

# Meal Prepping for Real Life

*Save Time. Eat Better. Stress Less.*

## **Prep-as-You-Go Freezer Staples**

Instead of bulk prepping everything at once, use this method: every time you buy a fresh item, prep what you won't use right away and freeze the rest.

- **Carrots** – Peel and slice or dice; freeze flat in bags. Great for soups or roasts.
- **Celery** – Wash, chop, and freeze in bags. Add directly to recipes.
- **Onions** – Chop in bulk using a food processor and freeze in ½ cup portions.
- **Fresh Spinach** – Rinse, dry, and freeze in handfuls for smoothies or sautés.
- **Bell Peppers** – Dice and freeze for omelets, stir-fries, and casseroles.
- **Zucchini or Summer Squash** – Grate and freeze flat for muffins or soups.

Tip: Lay bags flat in the freezer for faster freezing and easier stacking.

## **Fridge & Freezer Smart Staples**

- **Block Cheese** – Grate and store in glass jars. Avoid anti-caking agents in pre-shredded cheese.
- **Cream** – Pour into freezer-safe bags (mark portions). Defrost overnight in fridge.
- **Romaine Lettuce** – Wash, dry in spinner, chop, and jar. Stays crisp 2–3 weeks.
- **Homemade Salad Dressings** – Mix oil/vinegar or creamy base dressings, store in jars. Freeze extras in small bags for thaw-and-use convenience.

## **Protein Planning that Pays Off**

- **Buy Beef in Bulk** – Share a quarter, half, or whole cow with others. Get cuts you actually want, skip mystery meat.
- **Avoid Wrapped Meats at the Store** – Pre-cut, pre-packaged meats often have added solutions and bacteria risk. If fresh isn't available, buy **vacuum-sealed frozen** cuts.
- **Cook Once, Eat Twice** – Make a batch of ground beef, shredded chicken, or meatballs, freeze in meal-size portions.

## **More Time-Saving Staples to Freeze**

- **Cooked Rice or Quinoa** – Freeze in 1-cup portions. Add straight to stir-fries or soups.
- **Homemade Broth or Soup Bases** – Freeze in ice cube trays or 1–2 cup bags.
- **Herbs in Oil** – Chop herbs like basil, parsley, or rosemary and freeze with olive oil in silicone ice cube trays.
- **Mashed Potatoes** – Freeze leftover mashed potatoes in scoops for fast sides.
- **Tomato Paste** – Spoon into small blobs on parchment, freeze, and bag them.
- **Egg Muffins or Frittatas** – Pre-bake in muffin tins, freeze, reheat individually.

### **Add-Ons for Long-Term Wins**

- **Label + Date Everything** – Use freezer-safe labels or masking tape with a Sharpie.
- **Make "Use This First" Baskets** – Put older freezer items in a designated spot to reduce waste.
- **Keep a Freezer Inventory List** – Magnet board, dry-erase, or digital note—know what's in there without digging.