



NUTRITION & FITNESS

A photograph of several clear glass meal prep containers on a wooden surface. The containers are filled with a variety of healthy foods, including cooked chicken, salmon, broccoli, carrots, and nuts. The text 'MEAL PREPPING FOR ATHLETES' is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

**MEAL
PREPPING
FOR
ATHLETES**

HELLO

and welcome to MEAL PREP FOR ATHLETES!

Nutrition is often an overlooked component of ultimate athletic and life performance. This guide has been designed to help you navigate through the world of meal prepping. It's all about learning to choose healthy foods and prepare nutritious, delicious meals that can easily fit into your fast-paced life.

In this guide, you will find information on what constitutes a healthy diet, the fundamental building blocks of nutrition, how to create a perfectly balanced meal, and more. There are also valuable tips on meal planning, cooking timelines, portion control and even some healthy snack recipes.

Remember, the journey towards health and well-being is personal and unique to each individual. This guide is not a strict rulebook but rather a tool to empower you to make informed choices about your diet and lifestyle. Take the information provided, adapt it to suit your needs.

The things we do every day are the ones that have the most impact on our health and our eating habits fall into this category.



DISCLAIMERS



The information provided in this guide is designed to provide helpful information on the subjects discussed. It is not meant to be used, nor should it be used, to diagnose or treat any medical condition. For diagnosis or treatment of any medical problem, consult your own physician.

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BUILDING BLOCKS of a Healthy Diet

The building blocks of a healthy diet are the essential nutrients your body needs to function properly: carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals, and water.



Carbohydrates provide your body with energy, and come in two main types – simple (sugars) and complex (starches and fiber). Choose whole grains and vegetables for your carbs, which provide long-lasting energy.



Proteins are vital for cell growth, repair, and maintenance. High-quality protein sources include lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, nuts, seeds, and legumes.



Fats are a crucial part of your diet and perform various functions, like nutrient absorption and maintaining body temperature. Opt for unsaturated fats (found in avocados, nuts, seeds, and olive oil) over saturated and trans fats.



Vitamins and minerals are essential for a wide range of bodily functions such as bone health, wound healing, immune function, and energy production.



Water makes up about 60% of your body weight and is essential for every system in your body.

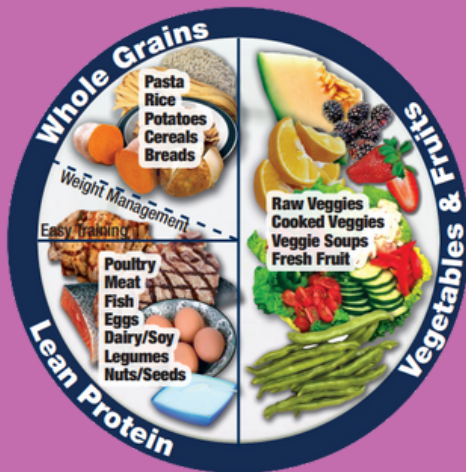


How to Build A PERFECTLY BALANCED MEAL

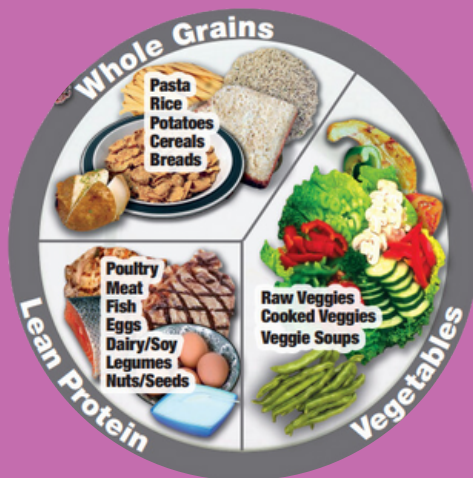
Building a perfectly balanced meal involves incorporating a variety of nutrient-rich foods from all food groups. Besides eating balanced meals, athletes should focus on the periodization aspect and adjust their nutrition needs based on their training load. Harder and longer training days should have more caloric intake than easy or recovery days. A qualified sports nutritionist can assist you with your specific targets. Below are some good habits to get your started.

- ✓ Half your plate with vegetables: These are high in vitamins, minerals, and fiber but low in calories. Include a variety of colors to consume a broad spectrum of nutrients. Include a variety of non-starchy vegetables and starchy vegetables.
- ✓ Add protein: Include lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, or plant-based sources like legumes, nuts, and seeds. Protein is better absorbed throughout the day and not consumed in one big meal.
- ✓ Add healthy fats: Avocado, nuts, seeds, olives, and fatty fish are excellent sources. These fats are crucial for brain health and inflammation reduction.
- ✓ Stay hydrated: Don't forget to drink plenty of water or other unsweetened beverages throughout the day. Soda is not your friend. Check out this [hydration](#) article for more in-depth information.

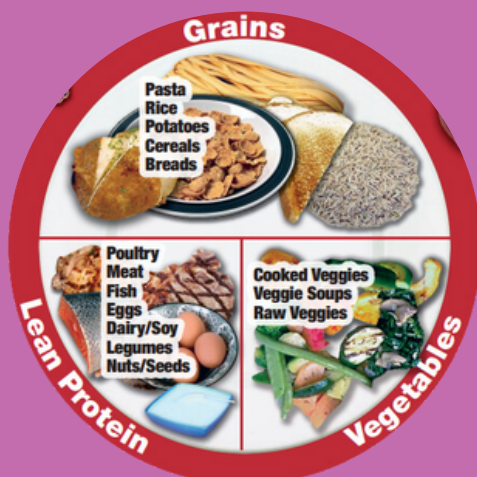
How to Build ATHLETE'S PLATE BASED ON TRAINING SCHEDULE



Easy training or rest day fill your plate as follows: 1/2 vegetables, 1/4 whole grains, 1/4 lean protein. Notice how the lean protein portion does not change based on an athlete's training while the whole grains and vegetable portions get adjusted.



Moderate training day fill your plate as follows: 1/4 lean protein, the remaining 3/4 is split evenly between vegetables and whole grains. Athletes should consider pre and post-workout snacks in addition to traditional breakfast, lunch dinner food consumption.



Hard training day fill your plate as follows: 1/4 vegetables, 1/2 whole grains, 1/4 lean protein. Timing of the nutrition intake is more important for athletes than the general population. Athletes should fuel their bodies post workout as soon as practically possible.

*images courtesy of and
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CALORIE AND MACRONUTRIENT BREAKDOWNS

Understanding Macronutrients involves listing common foods under the categories of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats, detailing their calorie content and their macronutrient breakdown.

For example:

- **Chicken breast (100g):** Calories: 165, Protein: 31g, Carbohydrates: 0g, Fat: 3.6g
- **Quinoa (cooked, 1 cup):** Calories: 222, Protein: 8.1g, Carbohydrates: 39.4g, Fat: 3.6g
- **Avocado (1 medium):** Calories: 240, Protein: 3g, Carbohydrates: 13g, Fat: 22g



The Perfect Portion Sizes Using Hands

Using your hands is an easy way to estimate portion sizes:



Your palm determines your protein portions - 1 palm = 20-30g ~3-4 oz (85-115 g) cooked meat / tofu, 2 whole eggs, 1 cup Greek yogurt.



Your fist determines your veggie portions ~1 cup non-starchy vegetables



Your cupped hand determines your carbohydrate portions ~ 20-30 g ~ 1/2 to 2/3 cup (100-130 g) cooked grains / legumes, 1 medium fruit / tuber



Your thumb determines your fat portions ~ 7-12 g ~ 1 Tbsp (14 g) oils, nuts, seeds, nut butter, cheese, etc.



Remember, these are general guidelines. Your specific dietary requirements will vary depending on your activity level, and health goals. Always consult with a healthcare professional or a certified sports nutritionist if you need personalized advice.

01 THEMES FOR MEAL PLANS:
To simplify the process, consider assigning a theme to each day of the week like Meatless Mondays, Taco Tuesdays, or Fish Fridays. This will help narrow down your recipe options.

02 LEARN TO LOVE LEFTOVERS:
Prepare meals that can be eaten over a couple of days or can be repurposed into a new dish. This saves time and reduces food waste.

03 MAKE USE OF KITCHEN TOOLS:
Slow cookers, pressure cookers, and rice cookers can make meal preparation easier and quicker. Baking or roasting can also be a time-saver because you can cook several portions in one go.

04 PREP COMPONENTS, NOT JUST FULL MEALS:
Consider preparing ingredients that can be mixed and matched throughout the week for variety. For example, cook a batch of quinoa, chop some veggies, grill some chicken, and prepare a dressing. These can be quickly combined for a salad, wrap, or grain bowl during the week.

05 INCLUDE SNACKS IN YOUR MEAL PLAN:
Healthy snacks can keep your hunger in check between meals. Include easy-to-grab items like fresh fruits, yogurt, nuts, or boiled eggs in your meal plan.

06 CONSIDER YOUR SCHEDULE:
If you have a particularly busy day, plan for a slow cooker meal that can cook while you're away, or consider a leftover night.





Remember, the goal of meal planning is to make your life easier. Keep it flexible and adapt it to your lifestyle. It's okay if things don't always go according to plan. Meal planning is a tool to assist you, not stress you.



Meal Prepping

START WITH A PLAN:

Decide on your meals for the week ahead and write them down.

COOK IN BATCHES:

Prepare your meals in large quantities to save time during the week.

UTILISE YOUR FREEZER:

Freeze portion-sized meals for future use.



KEEP IT SIMPLE:

Don't overcomplicate your meals. Simple, healthy ingredients make delicious meals.

COOKING TIMELINE

(WHAT YOU SHOULD START WITH)

Efficient Cooking Tip: Begin with the Dishes that Require the Most Time



01

Start with roasting meats or vegetables as these often take the longest.



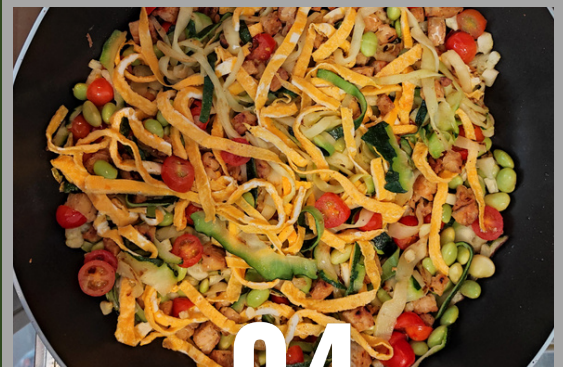
02

While these are cooking, start on your grains (like rice or quinoa) as they can cook unattended.



03

Prepare any sauces or dressings while the grains are cooking.



04

Finally, prepare any quick-cooking items like sautéed vegetables or reheating pre-cooked items.

This efficient timeline ensures that all your components will finish around the same time, resulting in hot, freshly cooked meals.

SNACK IDEAS

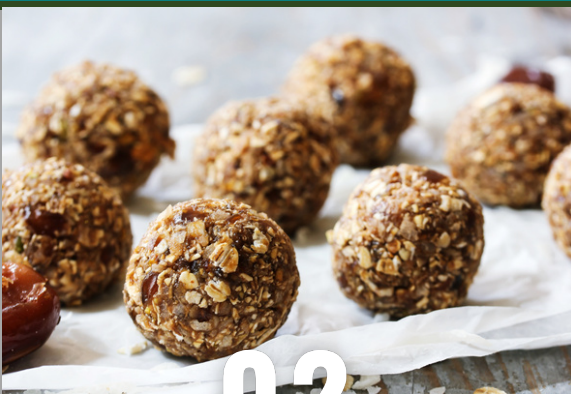


01

Ingredients

1/2 cup Organic Coconut Milk
1/2 tsp Maple Syrup
1/2 tsp Vanilla Extract
2 2/3 Tbsp Chia Seeds
1/2 cup Berries
1/4 cup Sliced Almonds

Berry Chia Pudding: In a medium-sized bowl, whisk together the coconut milk, maple syrup, and vanilla extract. Then whisk in the chia seeds. Pour the mixture into mason jar container and place in the refrigerator for 3 hours or overnight. When ready to enjoy top the pudding with your favorite berries and nuts.



02

Ingredients

1 1/2 cup oats, 1/2 cup ground flax seed
2 Tbsp chia seeds, 1 tsp cinnamon
1/3 cup flaked coconut, 2 scoops protein powder, 1/2 cup mini chocolate chips
1/2 ground pecans or almonds, 1/2 cup honey, 1 cup almond or peanut butter
1 tsp vanilla

Energy Balls: Mix the dry ingredients in a large bowl. Stir together honey, almond or peanut butter and vanilla. Pour the mixture over the dry ingredients and blend lightly. Make balls and store them in the refrigerator or freezer in an air-tight container. Makes 32-36 balls. Eat two balls as your post-workout snack.

This recipe is a courtesy of CK TRI Athlete
Dawn Bradley

SNACK IDEAS



03

Ingredients

1/2 cup Oats, 1 1/2 tsp Chia Seeds,
2/3 cup Unsweetened Almond Milk,
2 Tbsp Vanilla Protein Powder, 2
Tbsp Raspberries, 2 Tbsp
Blueberries, 1 1/2 tsp Almond Butter

Overnight Oats with Berries: In a bowl combine the oats, chia seeds and milk. Stir to combine. Place in the refrigerator for 8 hours, or overnight. After the oats have set, remove them from the refrigerator and add the protein powder. Mix well. Add extra almond milk 1 tbsp at a time if needed. Put the oats into a bowl, top with berries and almond butter for a quick and easy breakfast post-morning workout.



04

Ingredients

1 cup pitted dates, 2/3 cup peanut
butter, 1/3 cup quick oats, 1 tsp vanilla
extract, a pinch of salt, 1/4 cup mini
dark chocolate chips

Peanut Butter Date Balls: Mix the dates in a food processor until chopped into small pieces. If the dates are hard, soak them for a few minutes in warm water first, then drain, dry and try again. Add peanut butter, oats, salt and vanilla extract to the processor. Use pulse mode to mix all the ingredients. If the mixture is too sticky, add 1-2 tbsp oats. If it's too dry, add 1-2 tbsp peanut butter. Lastly, mix in chocolate chips. Form the balls and freeze them. Take a few balls out of the freezer when you plan your workout. Enjoy this yummy snack when you are done.

MEET THE COACH

COACH KAT



Coach Kat CK TRI LLC is a USAT, TrainingPeaks and Stryd Certified Coach as well as a Certified Sports Nutritionist.

She is a 5-time Boston Marathon Qualifier, IRONMAN World Championships Qualifier, 4-time IRONMAN 70.3 World Championships Qualifier, 3-time Standard Distance World Championships Qualifier, a member of Team USA, IRONMAN AWA Athlete, multiple times podium finisher in Sprint, Olympic, 70.3 and full Ironman distance triathlons.

Coach Kat is passionate about helping her athletes achieve their athletic and life potential, from 5K to full Ironman and everything in between. She successfully coached first-timers as well as podium finishers and overall winners in her coaching career. She understands the need for women-specific coaching that accounts for hormone fluctuations that affect the training, racing, and recovery cycles. She offers a uniquely individualized approach that works in sync with women's bodies to optimize physiological responses and consequently performance.

Anything is possible BUT it requires hard work, dedication, knowledge, and a whole lot of support. Coach Kat loves sharing her expertise and love for the sport with like-minded individuals who are not scared to dream big, set a goal, and work hard to achieve it.

Coach Kat can be reached at CoachKat@cktri.com.