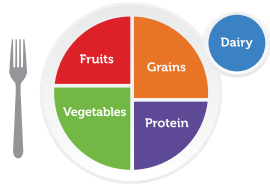


Start *simple*  
with **MyPlate**



# Meal Planning

Healthy eating is important at every age. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When planning meals, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



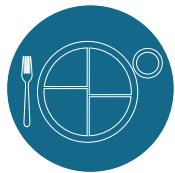
## See what you have

Plan meals that use foods you already have. Look in your freezer, cabinets, and refrigerator, and be sure to check expiration dates.



## Map out your meals

Write out the meals you plan to eat for the week and use it as a guide. Be sure to list beverages and snacks, too.



## Find balance

Plan your meals so you eat from all five food groups—fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy products—every day. When planning, be aware of added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium by reading the [Nutrition Facts label](#).



## Think about your schedule

Prepare meals and sides—including whole grains, vegetables, and beans—on the weekends when you may have more time. This will help during busy weekdays.



## Make a grocery list

Start by listing ingredients for the meals you plan to make and then cross off items you already have. Buying for the week can help you make fewer shopping trips.



## Love your leftovers

Prepare enough of a dish to eat multiple times during the week or freeze some to enjoy later. Making leftovers part of your plan can save you time and money.