



 **BUDGETBYTE\$**

SAMPLE ONE WEEK

**ONE POT**

MEAL PLAN

MEAL PLANNING MADE EASY WITH DELICIOUS  
RECIPES DESIGNED FOR SMALL BUDGETS





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# LET'S GET COOKING!

*Hello, and welcome to the Budget Bytes Meal Plans! I've created these meal plans to help make your life a little easier, but also in hopes that this will be the jumping off point on your meal planning journey.*

I hope these meal plans will help get you comfortable with the meal planning process, so that one day you'll be able to create your own customized meal plans that are tailored to your lifestyle.

And hey, if meal planning for yourself is not your goal, we're happy to do the work for you. We will have a fresh stream of pre-made meal plans coming your way soon!

So, let's get cooking, shall we?

*-Beth*

*Owner, Budget Bytes*

**PS:** If you enjoyed this sample meal plan, get full monthly meal plans with weekly menus and custom grocery lists at: [budgetbytes.com/mealplans](https://budgetbytes.com/mealplans)

# ABOUT THIS MEAL PLAN

*This four week meal plan\* is designed to give you a variety of satisfying, well balanced dinners, all while maximizing your food budget and reducing waste. This One Pot Meal Plan is designed using recipes that are all cooked in one pot or one skillet, to reduce time, energy, and cleanup!*

*\*This is a sample one week plan taken from the full four week monthly meal plan, with weekly menus and custom grocery lists available at: [budgetbytes.com/mealplans](https://budgetbytes.com/mealplans)*

## **THE MENUS**

Each of the four weeks include six days of dinners, with one “freebie day” designed in, so you can either eat up your leftover portions from the week, or take a night off and eat out. Because let’s be real, sometimes you just need a night off, and allowing yourself to do so once in a while will help you stick to the plan the rest of the week. We’ve made the freebie day the last day of the week so you can use your ingredients while they are the most fresh, and you can use that “cook free” day to do the shopping for the next week.

You can choose to do all four weeks in succession, or mix and match the weeks as you see fit.

## **THE MEALS**

Each meal provides 4-6 servings. This meal size can work great for couples or small families. Leftover portions can be taken to work or school the next day for lunch, or often times frozen for later on. Having single portions of meals stashed in the freezer ready to reheat at a moment’s notice is a lifesaver!

Some meals are an all-in-one dish with no need for a side, while others are served with a second simple recipe on the side to round out the meal and keep it balanced.

## **CALENDARS AND SHOPPING LISTS**

This meal plan includes a monthly calendar with all four weeks listed in one place, as well as individual weekly calendars, so you can concentrate on one week at a time.

Each weekly plan includes a shopping list, six recipes, notes for saving and using leftover ingredients, as well as notes about what should be saved for the next week, or what you might have on hand from a previous week's menu.

Each weekly shopping list is included in the master pdf, and also available as an individual file so it can be easily printed or saved to your phone for easy access when shopping.

## **LEFTOVERS**

Making the most of your leftover ingredients is a major theme in this meal plan. We've included suggestions throughout for using up leftover ingredients. While it's not always possible to find uses for 100% of the ingredients you purchase, just being mindful and proactive about using leftovers will help reduce your regular weekly food waste by a considerable amount. Every effort counts.

## **GENERAL INGREDIENT BUYING TIPS**

- Buy yellow onions in 2-5 lb. bags instead of individually because you'll be using them frequently throughout the month and they are fairly shelf stable.
- I highly suggest using a bouillon or broth concentrate that you can keep on hand to mix up any amount of broth needed. This method is much less expensive than buying cans or boxes of broth, it reduces waste, and uses less packaging. My favorite is Better Than Bouillon, which comes in several flavors, low sodium, and organic versions.
- Salt and pepper are not included in the grocery lists. Make sure you're stocked with both.
- Your shopping lists will likely get shorter throughout the month as your kitchen becomes stocked with basic ingredients.

# HOW TO USE THIS MEAL PLAN

## STEP 1

The day before the week begins, review the menu for the week, along with the recipe notes, and tips for saving leftover ingredients.

## STEP 2

Review the recipes. If there are any ingredients or techniques that you are unfamiliar with, don't hesitate to reach out to us for help! You can request help in the [Budget Bytes Meal Plans Facebook group](#), or by emailing [support@budgetbytes.com](mailto:support@budgetbytes.com). Make sure to include which meal plan you're working on and the title of the recipe.

## STEP 3

Shop your pantry, freezer, and refrigerator. Take the shopping list for that week into your kitchen and go down the list, item by item, crossing off ingredients you already have and making notes about pantry staples that you may need to restock. Many ingredients in this meal plan carry over from week to week, either in your pantry or freezer, so it's critical that you check each week, even when there isn't a specific note in the meal plan.

## STEP 4

Take it to the store! Take your modified shopping list to the store and purchase the remaining items on your list.

## STEP 5

Time to get cooking! Each day, before you begin your recipe(s), make sure to read the recipe through, from start to finish, so you understand the workflow. If you're having trouble with a recipe, you can reach out to us or visit the recipe on the website to view the step by step photos, or video when available.



## **STEP 6**

Save those leftovers! Portion your cooked meal into single servings and refrigerate for later, or if it's a freezer-friendly dish (as indicated by the asterisk on the weekly menu), freeze for longer storage.

## **STEP 7**

On the last day of the week, your “freebie day”, start planning for the following week by going back to step 1!

# MONTH AT A GLANCE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
WEEK 1	One Pot Creamy Cajun Chicken Pasta	Smoky Potato Chickpea Stew	Greek Turkey and Rice Skillet	Fresh Tomato Basil Pasta with Ricotta	Basic Chili	Vegan Winter Lentil Stew	Leftovers / Eat out
WEEK 2	One Pot American Goulash	One Pot Teriyaki Chicken and Rice	Moroccan Lentil and Vegetable Stew	Penne Pasta with Sausage and Greens	Garden Vegetable Lasagna Soup	Zuppa Toscana	Leftovers / Eat out
WEEK 3	One Pot Bacon Broccoli Mac and Cheese	Spanish Chickpeas and Rice	Homemade Chickpea Noodle Soup	One Pot Sausage and Sun Dried Tomato Pasta	Vegetable Pot Pie Skillet with Cheddar Biscuits	Chickpea and Vegetable Soup	Leftovers / Eat out
WEEK 4	Chorizo Sweet Potato Skillet	One Pot Roasted Red Pepper Pasta	Vegan Moroccan Peanut Stew	Pastalaya	One Pot Beef and Mushroom Stroganoff	Italian Wonderpot	Leftovers / Eat out

**SAMPLE**

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## MENU

❄️ *Leftover cooked portions are freezer-friendly*

MONDAY

One Pot Creamy Cajun Chicken Pasta

*Option: Make non-creamy by skipping the cream cheese.*

TUESDAY

Smoky Potato Chickpea Stew ❄️

WEDNESDAY

Greek Turkey and Rice Skillet ❄️

THURSDAY

Fresh Tomato Basil Pasta with Ricotta

FRIDAY

Basic Chili ❄️

*Optional purchase: your favorite chili toppings.*

SATURDAY

Vegan Winter Lentil Stew ❄️

SUNDAY

Leftovers/eat out and shop for next week!

LEFTOVER  
INGREDIENT  
SUGGESTIONS

**Ginger** - buy one large knob of ginger to use throughout the month. Store in the freezer

**Kale** - freeze and use in Zuppa Toscana in Week 2

**Feta** - freeze in 2 oz. portions for use later in the month

**Ricotta** - use extras as toppings for pancakes, waffles, or toast (try **Almond Dutch Baby with Ricotta and Jam**)

**Celery** - slice and serve with cream cheese as snacks

**Carrots** - save for use in Week 2

**Chicken breast** - wrap and freeze for later in the month

**Green onion** - use to top chili

# GROCERY LIST

## BAKERY:

- Optional bread or crackers for soups and stews (T)(F)(S)

## CANNED GOODS:

- 1 15 oz. can Black beans (F)
- 3 1/2 cups Chicken broth (M)(W)
- 1 15 oz. can Chickpeas (T)
- 1/2 cup Kalamata olives (W)
- 1 15 oz. can Kidney beans (F)
- 1 15 oz. can Diced tomatoes (F)
- 2 15 oz. cans Fire roasted diced tomatoes (M)(T)

- 1 6 oz. can Tomato paste (F)

- 10 cups Vegetable broth (T)(S)

## DAIRY:

- 2 Tbsp Butter (M)(R)
- 2 oz. Cream cheese (M)
- 1/2 cup Whole milk ricotta (R)
- 1 oz. Feta (W)

## DRY GOODS:

- 1 cup Long grain white rice (W)
- 1 cup Brown lentils (S)

- 1 3/4 lbs. Penne pasta (M)(R)

- 1 1/2 Tbsp Brown sugar (F)(S)

## FROZEN:

- 1/4 lb. Frozen cut leaf spinach (W)

- 1 cup Frozen peas (S)

## MEAT:

- 1 lb. Ground beef (F)

- 1 lb. Boneless, skinless chicken breast (M)

- 19 oz. Ground turkey (W)

## PRODUCE:

- 1/2 cup Fresh basil (R)

- 4 Carrots (1/2 lb.) (S)

- 4 stalks Celery (S)

- 12 cloves Garlic (T)(W)(R)(F)(S)

- 1 tsp Fresh ginger, grated (T)

- 2 pints Grape tomatoes (R)

- 1/4 lb. Kale (T)

- 1 Fresh lemon (W)

- 3 Green onions (M)

- 4 Yellow Onions (M)(T)(R)(S)

- 1 handful Fresh parsley (W)

- 4 lbs. Russet potatoes (T)(S)

- 1/3 cup Sun dried tomato halves (W)

## CONDIMENTS:

- 2 Tbsp Dijon mustard (S)

- 5/8 cup Olive oil (M)(T)(W)(R)(F)(S)

- 1 1/2 Tbsp Soy sauce (S)

## SPICES:

- 1/2 tsp Cayenne pepper (M)(F)

- 1 Tbsp Chili powder (F)

- 1 tsp Ground Cumin (F)

- 1 Tbsp Curry powder (T)

- 3/4 tsp Garlic powder (M)(F)

- 1 tsp Onion powder (M)(F)

- 2 tsp Dried Oregano (M)(W)

- 5 1/8 tsp Smoked paprika (M)(T)

- 1 pinch Crushed Red Pepper (T)

- 1 tsp Dried rosemary (S)

- 1 1/2 tsp Dried thyme (M)(S)

## OTHER:

- Optional chili toppings (F)

MONDAY

# ONE POT CREAMY CAJUN CHICKEN PASTA

SERVINGS  
4

PREP TIME  
10 minutes

COOK TIME  
20 minutes

TOTAL TIME  
30 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

### CAJUN SEASONING

**2 tsp smoked paprika**

**1 tsp dried oregano**

**1 tsp dried thyme**

**1/2 tsp garlic powder**

**1/2 tsp onion powder**

**1/4 tsp cayenne pepper**

**1/4 tsp black pepper**

**1/4 tsp salt**

### CHICKEN PASTA

**1 Tbsp olive oil**

**1 Tbsp butter**

**1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast**

**1 yellow onion, diced**

**1/2 lb. penne pasta**

**1 15 oz. fire roasted diced tomatoes**

**2 cups chicken broth**

**2 oz. cream cheese**

**3 green onions, sliced**

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine the ingredients for Cajun seasoning in a small bowl. Cut chicken into 1/2 to 3/4 inch cubes. Place cubed chicken in a bowl, pour Cajun seasoning over top, and stir to coat the chicken in spices.
2. Add olive oil and butter to a large deep skillet. Heat the oil and butter over medium-high until the skillet is very hot and the butter is melted and foamy. Add seasoned chicken to skillet and cook for a couple minutes on each side, or just until the outside gets some color. The chicken does not need to be cooked through at this point.
3. Add the diced yellow onion to skillet and continue to sauté for about 2 minutes more, or until the onion begins to soften. Allow moisture from the onion to dissolve any browned bits from the bottom of skillet.
4. Next, add the pasta, fire roasted diced tomatoes (with juices), and chicken broth to skillet. Stir just until everything is evenly combined, then place a lid on top and allow the broth to come to a boil.
5. Once boiling, turn heat down to medium-low and let pasta simmer for about ten minutes, stirring every couple of minutes, until pasta is tender and liquid is thick and saucy.
6. Add cream cheese to the skillet in chunks, then stir until it has melted into the sauce. Top pasta with sliced green onions and serve.

Get step by step photos & more:

<https://www.budgetbytes.com/one-pot-creamy-cajun-chicken-pasta/>

**TUESDAY**

# SMOKY POTATO CHICKPEA STEW

**SERVINGS**  
6 (1 1/3 cups each)

**PREP TIME**  
10 minutes

**COOK TIME**  
1 hour

**TOTAL TIME**  
1 hour 10 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tbsp olive oil**
- 2 cloves garlic**
- 1 tsp fresh grated ginger**
- 1 yellow onion**
- 1 Tbsp curry powder**
- 1 Tbsp smoked paprika**
- 1 pinch crushed red pepper**
- 1 15 oz. can fire roasted diced tomatoes**
- 2 russet potatoes (2 lbs total)**
- 1 15 oz can chickpeas**
- 4 cups vegetable broth**
- 1/4 lb. fresh kale, chopped**

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Finely dice the onion, mince garlic, and grate the ginger. Add onion, garlic, and ginger to a large soup pot with olive oil and sauté over medium heat until onions are soft and translucent.
2. Add the curry powder, smoked paprika, and red pepper flakes to the pot and continue to stir and cook for 1-2 minutes more to toast the spices.
3. While onion, garlic, and ginger are sautéing, peel potatoes and cut them into 1-inch cubes. Drain the chickpeas.
4. Once spices are toasted, add potatoes, fire roasted diced tomatoes (with juices), and chickpeas to the pot. Pour vegetable broth over top, then stir until everything is combined.
5. Place a lid on the pot, turn the heat to medium-high, and allow it to come to a boil. Once boiling, turn the heat down to low and allow the soup to simmer with the lid in place for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally.
6. After 45 minutes, stir the stew well and smash the potatoes against the side of the pot to help them break down and thicken the stew. Add the chopped kale and stir it into the stew until it has wilted. Taste the soup and adjust the salt or other spices if desired. Serve hot with crusty bread or crackers.

Get step by step photos & more:

<https://www.budgetbytes.com/smoky-potato-chickpea-stew/>

WEDNESDAY

# GREEK TURKEY AND RICE SKILLET

**SERVINGS**  
4

**PREP TIME**  
5 minutes

**COOK TIME**  
30 minutes

**TOTAL TIME**  
35 min

## INGREDIENTS

**1 Tbsp olive oil**

**2 cloves garlic**

**19 oz. Ground turkey**

**1 tsp dried oregano**

**1/4 tsp salt**

**Freshly cracked pepper**

**1 cup long grain white rice,  
uncooked**

**1/4 lb. frozen cut leaf spinach**

**1/3 cup sun dried tomato halves  
(about 7 pcs), sliced**

**1/2 cup kalamata olives, sliced**

**1 1/2 cups chicken broth**

**handful fresh parsley**

**1 fresh lemon**

**1 oz. feta**

## INSTRUCTIONS

**1.** Mince the garlic and add it to a large deep skillet with olive oil. Sauté over medium heat for 1-2 minutes, or until the garlic is fragrant. Add ground turkey, oregano, salt, and pepper to the skillet. Continue to sauté until turkey is cooked through (about 5 minutes).

**2.** While turkey is cooking, slice olives and sun dried tomatoes. Once the turkey is cooked through, add the rice, frozen spinach (no need to thaw first), olives, and sun dried tomatoes to the skillet.

**3.** Add chicken broth and stir until everything is very well combined. Place a lid on the skillet, turn the heat up to medium high, and allow it to come up to a boil. Once it reaches a boil, turn heat down to low or medium low, and allow it to gently simmer for 15 minutes. Use the lowest level of heat that maintains a steady simmer in the skillet.

**4.** After 15 minutes, give the skillet a brief stir, replace lid quickly, turn off heat, and allow it to sit for an additional 10 minutes.

**5.** While skillet is resting, zest half of the lemon and slice it into wedges. Roughly chop the parsley. Give the skillet a final fluff and stir, then top with lemon zest, parsley, and crumbled feta. Serve with lemon wedges to squeeze over top.

Get step by step photos & more:

<https://www.budgetbytes.com/greek-turkey-rice-skillet/>



THURSDAY

# FRESH TOMATO BASIL PASTA WITH RICOTTA

**SERVINGS**  
4

**PREP TIME**  
10 minutes

**COOK TIME**  
15 minutes

**TOTAL TIME**  
25 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

**12 oz. penne pasta**

**2 Tbsp olive oil**

**2 cloves garlic**

**2 pints grape tomatoes**

**1 Tbsp butter**

**1/2 cup fresh basil, loosely packed**

**1/2 cup whole milk ricotta**

**Salt & pepper to taste**

Get step by step photos & more:

<https://www.budgetbytes.com/fresh-tomato-basil-pasta-with-ricotta/>

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring a large pot of water to boil for the pasta. Once boiling, add the pasta and continue to boil until the pasta is tender. Reserve about one cup of the starchy pasta water, then drain the pasta in a colander.
2. While the pasta is cooking, prepare the rest of the recipe. Slice grape tomatoes in half and slice or roughly chop basil. Mince the garlic.
3. Add olive oil to a large skillet and place it over medium heat. Once hot, add garlic and sauté for just one minute to take the raw edge off the garlic.
4. Add grape tomatoes and a pinch of salt to the skillet. Stir to combine, then place a lid on the skillet and let the tomatoes simmer for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Let tomatoes simmer just until they begin to break down and they have released their juices. The tomatoes should just be beginning to lose their shape and their skins should appear a bit wrinkled.
5. Turn the heat off and add butter, most of the basil (save some to garnish with), and some freshly cracked pepper. Stir until butter is melted, then taste and adjust salt and pepper as needed. You want it to be slightly on the salty side, as the saltiness will dilute a bit once it's combined with the pasta.
6. Add cooked and drained pasta and stir to coat the pasta in the tomato sauce. Add a splash or two of the reserved pasta water if the mixture appears dry.
7. Top pasta with dollops of ricotta, a little more pepper, and any reserved basil, then serve!

**FRIDAY**  
**BASIC CHILI**

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**SERVINGS**  
6 (1 cup each)

**PREP TIME**  
5 minutes

**COOK TIME**  
45 minutes

**TOTAL TIME**  
50 minutes

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**INGREDIENTS**

- 2 Tbsp olive oil**
- 1 yellow onion**
- 2 cloves garlic**
- 1 lb. ground beef**
- 1 15 oz. can kidney beans**
- 1 15 oz. can black beans**
- 1 15 oz. can diced tomatoes**
- 1 6 oz. can tomato paste**
- 1 cup water**

**CHILI SEASONING**

- 1 Tbsp chili powder**
- 1 tsp ground cumin**
- 1/4 tsp cayenne powder**
- 1/4 tsp garlic powder**
- 1/2 tsp onion powder**
- 1/2 Tbsp brown sugar**
- 1 tsp salt**
- 1/2 tsp Freshly ground pepper**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- 1.** Dice onion and mince garlic. Add both to a large pot with the olive oil and cook over medium heat until they are soft and transparent. Add ground beef and continue to sauté until the beef is fully browned.
- 2.** Drain beans and add them to the pot along with the diced tomatoes, tomato paste, 1 cup water, and all of the ingredients for the chili seasoning. Stir until well combined. Place a lid on the pot and allow it to simmer over a low flame for at least 30 minutes, stirring occasionally (the flavor gets better the longer it simmers).
- 3.** Give the chili one final taste, adjust the salt or seasonings if needed, then serve hot with your favorite toppings.

Get step by step photos & more:

<https://www.budgetbytes.com/basic-chili/>

**SATURDAY**

# VEGAN WINTER LENTIL STEW

**SERVINGS**  
8 (1.5 cups each)

**PREP TIME**  
10 minutes

**COOK TIME**  
50 minutes

**TOTAL TIME**  
1 hour

## INGREDIENTS

**2 Tbsp olive oil**

**1 yellow onion**

**4 cloves garlic**

**4 carrots**

**4 stalks celery**

**2 lbs. Russet potatoes**

**1 cup brown lentils**

**1 tsp dried rosemary**

**1/2 tsp dried thyme**

**2 Tbsp Dijon mustard**

**1 1/2 Tbsp soy sauce**

**1 Tbsp brown sugar**

**6 cups vegetable broth**

**1 cup frozen peas**

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Dice the onion and mince the garlic. Add olive oil, onion, and garlic to a large soup pot and begin to sauté over medium heat.
2. While the onion and garlic are sautéing, dice the celery, then add it to the pot and continue to sauté. As celery, onion, and garlic are sautéing, peel and chop carrots into half rounds. Add the carrots to the pot and continue to sauté.
3. As the onion, garlic, celery, and carrots are sautéing, peel and cube the potatoes into 3/4 to 1-inch pieces. Add cubed potatoes to the pot along with the lentils, rosemary, thyme, Dijon, soy sauce, brown sugar, and vegetable broth.
4. Briefly stir ingredients to combine, then place a lid on the pot, turn heat up to high, and bring the stew up to a boil. Once it reaches a boil, turn heat down to low and let it simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Toward the end of the simmer time, when potatoes are very soft, begin to mash the potatoes a bit as you stir. This will help thicken the stew.
6. Finally, after 30 minutes, stir in the frozen peas and allow them to heat through. Taste the stew and add salt if needed (this will depend on the salt content of your broth, I did not add any extra). Serve hot and enjoy!

Get step by step photos & more:

<https://www.budgetbytes.com/vegan-winter-lentil-stew/>





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