

1. Add pasta, marinara sauce, and water to a medium pot.
2. Bring to a gentle boil over **medium-high heat**.
3. Reduce heat to **medium**, stirring every 1–2 minutes to prevent sticking.
4. Simmer **10–12 minutes**, until pasta is tender and liquid thickens.
5. Stir in spinach and cook **1 minute** until wilted.
6. Remove from heat and top with Parmesan.
7. Season to taste and serve hot.

MEAL 3: SHEET PAN CHICKEN

Serves: 1; Prep time: 10 minutes; Cook time: 25–30 minutes

Nutrition (per serving): ~560 kcal, P/C/F: 35g/40g/30g

Ingredients:

- 1 large **chicken thigh** (bone-in, skin-on or skinless)
- 1 medium **potato**, diced (about 200 g)
- 1 cup **carrots**, sliced
- 1½ tbsp **olive oil**
- 1 tsp **seasoning blend** (Italian, paprika + garlic, or ranch seasoning)
- ¼ tsp **salt**
- ¼ tsp **pepper**

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to **425°F (220°C)**.
2. Line a sheet pan with foil or parchment.
3. Add chicken, potatoes, and carrots to the pan.
4. Drizzle with olive oil and toss to coat evenly.
5. Sprinkle seasoning, salt, and pepper over everything.
6. Spread ingredients into a single layer.
7. Bake **25–30 minutes**, flipping vegetables halfway.
8. Chicken is done when internal temp reaches **165°F (74°C)**.
9. Serve with salsa or ranch if desired.

MEAL 4: TACO BOWLS

Serves: 1; Prep time: 5 minutes; Cook time: 15 minutes

Nutrition (per serving): ~550 kcal, P/C/F: 38g/50g/22g

Ingredients:

- 5 oz (140 g) **ground turkey (93% lean)**
- 1 tbsp **taco seasoning**
- ½ cup cooked **white or brown rice**
- ½ cup **canned corn**, drained
- ¼ cup **salsa**
- ¼ cup **shredded cheese** (cheddar or Mexican blend)

Instructions:

1. Heat a skillet over **medium heat**.
2. Add ground turkey and cook **6–8 minutes**, breaking it apart.
3. Sprinkle taco seasoning and stir well; cook **1–2 minutes**.
4. Warm rice and corn (microwave or stovetop).
5. Assemble bowl:
6. Rice on the bottom
7. Turkey on top
8. Corn, salsa, and cheese last
9. Serve warm.

MEAL 5: BREAKFAST FOR DINNER

Serves: 1; Prep time: 5 minutes; Cook time: 8–10 minutes

Nutrition (per serving): ~520 kcal, P/C/F: 30g/45g/26g

Ingredients:

- 2 large **eggs**
- 2 slices **whole-grain bread**
- 1 cup **fresh fruit** (berries, apple slices, or banana)
- Optional:
 - 2 turkey sausage links
 - 1 tsp **butter or oil** for eggs

Instructions:

1. Heat a non-stick skillet over **medium heat**.
2. Add butter or oil (if using).
3. Crack eggs into a bowl, whisk lightly, and pour into skillet.
4. Cook **3–4 minutes**, stirring gently, until just set.
5. Toast bread until golden.
6. Cook sausage according to package instructions if using.
7. Serve eggs with toast and fruit on the side.

ABOUT BUSY LIFE PLANNER HUB

Our Mission:

To help busy families create simple, sustainable routines that make life flow.

What We Believe:

- - Structure should support your life, not control it
- - Small steps create big change
- - Parents deserve tools that make everyday life easier

Explore More Tools:

Visit the Busy Life Planner Hub for planners, routines, meal guides, kids activities, and more.