



# WEEKNIGHT MEALS

10 Weeknight meals for busy families



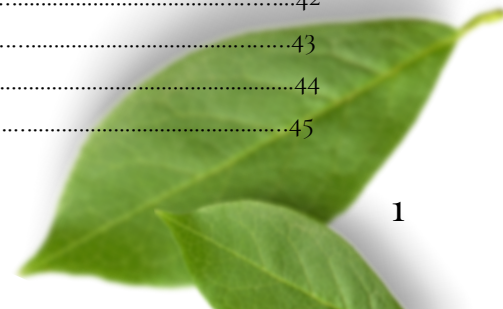
## Simple & Delicious

A collection of 10 weeknight meals. Complete with recipes, grocery list, and time saving tips. Plus 4 sweet treats.



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# INTRODUCTION

This is a collection of 10 weeknight meals for families of four. They are easy to prepare on busy weeknights when you're tired from your day. The last thing you want to do is spend your available time in the kitchen trying to figure out what to make, making a meal, and doing a lot of clean-up afterwards. With this meal plan you will be able to quickly prepare the meal so you can spend your precious time with your loved ones.

These are time-tested recipes that I served my family when my boys were growing up. At that time, I was working full time, volunteering in the community, helping my sons with their homework, and getting them to their activities. I needed meals that could be made quickly and would fill them up. Yet, I wanted meals that I would feel good about feeding my family.

There are 10 weeknight meals in this book. It's complete with recipes, a grocery list, and time saving tips. Plus an All-Purpose Seasoning recipe and 4 additional recipes for sweet treats that will become your family favorites.

I hope you find this book helpful and that your weeknights will go a little more smoothly. I would appreciate it if you could give this book a rating. It would help my business.

Please check back since I plan to write some additional books with other recipe topics. If you have a recommendation, please share it with me. And again, thank you for purchasing it. I appreciate your support.

Sincerely,  
Deeann Bylsma



# Helpful Information

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If you have any allergies, sensitivities, or health concerns related to food(s) please consult your healthcare provider or doctor before preparing or consuming any of these recipes.

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# TIME SAVING TIPS



Your time in the kitchen preparing for weeknight meals is more than just cooking the meal and doing the dishes. It includes meal planning, grocery shopping, meal preparation, cooking, clean up, and a whole lot more. This can be so time-consuming on weeknights.

I've put together a list of tips that have helped me be more efficient in the kitchen. It may seem like a lot to learn and try all at once. To start just pick one or two and add one or two each week. Soon you'll be using them consistently.

## **PANTRY TIPS:**

A well-stocked pantry is very important. I like to have goods like rice, pasta, marinara sauce, alfredo sauce, flour, sugar, various canned vegetables, cans of cream soups, and so much more in my pantry at all times. Having pantry items allows you to buy these items when they are on sale since they will keep. You can stock up and save money. In today's rising costs, we all need that.

Pantry items have been a life saver when I couldn't get to the grocery store, or when the meal planned for the night has changed. I've had work potlucks that I've needed something to serve, or a couple extra people join us for dinner. Things happen. Life happens.

## **PREMIXED OR PURCHASED SEASONINGS:**

I like our meals to have more flavor than what I can get from only salt and pepper. I prefer to have a blend of seasonings that are premixed or purchased readily available to use as I cook.

Premixed seasoning is easier than taking several bottles out and measuring 4 or 5 herbs and spices for each meal. I can select the seasoning I want and use that one bottle. I also know that it's flavors that my family enjoys.

I tend to keep 2 or 3 seasoning mixes on hand. Having more than that costs more and I find I just go back to using my trusted 2-3 favorites anyway. I have several dried spices on hand. I can add those to any of the seasoning mixes to make new flavors.

## **HAVE A MEAL PLAN:**

Have you ever heard of decision fatigue? It's when your brain is foggy due to too many decisions to make. I think it happens when we get home from work and have so much to try to do in a very short amount of time that can make it difficult to decide what to make for dinner.

With a meal plan, you know what you will be making for dinner, and you can get right to it, making your time more productive.

# TIME SAVING TIPS



## HAVE A MEAL PLAN CONTINUED:

Knowing what you plan on making each day can help you use up what you already have and rotate through your staple items in your pantry or fridge. It also helps you plan your grocery list, reducing the number of trips to the grocery store.

It allows you to prepare in advance for each meal too. You know what you will be making, and you know what to thaw. You can take those items out 2-3 times during the week rather than each day.

Grocery lists can be a real time saver if they are done right. Creating a grocery list can be quite a process. Oftentimes, one item gets overlooked and now what do you do. With some consistency it can be done with less effort and really reduce the forgotten items.

Write down when you used the last of a pantry item. If you do that, you never have to review everything in the pantry. Maybe you'll want to double check an item or two, but not everything.

For fridge staples such milk, eggs, ketchup, condiments, and dressings, things like that, use the same concept as for pantry items. When you put something away and it's low or out, write it down on your grocery list. This will limit you to only a couple of items to double check.

This helps keep the pantry and the fridge items current. So, the only things you need to add to your grocery list would be the special items from the meal plan.

## LIMIT TRIPS TO THE GROCERY STORE:

If you're like me, every time I go to the grocery store, I see additional things I need, or I think I need. That just means the costs of my groceries are going up. Also, each time I go to the grocery store it is often 30 minutes or more. That time adds up and takes you away from something you'd rather be doing. Grocery shopping takes planning and discipline to stick to a limited number of trips.

## SHORTCUT INGREDIENTS:

Look for shortcut ingredients that work with your available time and within your budget. Some shortcut ingredients may cost more, but they can be worth it for the time savings.

An example is rotisserie chicken or canned chicken breast versus cooking chicken and shredding it up. Bacon is another shortcut ingredient. If you buy bacon already crumbled versus cooking and crumbling it. It costs more, but it saves so much time in cooking and in cleanup.



# TIME SAVING TIPS



## SHORTCUT INGREDIENTS CONTINUED:

Buying frozen vegetables rather than buying fresh vegetables can be a time saver. Frozen vegetables are already cleaned and sliced. Often in cooking, frozen vegetables will work in place of fresh vegetables. You just need to know when to thaw them before using them in a recipe and when to use them frozen.

## CHOP PRODUCE ONCE AND CLEAN UP ONCE:

It's a huge time saver to have some produce already cleaned, cut, and measured. All you need to do is add them into a meal. So, before your busy week starts, clean, and cut your produce for your week's meal plan. Measure them out and put them in bags or containers. Just remember to label them. Keep in mind that some produce is best prepped right before using them, like potatoes. However, they can be washed beforehand.

Another benefit of cleaning and cutting produce ahead of time is you only clean the cutting board, knives, and anything you use one time rather than with each meal.

## COOK INGREDIENTS ONCE AND CLEAN UP ONCE:

If you have a common ingredient that needs to be cooked, cook all of them at one time. For example, if you are making two chicken casseroles and they both call for shredded chicken, cook it, and shred it all at once.

How about cooked rice? Cook up a larger batch one time. Typically, it only takes a little bit longer to cook up a larger batch one time versus cooking half as much twice.

Cooking for two meals means you're washing the pan and utensils once rather than twice.

## CLEAN UP

For me, clean up is the worst part of cooking. It's a necessary evil. There are some short cuts that can be done for quicker clean up.

If you are roasting anything, line a baking sheet with parchment paper or aluminum foil. This reduces or eliminates scrubbing. Sometimes I can just pick up the parchment paper or aluminum foil and throw it away. Minimal washing and no scrubbing.

Use cooking spray or grease your pans, including your slow cooker to make clean up easier and avoid scrubbing or the need to soak the pans.

I dislike grease splatters and the mess from fried foods. I'd rather roast it in the oven, grill it, or make it in the air fryer. My air fryer is dishwasher safe, and my oven is self-cleaning.

# TIME SAVING TIPS



## CLEAN UP CONTINUED:

Make bacon in the oven on a large baking sheet that is lined with foil. After the bacon is cooked and once the bacon grease sets, you can throw the foil away. Then wash the baking sheet with no scrubbing.

## LEFTOVERS:

Most of these meals will create leftovers. They are intended to feed a family of four, but many will feed more than that.

Package leftovers into divided meal containers that can be eaten later as homemade TV dinners. These are great for quick and go lunches for work or when you're too busy to cook a meal. Also, many of these meal freeze well.

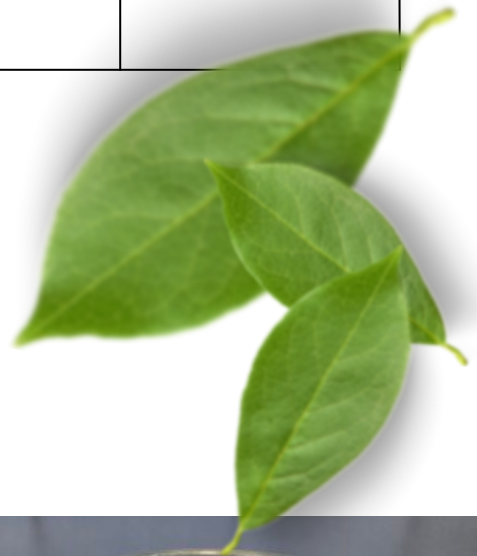
These meals reheat well in a microwave. Crispy type foods can be reheated in an Air Fryer or on a Pizza Pizzaz.

Just remember to eat your leftovers!



# Weeknight Meal Plan

<i>Meal 1</i>	<i>Meal 2</i>	<i>Meal 3</i>	<i>Meal 4</i>	<i>Meal 5</i>
Beefy Biscuit Cups Potato Bites	Cheddar Crusted Chicken Breast Strawberry Pecan Salad Vinaigrette Dressing	Garlic Butter Chicken Pasta	Porcupine Meatballs Baked Potatoes Dill Green Beans	Oven Roasted Sausage & Potatoes
<i>Meal 6</i>	<i>Meal 7</i>	<i>Meal 8</i>	<i>Meal 9</i>	<i>Meal 10</i>
Sweet Chili Pork Cubes & Rice	Taco Skillet & Tortilla Chips	Crescent Top Chicken Casserole	Meatloaf Burgers Smashed Potatoes Creamed Corn	Chicken Fried Rice



# GROCERY LIST

## Fresh Produce

### Staples

- Garlic Cloves - 1 head

### Meals 1-5

- Carrots - 6 medium
- Onions - 1 medium
- Peppers, diced - 1/2 cup
- Potatoes - 14 medium
- Salad Greens, 4 servings
- Spinach, optional - 1 handful
- Strawberries - 16 berries

### Meals 6-10

- Onions - 1 medium
- Peppers, diced - 3/4 cup
- Baby Potatoes - 4 servings

### Sweet Treats

- Apples Golden Delicious - 2
- Kiwi - 2 each
- Strawberries - 2 lb

## Frozen

### Meals 1-5

- Green Beans - 4 servings
- Stir Fry Vegetables 1 20-oz bag

### Meals 6-10

- California Blend Vegetables - 1 16-oz bag
- Corn - 1 bag
- Peas & Carrot - 1 bag

### Sweet Treats

- Whipped Topping - 16 oz tub

## Meat & Lunchmeat

### Meals 1-5

- Bacon or Crumbled Bacon - 6 strips
- Chicken, boneless & Skinless - 10 servings
- Ground Beef - 2 lbs
- Kielbasa Sausage - 6 each

### Meals 6-10

- Chicken, Shredded 4 cups
- Ground Beef - 2 lbs
- Boneless Pork to Cube - 1 to 1 1/2 lb

## Cheese

### Meals 5-6

- Cheddar Cheese Shredded, 1 cup
- Cheddar Cheese Fine Shredded 3/4 cup
- Parmesan Cheese Finely Shredded - 1 cup

### Meals 6-10

- Cheddar Cheese Shredded, 2 cups

## Other

- 
- 
- 
- 

## Canned Fruits, Veg & Soups

### Meals 1-5

- Condensed Tomato Soup - 1 can

### Meals 6-10

- Condensed Cream of Potato Soup - 1 can
- Fire Roasted Diced Tomatoes 1 - 14.5 oz can

## Condiments / Sauces

### Staples

- Ketchup
- Mustard

### Meals 1-5

- Vinegar or Red Wine Vinegar

### Meals 6-10 Nothing

## Ethnic Foods

### Meals 1-5

- Spaghetti Sauce 14 oz
- Pasta - 1 box

### Meals 6-10

- Salsa
  - Soy Sauce Low Sodium
  - Sweet Chili Sauce - 1/2 cup
  - Taco Seasoning Packet
- ### Sweet Treats
- 10 count Flour Tortilla Shells - 1 pkg

## Dry Goods

### Staples

- Instant Rice - 1 1/3 cup

### Meals 1-5

- Seasoned Panko Crumbs

### Meals 6-10

- Jasmine Rice - 4 cups
- French Fried Onions - 1/2 cup

## Spices & Herbs

### Staples

- Cinnamon
- Dill, dried
- Garlic Powder
- Garlic Salt
- Ground Pepper
- Kosher Salt
- Marjoram, dried
- Onion Flakes
- Paprika
- Parsley Flakes
- Thyme, dried optional

## Other

- 
- 
- 
- 

## Baking

### Staples

- Extract - Butter
  - Extract - Vanilla
  - Oil Olive
  - Oil Vegetable
  - Sugar Brown
  - Sugar granulated
- ### Meals 1-5
- Pecans, chopped
- ### Meals 6-10
- Nothing
- ### Sweet Treats
- Cake Mix - Yellow 1 box
  - Chocolate Chips 1 11.5 oz bag
  - Gelatin - Strawberry 3 oz box
  - Vanilla Pudding - Instant Small box

## Breakfast

### Meals 1-5 Nothing

### Meals 6-10

- Old Fashioned Oatmeal - 3/4 cup

### Sweet Treats

- Corn Syrup
- Fruit Preserves, any flavor 2 tbsp
- Krispie Rice Cereal - 6 cups
- Peanut Butter

## Snacks

### Meals 1-5 Nothing

### Meals 6-10

- Tortilla Chips

## Refridgerated Items

### Meals 1-5

- Large Refrigerator Biscuits - 2 tubes

### Meals 6-10

- Refrigerator Crescent Sheet or Rolls - 1 tube

## Dairy

### Staples

- Butter

### Meals 1-5

- Sour Cream, optional - 4 tbsp

### Meals 6-10

- Cream Cheese - 4 oz
- Eggs - 4 large
- Milk - 1/2 cup

### Sweet Treats

- Cream Cheese - 4 oz
- Eggs - 4 large





# ALL-PURPOSE SEASONING

An all-purpose seasoning can save time and make it easier to prepare meals.

Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)



# All-Purpose Seasoning

*Light Seasoning with Onion, Garlic, and Parsley*



Yields 2 cups ⌚ 10 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup Kosher Coarse Salt
- 1/3 cup Parsley Flakes
- 1/4 cup Garlic Powder
- 1/4 cup Onion Flakes
- 3 tbsp Dried Marjoram
- 1 tsp Ground Pepper

## DIRECTIONS

1. Mix all together and store in an airtight container.





# MEAL 1

Beefy Biscuit Cups with Potato Bites made  
in the air fryer.

Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)





# Beefy Biscuit Cups

*With Marinara Sauce and Cheddar Cheese*



16 servings



40 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb Ground Beef
- 1 14 oz jar Spaghetti Sauce
- 2 tubes Large Refrigerator  
Buttermilk Biscuits
- 1 cup Cheddar Cheese,  
shredded

## NOTES

The remaining marinara sauce can be frozen.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Brown the ground beef and drain it.
2. Stir in the spaghetti sauce. Cook thoroughly over medium heat.
3. Press biscuits into the bottom and up the sides of a greased muffin pan.
4. Spoon 1-2 tbsp of meat sauce into the center of each biscuit. Don't overfill.
5. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
6. Bake for 12-15 minutes or until the biscuits are golden brown.
7. Sprinkle with cheese and bake for another 2-3 minutes or until the cheese is melted.
8. Serve immediately.

# Potato Bites

*Made in the Air fryer and Lightly Seasoned*



4 servings



30 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

4 Medium Potatoes

3 tbsp Olive Oil

1/4 tsp Paprika

1 tsp All-Purpose Seasoning

Salt & Pepper to taste

## NOTES

If you do not have an air fryer, you can use an oven with the same time and temperature.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Clean and cut potatoes into bites sized pieces.
2. In a bowl or a baggie mix together the olive oil, all-purpose seasoning, paprika, salt and pepper to taste.
3. Add the potatoes and coat in the oil mixture.
4. Turn air fryer on to 400 degrees and preheat it by letting it run for 2-3 minutes empty. Add the potatoes and let it run for 15 minutes. Turning the potatoes about halfway through the cooking time.
5. Remove from the air fryer and serve immediately.





# MEAL 2

Cheddar Baked Chicken and Strawberry  
Pecan Salad with a Vinaigrette dressing

Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)





# Cheddar Baked Chicken

*Coated with Panko and Cheddar Cheese*



4 servings



40 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp Olive Oil
- 4 Boneless Skinless Chicken Breasts
- 4 tbsp Butter, melted
- 2 Cloves Garlic, minced
- 3/4 cup Italian Seasoned Panko Crumbs
- 3/4 cup Cheddar Cheese, finely shredded

## NOTES

If your chicken is browning too much, loosely tent a piece of aluminum foil over the meat.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Put Olive oil on a baking sheet and put in the oven as the oven preheats.
3. Place the butter and the garlic in a shallow bowl or dish and place in the microwave to melt the butter and infuse the garlic flavor into the butter.
4. On a separate plate mix Panko crumbs and shredded cheese together.
5. Dip both sides of the chicken breast in the melted butter mixture and then in the panko and cheese mixture.
6. Place the chicken on the baking sheet.
7. Bake uncovered in the oven for 20-25 minutes or until the chicken is fully cooked.

# Strawberry Pecan Salad

*With Strawberries, Pecans, and Parmesan Cheese*



4 servings



10 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

4 servings Salad Greens  
16 Strawberries, sliced  
4 tbsp Parmesan Cheese,  
finely shredded  
2 Tbsp Pecans, finely  
chopped

## DIRECTIONS

1. Place a hand full of lettuce or salad greens in a bowl or on a plate.
2. Top each serving with 4 sliced strawberries, 1 tbsp of Parmesan cheese, and 1 tbsp of pecans.
3. Just before serving top with your choice of dressing.



# Vinaigrette Dressing

*With Strawberries, Pecans and Parmesan Cheese*



4 servings



10 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup Vegetable Oil
- 1/4 cup Sugar
- 1/4 cup Cider Vinegar or Red Wine Vinegar
- 1 clove Garlic, minced
- 1/4 tsp Salt
- 1/4 tsp Paprika
- 1/8 tsp Pepper

## DIRECTIONS

1. Make an hour or more before serving.
2. Put all ingredients into a container that seals and seal it.
3. Shake it until the sugar is dissolved.
4. Once the sugar is dissolved, it is ready to use.
5. Keep refrigerated.
6. This keeps for up to two weeks.





# MEAL 3

Garlic Butter Chicken Pasta

Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)





# Garlic Butter Chicken Pasta

*With Stir Fry Vegetables and Parmesan Cheese*



8 servings



45 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

6 servings Chicken Breast,  
boneless skinless  
2 Tbsp Olive Oil  
1 16-oz pkg Pasta  
4 Tbsp Butter  
2 Cloves Garlic, minced  
2 tsp All-Purpose Seasoning  
1 20-oz bag Stir fry Vegetables,  
thawed  
1/2 cup Parmesan Cheese, finely  
shredded

## DIRECTIONS

1. Cube chicken breast meat into small bite sized pieces.
2. Heat olive oil in a skillet on medium heat. Add cubed chicken breast meat, add 1 tsp All-purpose seasoning, and cook in a skillet. When it's done remove it from the skillet. Set aside.
3. In the skillet melt the butter and garlic. Add in the vegetables and sauté until cooked.
4. While the chicken is cooking, cook the pasta according to the package instructions. Drain. Return the pasta back to the pan.
5. Add in the parmesan cheese and 1 tsp all-purpose seasoning. Stir until the cheese is melted.
6. Add the chicken and vegetables to the pasta and stir.
7. Serve immediately.





# MEAL 4

Porcupine Meatballs, Baked Potatoes, and  
Dill Green Beans

Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)





# Porcupine Meatballs

*Ground Beef and Rice baked in a Tomato Sauce*



4 servings



1 hour and  
15 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

1 lb Ground Beef  
1/3 cup Uncooked Instant Rice  
1/2 tsp Garlic Salt  
1 can Condensed Tomato Soup  
1/2 can Water

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Spray or grease your baking pan with non-stick cooking spray.
3. In your baking pan, mix raw ground beef, rice, and garlic salt. Make into 8 meatballs and place in the bottom of your baking pan.
4. Pour tomato soup on top of meatballs. The tomato soup should not be diluted or mixed with anything.
5. Fill your empty tomato soup can halfway with water. Pour over top of your meatballs. Do not mix it.
6. Cover your pan with a lid or foil and bake for 1 hour or until the meatballs are done.

# Baked Potatoes

*With butter and sour cream*



4 servings



1 hour and  
10 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

4 Medium Potatoes

4 tbsp Butter

4 tbsp Sour Cream

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Clean the potatoes.
3. Wrap each potato in aluminum foil and place on the oven rack.
4. Bake for 1 hour or until they are soft when lightly squeezed.
5. Remove aluminum foil and slice in half lengthwise.
6. Top with 1 tbsp butter and 1 tbsp sour cream.
7. Serve immediately.



# Dill Green Beans

*With Butter and Dried Dill*



4 servings



20 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

4 servings of Green Beans

1 Tbsp Butter

1/8 tsp Dried Dill

Salt & Pepper to taste

## DIRECTIONS

1. Cook the green beans using any method you prefer until they are the desired tenderness.
2. The beans should be drained.
3. Add the butter, dill and salt & pepper to taste. Stir.
4. Serve immediately.





# MEAL 5

Oven Roasted Sausage & Potatoes

Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)





# Roasted Sausage & Potatoes

*With Carrots, Spinach, and Bacon*



6 servings



1 hour and  
5 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

3 tbsp Olive Oil  
6 medium Potatoes  
6 medium Carrots, sliced  
1/2 medium Onion, diced  
1/2 cup Peppers, diced  
6 Kielbasa Sausages  
6 strips Bacon, cooked &  
crumbled  
1 handful Fresh Spinach,  
chopped optional

## DIRECTIONS

1. Cook the bacon strips and crumble them. Set aside.
2. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Put the olive oil on a large baking sheet and heat it up in the preheating oven.
3. Slice and dice the potatoes, carrots, onions, and peppers. Put them on the baking sheet and lightly toss in the olive oil. Salt and pepper to taste.
4. Bake the vegetables in the oven for about 25 minutes. Remove from the oven and gently stir. The vegetables will be about half done.
5. While the vegetables are roasting slice the sausage into bite sized pieces. Set aside.
6. Chop or break the spinach into smaller pieces. Set aside.
7. Add the sausage, bacon, and fresh spinach when the potatoes and carrots are about half way done. You can put them on the top of the vegetables and stir them in later. Return them to the oven for about 10 more minutes or until they are warm, and the potatoes and carrots are fork-tender.
8. Remove from the oven. It is ready to serve.





# MEAL 6

Sweet Chili Pork & Rice

Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)



# Sweet Chili Pork & Rice

*With Sweet Chili Sauce and Jasmine Rice*



4 servings



30 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 to 1 1/2 lb Boneless Pork, cubed
- 1/2 cup Sweet Chili Sauce
- 2 tbsp Soy Sauce, low sodium
- 2 tbsp Vegetable Oil
- 1 tsp Garlic, minced
- 4 Servings Jasmine Rice

## NOTES

If you do not have an air fryer, you can use an oven with the same time and temperature or cook this on the stovetop.

## DIRECTIONS

1. In a resealable bag add the vegetable oil, 1/4 cup sweet chili sauce, 1 tbsp soy sauce, and the minced garlic. Mix in the bag.
2. Cut the pork into bite sized cubes and place into the bag of sauce mix. Seal the bag and coat the sauce on all of the pork cubes.
3. You can let the meat marinate for 1-12 hours.
4. Cook 4 servings of jasmine rice according to package instructions. This will take about 25 minutes.
5. Preheat the air fryer for 2-3 minutes at 400 degrees. Add the pork cubes and cook for 5 minutes. Stir. Cook for another 3-5 minutes or until the pork cubes are fully cooked.
6. While the meat is cooking, make the additional sweet chili sauce. In a small microwavable bowl mix together 1/4 cup sweet chili sauce and 1 tbsp soy sauce. Heat for about 1 minute in the microwave.
7. To serve put 1 serving of rice on a plate, top with the pork, and drizzle on the additional sweet chili sauce.





# MEAL 7

Taco Skillet with Tortilla Chips

Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)





# Taco Skillet

*Made with ground beef, rice, and peppers*



4 servings



40 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

1 lb Ground Beef  
3/4 cup Peppers, sliced  
1 tsp Onion Flakes  
1 cup Quick Cooking Rice  
1 cup Water  
1 packet Taco Seasoning  
1 14.5 oz can Fire Roasted Diced Tomatoes  
1 cup Cheddar cheese, shredded  
Sour cream and salsa, optional

## DIRECTIONS

1. Brown the ground beef. Drain.
2. While the meat is browning, slice the peppers small.
3. To the meat, add in the peppers, onion flakes, rice, water, taco seasoning packet, and the fire roasted tomatoes with the liquid.
4. Cover with a lid and simmer on low heat for 15 minutes or until the rice is tender, stirring it occasionally.
5. Sprinkle with the shredded cheese and heat a couple of minutes until the cheese is melted.
6. Serve with sour cream, salsa, and tortilla chips.





# MEAL 8

Crescent Top Chicken Casserole

Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)





# Crescent Top Chicken Casserole

*With Broccoli, Cauliflower, and Carrots*



8 servings



55 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 16 oz pkg California Blend Vegetables, thawed
- 2 cups Chicken, shredded
- 1/2 cup Milk
- 1 can Cream of Potato Soup
- 1/2 cup French Fried Onions
- 1-2 tsp All-Purpose Seasoning
- 1 cup Cheddar Cheese, shredded
- 1 tube Refrigerator Crescent Sheets or Rolls

## DIRECTIONS

1. Grease a 9x13 pan. In the pan combine vegetables, chicken, milk, cream soup, French fried onions, and All-Purpose Seasoning. Mix well.
2. Bake uncovered for 20 minutes in a preheated 350 degree oven.
3. Meanwhile, unroll crescent roll dough. If you are using crescent rolls press the seams together to form a solid sheet. Cut sheet of dough into 6 long strips.
4. Remove the casserole from the oven and weave the strips on top of the warm filling forming a lattice top.
5. Return to the oven and bake for 15 more minutes or until the crescent roll dough is golden.
6. Serve immediately.





# MEAL 9

Meatloaf Burgers, Smashed Potatoes, and  
Cream Corn

Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)





# Meatloaf Burgers

*Ground Beef Topped with a Tangy Tomato Sauce*



4 servings



40 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb Ground beef
- 3/4 cup Old Fashioned Oatmeal
- 1/4 cup diced Onion, optional
- 1 large Egg
- 1/8 tsp Dried Thyme
- Salt & Pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup Ketchup
- 1 tbsp Brown Sugar
- 1 tsp Mustard

## NOTES

These are great on the grill. Just spoon the sauce on the patties right before removing from the grill. They can also be done in the air fryer.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Coat the baking pan with cooking spray.
2. In the mixing bowl by hand mix together the ground beef, oatmeal, onion, egg, thyme, and salt & pepper to taste. Make into 4 burger patties.
3. Bake the meatloaf burgers uncovered for 20-25 minutes or until done. Remove from the oven.
4. While the burgers are cooking, in a small bowl make the sauce by mixing together the ketchup, brown sugar, and the mustard. Using a spoon spread over the top of the baked meatloaf burgers. Return to the oven for about 5 minutes to heat up the sauce.
5. Serve immediately.

# Smashed Potatoes

*Topped with Butter and Garlic Seasoning*



4 servings



35 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp Olive oil
- 4 servings Baby Potatoes
- 1 tsp All-Purpose Seasoning
- 4 tbsp Butter, melted

## NOTES

Use baby potatoes that are about 1 1/2 inch in diameter or cut them into smaller pieces, halves or quarters. They will need some peelings on them to hold them together when smashed.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
2. Put olive oil in baking pan and heat up in the preheating oven.
3. Once the oil is heated up add the potatoes. They should be 1 1/2 diameter or cut into halves or quarters about that size. The pieces need peelings on them to hold the smashed potatoes together.
4. Bake for 15 minutes. Remove from the oven, flip, and bake another 5-10 minutes or until they are fork-tender.
5. Using a spatula, smash each potato to about 1/2-3/4 inch thick. Spoon melted butter over each potato and sprinkle on the All-Purpose Seasoning.
6. Bake for another 5 minutes. Serve immediately.



# Cream Corn

*Sweet Corn with Cream Cheese*



4 servings



15 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

2 cups Sweet Corn  
4 oz Cream Cheese  
Salt & Pepper to taste

## DIRECTIONS

1. Add sweet corn and cream cheese to a saucepan. Over medium heat, cook until the cream cheese is melted. Stir occasionally to prevent scorching.
2. If it seems dry add a little bit of water as it is cooking.
3. Salt & pepper to taste.
4. Serve immediately.



# MEAL 10

Chicken Fried Rice

Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)





# Chicken Fried Rice

*With Carrots and Peas*



4 servings



30 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp Vegetable Oil
- 1/3 cup Onion, chopped
- 3 cups Cooked Rice
- 1 cup Peas & Carrots, frozen
- 2 large Eggs
- 2 cups Chicken, cooked and shredded
- 3 tbsp Low Sodium Soy Sauce
- 1 tbsp Butter

## NOTES

Precooked cold rice will fry up better than freshly made warm rice.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Beat the eggs in a bowl and set aside.
2. Heat oil in a large skillet using medium to high heat. Add the onion and the rice. Cook until the rice is lightly golden and the onions are translucent.
3. Add the peas and carrots and stir well. Once they are hot, push everything to one side of the skillet.
4. In small batches slowly add the eggs and stir with the spatula to scramble them. Keep adding the eggs slowly and scrambling them until all of the eggs have been scrambled.
5. Add the chicken to the skillet. Stir until mixed and the chicken is heated up.
6. Add the soy sauce and butter. Add salt and pepper to taste.
7. Serve immediately.





# SWEET DELIGHTS

Cinnamon Coffee Cake

Fruit Salsa with Cinnamon Tortilla Chips

Peanut Butter Rice Krispie Bars | Strawberry Cheesecake Fluff

**Blog by [JoyfulLittleThings.com](http://JoyfulLittleThings.com)**





# Cinnamon Coffee Cake

*With Cinnamon Swirled in*



15 servings



55 minutes

## DIRECTIONS

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 Box Yellow Cake Mix
- 1 small box Instant Vanilla Pudding, dry
- 4 large Eggs
- 1 tsp Butter Extract
- 1 tsp Vanilla Extract
- 3/4 cup Vegetable Oil
- 3/4 cup Water
- 1/4 cup Sugar
- 2 tsp Cinnamon

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a mixing bowl add cake mix, dry pudding, water, and oil.
3. Add eggs one at a time mixing very well. Batter should be smooth and shiny before adding the next egg. Repeat until all eggs have been added.
4. Add the extracts and beat for 3-4 more minutes.
5. Grease a 9x13 inch baking pan. Pour the batter into the baking pan.
6. In a small bowl mix together the sugar and the cinnamon, and sprinkle on the top of the cake batter.
7. Run a knife through the cake batter and the cinnamon and sugar. Swirling them together.
8. Bake for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.
9. Cool slightly before serving.

# Fruit Salsa

*With Cinnamon Tortilla Chips or Graham Crackers*



10 servings



30 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 Kiwi
- 2 Golden Delicious Apples
- 1 lb Strawberries
- 2 tbsp Granulated Sugar
- 1 tbsp Brown Sugar
- 3 tbsp Fruit Preserves,  
any flavor

## NOTES

I used a food chopper to cut the fruits.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Peel and very finely chop Kiwi.
2. Core and very finely chop apples. Do not peel them.
3. Remove stems from strawberries and very finely chopping them.
4. Add in the sugars and the preserves and stir them well.
5. It is ready to serve immediately with Cinnamon chips, graham crackers, cinnamon sugar pretzel sticks, or any sweet type of cracker or chip.



# Cinnamon Tortilla Chips

*With Cinnamon and Sugar*



10 servings



1 hour

20 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

1 10-ct pkg Flour Tortilla Shells

2 tsp Cinnamon

1/4 cup Granulated Sugar

1/4 cup Melted Butter or  
Cooking Spray

## NOTES

In the picture the left side was made using cooking spray and the right side was made with melted butter.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
2. Coat one side of a flour tortilla with melted butter or spray with cooking spray. It helps the cinnamon and sugar to stick to the tortilla.
3. Sprinkle on the cinnamon and sugar.
4. Using a pizza cutter, scissor, or knife cut into chips. Place on the baking sheet.
5. Bake for 8-10 minutes until the chips are crisp.
6. Serve when cooled to room temperature.

# Peanut Butter Krispie Bars

*With Chocolate Topping*



18 servings



30 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

1 cup Corn Syrup  
1 cup Granulated Sugar  
1 cup Peanut Butter  
6 cups Rice Krispie Cereal  
1 pkg Milk Chocolate Chips  
1 tbsp Peanut Butter

## DIRECTIONS

1. In a large pan over low heat stir in the corn syrup, sugar, and 1 cup peanut butter until it comes to a boil. Stirring it constantly.
2. Remove from heat and mix in the cereal. Spread evenly into a greased 9x13 pan pressing the mixture down.
3. Melt chocolate chips and remaining 1 tbsp peanut butter in a microwaveable bowl in 30 second increments, stirring between each one. Repeat until the chocolate chips are melted and smooth.
4. Spread over the bars.
5. Let set or chill to set. Cut when cooled.



# Strawberry Cheesecake Fluff

*With Strawberries, Cream Cheese, and Whipped Topping*



4 servings



30 minutes

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 3-oz pkg Strawberry Gelatin
- 3 Cups Strawberries, fresh  
diced or frozen
- 1 16-oz tub whipped Topping,  
thawed
- 4 oz Cream Cheese

## DIRECTIONS

1. If using fresh strawberries slice and set them aside. If using frozen strawberries, they need to be thawed and drained. Set aside.
2. Beat the softened cream cheese with the mixer until smooth. Add in the thawed whipped topping and dry package of gelatin. Mix together.
3. Fold in the strawberries. Chill.
4. It is ready to eat immediately.

# FINAL THOUGHTS



This brings you to the close of another week. I sincerely hope it was a good one and that you had some extra quality time to spend with family or friends.

I hope these recipes will be regular ones in your household and the tips have been helpful and easy to practice in your everyday life.

Please check back for volume 2 of 10 Weeknight Meals. Volume 2 is in the planning stages. Hopefully you can use volume 1 and 2 for a variety in your dinner meals. If you have a recommendation or suggestions, please share them with me. I enjoy hearing what others need, and I can take your thoughts into consideration.

A rating on this book would be very helpful as well. Thank you for purchasing it. I appreciate your support.

Sincerely,  
Decann Bylsma