

September 2014 | [www.skinnychef.com](http://www.skinnychef.com) | Jennifer Iserloh | Health & Wellness

## Healthy Cooking (and Shopping) For One



Healthy cooking at home is one of the best things you can do for your body and your budget. People find it hard to cook and shop for one even if they are a healthy eaters, but there are plenty of ways to be neater, smarter, and more efficient when you have a plan & recipes for one in place.

Follow these easy, no-fuss tips to make a week's worth of delicious meals for one, without the waste.

### Cooking for One

Stick to easy recipes that have a short list of ingredients to begin with. Also look for recipes that repeat ingredients, like my fish sticks and chicken parm.

Choose recipes that have a mix of fresh ingredients along with pantry items so you can get used to using both and learn how to stock a basic pantry for one, like main course salads as well as main dishes.

### Grocery Shopping for One

Once you've selected at least 10 recipes that you'd like to make over the next one to two weeks, you're set to make your shopping list.

Organize your list this specific way for "a power shop" through the grocery store that saves on time: Produce, Canned Good (tomato products and soups), Dry Goods (grains then pasta), Meat, Cleaning Products or Paper Products, then Dairy.

Print out your recipes, and make your shopping list. Take a quick peek in your pantry to see what you already might have on hand. Do you travel to work by

bus or subway? Save time and make your list in transit, then hit the store right before you head home. I make my list directly on my phone, no pen or paper necessary.

Most the recipes listed above have ingredients that will last 5 to 6 days in the fridge, or longer. Plan to make your chocolate avocado shake mid-week since most avocados need to ripen a few days on the counter, as they are fairly hard in the produce isle.

To save time, purchase pre-washed greens, like mixed salad greens, baby spinach, and baby kale — all will keep up to 5 days in your crisper. If there is condensation in the bag or bag, tuck in a paper towel to protect greens from spoiling too soon. Want to quickly use up greens and cut back on carbs in the process? Save them in a little olive oil and only add half the amount of pasta, rice, or noodles you're used to eating. Most often, also "shred" as they say, but that doesn't damage the abundance of nutrition they provide. Here are some of the fresh produce baskets I stocked in my cart — and you can use with the recipes list above and many, many others.

# READ MORE AT THE JUICE BAR

Protein

Grains

Vegetables

Pantry and Fridge

Chicken

Quinoa

Salmon

Beans

*NOTE: Some sentiments contained within "What We're Reading" articles may not strictly conform with PROJECT: PFC's nutritional outlook. We read articles containing opposing information all the time and derive our nutritional philosophies from the latest science, the opinions of experts worldwide and our anecdotal experiences in the field. We keep an open mind and a strong affinity for fact-based evidence to help make the world of nutrition "Simple Again" for you.*

## Healthy Cooking (and Shopping) For One



Healthy cooking at home is one of the best things you can do for your body and your budget. People find it hard to cook and shop for one even if they are a healthy eaters, but there are plenty of ways to be neater, smarter, and more efficient when you have a plan & recipes for one in place.

Follow these easy, no-fuss tips to make a week's worth of delicious meals for one, without the waste.

### Cooking for One

Stick to easy recipes that have a short list of ingredients to begin with. Also look for recipes that repeat ingredients, like my fish sticks and chicken parm.

Choose recipes that have a mix of fresh ingredients along with pantry items so you can get used to using both and learn how to stock a basic pantry for one, like main course salads as well as main dishes.

### Grocery Shopping for One

Once you've selected at least 10 recipes that you'd like to make over the next one to two weeks, you're set to make your shopping list.

Organize your list this specific way for "a power shop" through the grocery store that saves on time: Produce, Canned Good (tomato products and soups), Dry Goods (grains then pasta), Meat, Cleaning Products or Paper Products, then Dairy.

Print out your recipes, and make your shopping list. Take a quick peek in your pantry to see what you already might have on hand. Do you travel to work by

bus or subway? Save time and make your list in transit, then hit the store right before you head home. I make my list directly on my phone, no pen or paper necessary.

Most the recipes listed above have ingredients that will last 5 to 6 days in the fridge, or longer. Plan to make your chocolate avocado shake mid-week since most avocados need to ripen a few days on the counter, as they are fairly hard in the produce isle.

To save time, purchase pre-washed greens, like mixed salad greens, baby spinach, and baby kale — all will keep up to 5 days in your crisper. If there is condensation in the box or bag, tuck in a papertowel to protect greens from spoiling too soon. Want to quickly use up greens and cut back on carbs in the process? Saute them in a little olive oil and only add half the amount of pasta, rice, or noodles you're used to eating. Most greens also "shrink" as they wilt but that doesn't damage the abundance of nutrition they provide. Here are some of the fresh and pantry basics that should be staples in your cart — and you can use with the recipes list above and many, many others.

| Protein       | Grains                           | Vegetables                      | Pantry and Fridge |
|---------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Chicken       | Quinoa                           | Romaine lettuce or mixed greens | Olive oil         |
| White Fish    | Short grain brown rice           | Baby spinach                    | Eggs              |
| Ground Turkey | Whole wheat or whole grain pasta | Red and green bell peppers      | Breadcrumbs       |
|               |                                  | Mushrooms                       | Jarred marinara   |
|               |                                  | Avocado                         |                   |

### General Storage

Storage is a big deal when you're cooking for one, so streamline it! Start with a box of zipperlock sandwich bags and large freezer bags. Even when you cook for two, you'll have left-over beans, breadcrumbs, jarred marinara, tomato paste, canned tomatoes, cooked brown rice, cooked quinoa, canned chilies, enchilada sauce and anything else that might come in a can. All of these items freeze beautifully, just add them in small portions in a sandwich bag and label with a sharpie marker. For tomato paste, most recipes call for 1 tablespoon amounts, so that's how I freeze it. For beans, grains, and sauce, I freeze them in 1/4 cup amounts, and double bag for sauces to prevent leaks.

### Bare Bones Cooking Equipment

You're cooking for one, so keep it simple! Here are the basics you need to make simple, delicious healthy meals that you can whip up in less than 30 minutes: Chef's knife, paring knife, plastic cutting board, medium skillet, spatula, tongs, and a mini blender is a great way to outfit your kitchen with everything you need to make health meals on the fly.

### Workhorse Knives

Wusthof Knives – Around \$40-80 each

Great, strong knives that I used in culinary school and during my time working in restaurants. They last forever and are definitely worth the extra investment. I suggest the 8-Inch Cook's Knife, depending on the size of your hands, as well as the 10-Inch Bread Knife and the Paring Knife.

### Several Plastic Cutting Board

Wooden cutting boards are great because wood has natural anti-bacterial, anti-fungal properties — but you can't put them in a dishwasher, so plastic is best for faster clean-up. I suggest buying several plastic boards so you don't have to hand wash in between uses. Get an inexpensive set of three, that you can pop into the dishwasher after you make your tasty, fast meals.

### Best Tongs

Having a few pairs of tongs on hand can be a life saver when you're cooking a big meal or ready for summer time cook-outs. These stainless steel tongs are light, easy to handle, and so incredibly inexpensive. They're also dishwasher-safe for easy clean-up.

### Best Super Sharp Peeler

Peeler – Around 6\$

I'm coocoo over this Swissmar Peeler that never seems to wear out! If you've had a bad vegetable peeler, then you know the frustration and hard work it makes of taking the peel off a carrot or potato! This gem comes in different colors and is the perfect gift for anyone, from the occasional home cook to the seasoned chef.

### Best Pint-sized Blender

Magic Bullet Blender– Around \$70

Want to make mess-free healthy smoothies (or chocolate avocado milkshake) to get into better shape? This is the best tool and it's geared for one perfect portion since you make your blended drink or meal right in the cup. Check out the Magic Bullet Blender! After you use it once, it will find a permanent home on your counter top, because it has powerful blades that can even chop ice. Place the cups and the blade into the dishwasher for easy cleanup, and it comes with a collection of cups so you can have several smoothies weekly without hand washing.

***CHECK OUT MORE OF WHAT WE'RE READING:***



[www.facebook.com/ProjectPFC](http://www.facebook.com/ProjectPFC)



[www.twitter.com/ProjectPFC](http://www.twitter.com/ProjectPFC)



[www.pinterest.com/ProjectPFC](http://www.pinterest.com/ProjectPFC)