

{AF}Pre-planning meal time is important when working from home. Making meal plans ahead of time will allow you to manage your home more effectively. This will create an atmosphere of organization and reduce stress. So, what are some benefits and options in pre-planning your meals?

### **Benefits of Pre-planning Meals**

There are economic benefits of planning meals ahead of time, saving you time and money. Buying items in bulk can bring lower prices per ounce, or pound. Having menus planned and items on hand can save money by avoiding trips to fast food restaurants. This is especially true for larger families. Making plans ahead of time will also reduce the headaches that come with being disorganized at meal time, when everyone in the house is hungry.

### Simple Meals



### Three, Four, or Five Ingredient Meals

Using recipes that only call for three, four, or five ingredients can also simplify meal preparation. There are many internet resources that can provide you with ideas. The library is also a great source for cookbooks on the topic. Using these types of recipes is a favorite to many.

### Freezer Meals

Another option in preplanning meals is using the freezer meals technique. There are a variety of books available that offer information on how to create 30 days of meals within two days. The meals are prepared and placed in the freezer. When needed, the meal is removed from the freezer and placed into the oven to cook. Talk about an easy night for dinner.

Creating freezer meals involves taking a morning to bulk shop for grocery items. The same day, any prep work will be done. This includes cutting up vegetables, ect. The next day will be cooking day. Many of the meals will use the same foundations. For example, you may have five meals that will use homemade spaghetti sauce. On cooking day, one of the short cooking times will be making a large amount of the sauce in one setting. This will then be used to create several meals.

### Other Meal Tips

Having healthy snacks on hand can help while working from home. Having apples and oranges

## **Pre-planning Meal Time**

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available can help children who are ready for dinner, early. It is a great nutritious choice and can provide a little nutrition for the hungry child. Having vegetables on hand along with bagged lettuce is another healthy option.

Depending on the nutritional needs of your family, a few back up meals can be placed in the freezer. This would include prepared convenience foods, such as frozen pizzas. This is not always the healthy way to go, but it can assist you in times of need.

Including healthy sandwich choices into meal times can save additional time for the family. Keeping high fiber bread on hand along with low fat shaved meat, cheeses can provide for a quick meal. Sliced tomatoes and lettuce may be made on a regular basis as well.

## **Easier Meal Time**

Easier meal time is possible and can help the work from home mom. Taking a little time to pre-plan is a great option to use on a regular basis. You are in control, and have the ability to be creative in home management at meal times.{{/AF}}

