



# MEAL PLANNING *for Parties*

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# A Look Ahead

- Why meal plan?
- First steps
- Think through your courses
- Tips for better planning
- Ways to keep your Holiday meals nutritious
- Making healthy choices when you aren't hosting







# Why Meal Plan for Your Holiday Party?

- You'll reduce last-minute stress during the Holiday season
- You'll save money if you're willing to shop around for sales
- It can help you and your guests maintain healthy habits through the Holidays





# First Steps in Planning Your Holiday Meals

- It's easy to get carried away, so start simple!
- Establish how many guests you'll be feeding, and the amount of food you'll need
- Consider your guests' food preferences and any dietary restrictions while you plan



# Think Through Your Courses

- Decide what you'll serve for each course: appetizers, main entrees, sides, and desserts
- You can ask guests to bring a specific dish, or let them bring a dish of their choice
- You don't have to serve something just because it's "traditional"







# Tips for Better Meal Planning

- Use your calendar
- Consider all meals you're planning for
- Make a shopping list
- Keep things simple
- Make dishes a day or two ahead of time
- Ask for help from loved ones when you need it





# Other Things to Consider

- Invite your guests in advance
- Check with your guests a week before if they haven't RSVP'd
- Ensure you have everything you need to serve your meal
- Set the table and decorate at least a day in advance





# Ways to Keep Your Holiday Meals Nutritious



**Serve fruits and veggies as appetizers**



**Look for opportunities to incorporate additional veggies in your menu**



**Include lots of herbs and spices for extra flavor**



**Reduce sodium when you can**



**Include whole grains**



**Add fruit to dessert**





# Making Healthy Choices When You Aren't Hosting

- Eat mindfully
- Don't skip meals
- Check out the buffet before you load up your plate
- Fill up on fiber-rich foods, fruits and veggies, and lean proteins
- Watch your portion sizes
- Don't deprive yourself of the treats you love





# Resources

- <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/library/features/holidays-healthy-eating.html>
- <https://foodrevolution.org/blog/healthy-and-happy-holiday-gatherings/>
- <https://www.issaonline.com/blog/post/the-importance-of-meal-planning-for-holidays-how-to-do-it>