



# Tips & Tricks

DRAFT THREE OF MEAL PLAN DETAILS

# Contents

My Family Ways .....	4
Grocery lists .....	4
Autumn Meal Plan Menu .....	5
Weekly Shopping Lists .....	5
Week 1 .....	6
Week 2 .....	7
Week 3 .....	8
Week 4 .....	9
Ginger .....	9
Mirepoix .....	10
Food Service Gloves .....	10
Stock .....	11
Pasta Sauces I buy .....	11
Muesli & Yoghurt .....	11
Tom McHugos .....	12
Coles Easy Meals .....	12
Veggie Snacks (Noted on some dinners) .....	12
Coffee Rub .....	13
Potatoes .....	13
Chicken Skewers / Lamb Cutlets .....	13
Quinoa and Spinach .....	13
Tomato on Toast .....	13
Snack Box .....	14
School Lunches .....	14
Recipes / Meals .....	15
Chicken Legs .....	15
Overnight Oats .....	15
Nigella's Turkish Eggs .....	16
Meals from Freezer .....	17
Lemongrass Chicken & Left Over Pho .....	18
Pho .....	18
Mushroom Risotto .....	18
Steak / Lemon Steak (Tagliata Steak) .....	19
One Pot Wonder Paprika Chicken .....	20
Nigella Chicken and Pea Tray Bake .....	21
Chicken on BBQ .....	21
Simple Lemon Muffins .....	22
Mediterranean Vegetable Bake .....	23
Mediterranean Vegetable Bake – Salad .....	23
Tuna Pasta .....	24
Tuna, Artichoke and Lemon Pasta (family size) .....	25
Our Muesli Bars .....	26

Salmon Meal.....	26
Salmon on the BBQ.....	26
One Tray Salmon Bake .....	27
Breakfast Bruschetta .....	28
Apricot Chicken .....	28
Breakfast - Poached Eggs for Wednesday .....	29
Apple Crumble Topping .....	29
Northern Italian Cacciatore.....	30
Most Simple Chocolate Cake Ever .....	30
No Time to Bake School Birthday Cake Hack.....	31
Picnic Lunches.....	32
DIY Meal Plan .....	33

## My Family Ways

Before you read on, please know that I put this whole thing together so quickly! I work full time in a large company and spent my weekend putting together my meal plans with the recipes in my head. When my friends begged me for the plan I had to throw this together. It is a work in progress and I plan on having a much slicker guide for next quarter.

Secondly, I know it isn't all environmentally friendly. I do reuse what plastics I can and you could use glass containers or what suits your moral compass.

Also, these meals suit us as a family. We aren't carb heavy in our meals and we have a lot of fresh fruit and vegetables. There is nothing stopping you swapping out some of this for frozen veggies, or pastas or rice.

I enjoy cooking when I have time. One of my favourite things to do is to drink coffee and flip through my cookbooks for inspiration. I do this most Saturday mornings and then head to the markets or the shops for ingredients to cook over a few glasses of wine in the afternoon and then throw 10+ people impromptu dinner parties. This is when I make the really delicious meals and cook for fun. The weekend is time is also time I make lots of items ahead. This might not be your idea of fun so just plan out the weekends too in your plan.

I also buy anything on the weekend during this shop for what I will need on Monday and most of the fruit we will have for the week. Online shopping for fruit isn't always the best as you don't get to see what is looking its best. As I do groceries online on a Sunday night for collection on Monday night. You may prefer to do your order for pick up Sunday night to prepare for the week. I like Sunday nights to be simple nights. Often opting for a large lunch on Sunday and then just toast for dinner and a movie to relax.

## Grocery lists

(AKA reverse shopping list)

A reverse shopping list is everything you ever buy or need. Basically, you don't need to ever write a shopping list again! You have already done this once and then you just shop from that list. It is great as it reminds you to check on items which you may not have realised are about to run out.

Now this by no way means you MUST shop online. You could make this list up anyway. Word or excel would even work, and then just use it to hand write your weekly list. I miss Aldi a lot but we have had to learn to adapt now without it and I have become reliant on Coles and Woolworths. We have been shopping more with Coles as the meat down here they offer is local and brilliant.

You could go through your pantry and add every item to an online list. The apps have barcode scanners. I know this is a long process so just start with the items on the meal plan and your cleaning products, toilet paper etc and at least you have a start. The online stores also save all of your items in a "bought before" list to help you out.

Now, its going to take some time to do, but you will notice that the weeks are either week 1, 2, 3 or 4.

I have four lists saved on coles labelled (you guessed it) Week 1, Week 2, Week 3, Week 4. And then I can click on them and add it to my basket to review. I then have another two lists set up. Party Products and Weekly Basics.

We have a lot of parties so its easy not to have to think about what I need to buy regarding soft drinks, crackers, sauces etc. as I have this saved in my 'event list'

Weekly basics has all of the cleaning products, toiletries, milk, eggs. It is much less stress to delete the items you don't need than running out of soap. And you only have to do the list once!

## Autumn Meal Plan Menu

My Autumn meal plan menu will have a heap of other recipes including:

Best Meat Loaf

Beef Ragu

Slow Roast Lamb

Beef Macaroni

Lamb Creole

Simple Tomato, Chicken and Coconut Curry

Paella

Fried Rice

## Weekly Shopping Lists

If you are interested in my weekly shopping lists for the meal plan, send me an email to [digella@gmail.com](mailto:digella@gmail.com) and once I have finished them for all my friends I will try and send them through.

At the moment they are saved in lists on my Coles account all ready for me to go so I need to write them out again.

Otherwise, just start making your own lists online now with the meal plan and the recipes, you are going to have to put it all in to an online app anyway so you can start now.

I have done the weekly plans so that if you follow them from week one onwards you should have the herbs and everything you need also.

All your weekly shopping requirements + this for meals planned. If you aren't going to weekend shop for the veggie bake ingredients, you need to add this too. I have done this super rough for this first round. As it was just for me originally! Sorry if there are some things missing. I will make up for it in term 2

## Week 1

Add your fruit if you aren't shopping on the weekend.

### Dairy / Cold

1 x kg plain Yopro yoghurt  
15 x Yopro small yoghurts  
Meredith Dairy Goats cheese (or cheaper option)  
1 x 500mils apple juice  
1 x Tamar Valley (or good qual Greek yoghurt)  
Cheddar cheese for snack boxes  
Ham for snack box

### Meat

1 kg Chicken breasts or 1kg chicken thighs  
1 x kg chicken thighs  
Coles Made Easy meal  
Pre buy your chicken skewers, cutlets, nuggets - whatever its going to be for your kids meals. Portion them up into serving sizes

### Dry Goods

1 x loaf bread  
Carmens oats  
1 x carmens muesli box  
Moist coconut flakes  
French onion soup mix

Sirena Tuna large tin  
1 x pack bow pasta  
1 x rice crackers / crackers of choice for snack box  
1 x four bean mix for salad  
Balsamic vinegar  
Dried thyme  
Smoked paprika  
Worcestershire Sauce  
1 x eggs  
Tri Quinoa

### Fruit and Veg

3 x tomatoes tubs  
1 x lettuce  
400g mushrooms  
5 x cucumber  
4 x red capsicum  
2 x red onions  
2 x bags spinach  
1 x baby carrot bag  
4 x round tomatoes  
Avocado  
1 x bag spud lite potato

## Week 2

Add your fruit if you aren't shopping on the weekend.

### Dairy

1 x kg plain Yopro yoghurt  
15 x Yopro small yoghurts  
1 x 500mils apple juice  
1 x Tamar Valley (or good qual Greek yoghurt)  
Ham for snack box

### Meat

1 kg Chicken drumsticks (or more - totally scalable)  
1 x large rump steak

### Dry Goods

1 x loaf bread  
1 x rice crackers / crackers of choice for snack box  
1 x four bean mix for salad  
1 x eggs

1 x bag spaghetti  
Rice of your choice  
Soy sauce

### Fruit and Veg

4 x tomatoes tubs  
Garlic  
Ginger (if you haven't already bought and frozen it)  
2 x bok choy / Asian green style things  
200g snap peas for chicken drumstick meal  
1 x lettuce  
200g mushrooms  
5 x cucumber  
2 x red capsicum  
2 x red onions  
2 x bags spinach  
1 x baby carrot bag

## Week 3

Add your fruit if you aren't shopping on the weekend.

### Dairy

1 x kg plain Yopro yoghurt  
15 x Yopro small yoghurts  
Meredith Dairy Goats cheese (or cheaper option)  
1 x 500mils apple juice  
1 x Tamar Valley (or good qual Greek yoghurt)  
Cheddar cheese for snack boxes  
Ham for snack box

### Meat

1 x Coles Made Easy Meal  
2kg chicken thighs  
2 x salmon fillets (or 1 each per person) + enough for ½ portion next day

### Dry Goods

1 x loaf bread  
1 x rice crackers / crackers of choice for snack box  
1 x four bean mix for salad  
1 x eggs  
French onion soup mix

1 x arborio rice  
Soy sauce  
Oyster sauce  
Pack of Vermicelli noodles  
Moist coconut flakes

### Fruit and Veg

4 x tomatoes tubs  
Avocado  
Garlic  
Ginger  
Lemongrass (can buy the tube stuff)  
1 x lettuce  
500g mushrooms  
2 x bok choy / Asian Green style things  
200g snap peas  
5 x cucumber  
2 x red capsicum  
1 x bag spud lite potatoes  
2 x red onions  
2 x bags spinach  
1 x baby carrot bag  
2 x brown onions



## Week 4

Add your fruit if you aren't shopping on the weekend.

### Dairy

1 x kg plain Yopro yoghurt  
15 x Yopro small yoghurts  
1 x 500mils apple juice  
1 x Tamar Valley (or good qual Greek yoghurt)  
Ham for snack box

### Meat

1 kg Chicken drumsticks (or more - totally scalable)  
2 x rib fillet steaks (make coffee rub ahead)

### Dry Goods

1 x loaf bread  
1 x rice crackers / crackers of choice for snack box  
1 x four bean mix for salad  
1 x eggs

1 x bag spaghetti  
Rice of your choice

### Fruit and Veg

4 x tomatoes tubs  
Garlic  
2 x bok choy / Asian green style things  
200g snap peas for chicken drumstick meal  
1 x lettuce  
200g mushrooms  
5 x cucumber  
2 x red capsicum  
2 x red onions  
2 x bags spinach  
1 x baby carrot bag  
4 x round tomatoes (if having tomato on toast)

## Ginger

I have ginger in knob sizes in zip lock bags in my freezer all the time. You can just take them out and leave them for about 5 mins and grate or chop them. Perfect!

## Mirepoix

I cook up big batches of mirepoix (onion, carrot, celery, garlic) and put into small plastic containers. Pictured are the smallest sized ones. This makes a great base to lots of meals. Risotto, quick pasta sauce, a soup. Then just pull them out of freezer and pop one out like an ice cube into a pot to start a quick dinner.



Cook & Dine Food Co  
**\$2.00**

4 pack | \$0.50 per 1Ea

Add 1 for **\$2.00**



1 x bag brown onions

1 x bag carrots

1 x head of celery

1 x head garlic.

Dice everything and add about  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of oil and gently cook on stove top for at least an hour stirring well periodically. Add more oil if required.

## Food Service Gloves

These speed everything up. Tossing chicken, cutting meat, etc etc



Ansell Handy Clean Disposable Latex Gloves

**\$4.00**

24 pack | \$0.17 per 1Ea

## Stock

This is the best stock back up of all time. Gives you the ability to just make a ½ a cup of stock as it's a dry powder.

You can even make a quick cup of soup with it and throw in some BBQ chicken, chilli and spring onions! Its simple if I haven't had time to make thermomix stock.



### Vegeta Gluten Free Real Gourmet Stock Powder Canned **\$3.70**

250g | \$1.48 per 100G

## Pasta Sauces I buy

These pasta sauces are the best value on the market at the moment. I don't have Aldi down here in Tasmania!



## Muesli & Yoghurt

Yopro tubs with protein (the small ones) or just plain Yopro and Carmen's toasted muesli on top. Can mix in fruit if you want.



## Tom McHugos

This is our local privately own pub where we are currently living (Hobart)

They do steak and chips or chicken parmy and chips for less than \$15.

It is our cheap night out and we look forward to it.

Replace this with a simple option for your family.

Even a good fish and chip shop close by to you, some of them even do BYO.

You don't have a spend a lot to have a family night out.

## Coles Easy Meals

These have become a game changer for me. I know its cheating but they are good. Buy them in the butcher section and then add some salad.

<https://shop.coles.com.au/a/a-tas-metro-eastlands/everything/search/Coles%20Made%20Easy?pageNumber=1>

## Veggie Snacks (Noted on some dinners)

You will notice 'veggie snack' written for L (my son Louie). This means any vegetable your child enjoys. Let's be real. We don't love every single food so we can not expect our kids to love every single food. If you can get your child to enjoy and agree to eat two or three vegetables raw then serve them up some chopped pieces of these veggies while you prep dinner for the adults and their meal which you have pulled out of the freezer.

Why does it seem like I am preparing two separate meals on these particular nights?

These are the nights that we make it super easy on ourselves. We have our Coles Made Easy Meal with a salad and our son has some simple veggie snacks with a meal I have prepared which I can pull out of the freezer, or an Annabel Karmel meal. Annabel Karmel is the author of books on nutrition and cookings for babies, children and families and wrote the book Baby Led Weeing, which is what I have always followed as a parent of four children. Basically, feed them what you're eating, at the table with you. Get kids involved with food where you can. But lets take it easy on ourselves as a plate of veggie snacks and a frozen meal is still a great meal for a hungry kid!



### Annabel Karmel Frozen Mild Butter Chicken & Rice 1to4 Years

**\$3.00** save \$1.00

200g | \$1.50 per 100G

Add 1 for \$3.00



## Coffee Rub

Make up a few batches at a time. I use / scale with one jar each of masterfoods

- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons ground coffee (medium grind)
- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 2 tablespoons onion powder (or dried onion flakes)
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2 tablespoons cayenne (Optional) Reduce the amount for a less spicy rub

Combine all together in a bowl or thermomix.

Store in sealed container in pantry.

Pat a generous amount onto steak before bbq cooking.

Or buy here

<https://gewurzhaus.com.au/product/melbourne-coffee-meat-rub/>

## Potatoes

These are our mid week staple potatoes. They are great wrapped in alfoil, great roasted, great mashed. They are the perfect all rounder and have 25% less carb. There is something about the less carb which makes them so good as a jacket potato. When you cook them it is like the insides have already been mashed. Amazing!



### Coles Spudlite Potatoes Prepacked

**\$5.00**

1.5kg | \$3.33 per 1Kg



## Chicken Skewers / Lamb Cutlets.

I buy these from local butcher in large batches and freeze in single serves for Louie. But lets be kind on ourselves. These could also be chicken nuggets from the freezer section. Whatever you want. Just something you can grab out for the kids and get on quickly.

## Quinoa and Spinach

Cook quinoa to instructions on pack. Once cooked and still hot, throw it over a bag of washed spinach. Wait for it to wilt and then you have a simple and easy side to lots of things. Also a good base for a salad the next day.

## Tomato on Toast

Why limit toast to breakfast only!

Good quality sourdough, nice tomatoes, goats cheese, sprinkled with some olive oil and basil is delicious.

I always keep some Burgen bread in the freezer too as back up.

## Snack Box

I first discovered these while doing weight watchers. We have become big fans.

Follow [feedmehealthy\\_annavandyken](#) on Instagram to get ideas.

We mix it up with whatever is going. Shopping for the fruit components on the weekend from our local green grocer so we know it is fresh and ripe.

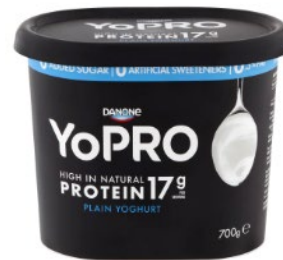
But generally - ¼ protein, ¼ fruit, ¼ Carb, ¼ veg and then some cheese.

I sometimes make hommus in the thermomix.

An easy and light dip is 1 tablespoon of French onion soup mixed, stirred through a

cup of YoPro. Tried and tested with work friends too and it has the tick of approval.

I make these either during the dinner prep and cooking time or right after dinner. I can not stand a morning rush



## School Lunches

I shop for fruit on the weekend so I can see what is looking at it's best. Whatever it says on the lunches on the chart plus:

- Munch and crunch (fruit and veg chopped)
- Yopro Yoghurt
- Frozen baked item (banana bread, lemon muffin, breakfast bars which I have made in advance.)

# Recipes / Meals

## Chicken Legs

8 drumsticks

2-3 garlic cloves

¼ cup soy sauce

2-3 tablespoons honey

Chilli

Ginger

Throw all sauce ingredients into a bowl.

Pour over chicken in a baking tray and mix to combine.

(You can marinate overnight in the baking tray and just pull it out and straight into the oven if you like)

You can bake on baking paper to assist clean up.

Bake 200 degrees c 45mins

## Overnight Oats

I use all different ideas.

We buy this:



### Carman's Natural Bircher Muesli

**\$8.00**

875g | \$0.91 per 100G

 Add to list

Add 1 for **\$8.00**



Made in Australia from at least 69% Australian ingredients

For over 25 years now, we've believed in the same simple philosophy. Re

The instructions say:

Mix 500g muesli

1kg tub of natural yoghurt

1 Granny Smith apple

Some honey to taste.

Store it in your fridge in a sealed container and it will keep as long as the date of the yoghurt!

Improves with time

Other recipes contain:

Oats

Grated apple (sometimes carrot)

Some seed mix

1 x cup apple juice

1 x cup yopro yoghurt

Cinnamon

There are so many recipes so I mix it up.

## Nigella's Turkish Eggs

<https://www.nigella.com/recipes/turkish-eggs>

200 grams greek yoghurt

1 clove garlic (peeled and minced)

1 teaspoon sea salt flakes

2 x 15ml tablespoons unsalted butter

1 x 15ml tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

1 teaspoon Aleppo pepper / Turkish red pepper flakes

2 large eggs (fridge-cold)

2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

a few fronds fresh dill (chopped)

1. Fill a wide-ish saucepan (I use one of 22cm diameter) with water to come about 4cm up the sides of the pan. Put it on the heat and cover so that it heats up faster. Line a large plate with some kitchen roll, get out a slotted spoon, and put both near the pan now.
2. Now fill another pan – on which a heatproof bowl can sit comfortably – again with water to come 3–4cm up the sides, and bring to the boil. Put the yogurt in said bowl, stir in the garlic and salt, and sit it on top of this pan, making sure the base of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Stir it until it gets to body temperature and has the consistency of lightly whipped double cream. Turn off the heat and leave the bowl as it is, over the pan.
3. Melt the butter gently in a small pan until it is just beginning to turn a hazelnutty brown (this is why, in classic French cuisine, it's known as *beurre noisette*), but make sure it's not actually burning. Turn the heat off under the pan, then stir in the olive oil, followed by the beautiful red pepper flakes; it will foam up fiercely. Leave to one side while you get on with the eggs. And this is when you should be thinking of putting the toast on.
4. When you are ready to poach the eggs, crack the first egg into a fine mesh strainer suspended over a small bowl, then lift it up a little and swirl gently for about 30 seconds, letting the watery part of the white drip into the bowl. Gently tip the egg into a small cup or ramekin and, aiming for the white, add 1 teaspoon of lemon juice; I know everyone else says vinegar, but I just don't like the taste of it on the egg, and the lemon does the trick just the same. Proceed as above with the second egg.
5. When the poaching water is just starting to simmer, take a cup or ramekin in each hand and gently slide in the eggs, one on each side of the pan. Turn the heat right down so there is no movement in the water whatsoever, and poach the eggs for 3–4 minutes until the whites are set and the yolks still runny. Transfer the eggs with your slotted spoon to the paper-lined plate to remove any excess water. Do remember to switch off the heat. Sorry to state the obvious, but I have too often left it on this low without noticing.

Divide the warm creamy yogurt between two shallow bowls, top each with a poached egg, pour the peppery butter around and slightly over the yogurt, scatter the chopped dill on top, and eat dreamily, dipping in some thick well-toasted bread as you do so.



## Meals from Freezer

(AKA Takeaway meals from home)

\*F marked in the meal plan. Where you see \*F that means you can 'shop from your freezer' The tip is to make the meals really nice so it doesn't feel like slop when you have it.

I batch make lots of things. I make them on the weekend to have for dinner on one night, then freeze them in takeaway style containers large enough for a full meal for all of us, label and date and pop into the freezer. These stack really well and you will be surprised how many you can fit in the freezer. I would much prefer to have a meal I can take out than meat which I then need to do something with.

Currently (as at end of Jan) I have 16 meals ready in the freezer for the whole family, please 6 portions of pea and ham soup and spaghetti meat sauce for Louie. The meals I make on the weekends which freeze well are:

- Pea and Ham Soup
- Slow cooked meat sauce for pasta
- Beef and beer casserole (Nigella Kitchen) <https://www.nigella.com/recipes/carbonnade-a-la-flamande>
- Julia's Apricot Chicken (don't knock it until you have tried it)
- Lamb creole
- Beef Burgundy

## Lemongrass Chicken & Left Over Pho

This gem is so versatile. We make it and have it the first night with Asian greens. You can have it with rice too. And then put served in the small takeaway containers and into the freezer. This is the perfect base for Pho!

### Recipe

2kg chicken thighs

2 onions

3 garlic cloves

### Ginger

Lemongrass stalk trimmed and bruised

½ cup chicken stock

¼ cup soy sauce

2 tbs oyster sauce

Chilli to your liking

200g snap peas

### Oven

In a large heavy pot you can put in the oven, brown off chicken.

Throw everything else in excluding snap peas

Cook for around 2 hours in oven 140degrees

### Slow Cooker

Brown off chicken.

Throw everything else in excluding snap peas

Cook low for around 4 hours

Throw snap peas in around 15 mins before finished.

## Pho

Use frozen portion of above.

Buy this



Some noodles

Heap of fresh veg you like. (look online for ideas for Pho)

Throw the stock and chicken into a pot and bring to boil then simmer for 5 mins. Throw in some grated ginger if you like.

Cook the noodles.

Spoon soup over noodles into bowls.

Everyone helps themselves to the veg

## Mushroom Risotto

For those with thermomixes you will be very familiar with this. I throw extra bits in this, like spinach and asparagus. Louie loves it so it stays on rotation.

If you don't have a thermomix and / or you don't like risotto. Just swap this out for spaghetti pasta or tuna pasta. .

## Steak / Lemon Steak (Tagliata Steak)

Another trusty Nigella Recipe. It is great because you can use rather inexpensive cut of meat and it is super tasty. Very Italian way of cooking steak. You can scale it simply for the amount of people you have. Even great for parties.



### Ingredients

2 x 15ml tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus some for oiling

1/2 teaspoon dried chilli flakes

1 teaspoon dried thyme

Just under a teaspoon sea salt flakes or 1/2 teaspoon pouring salt, or to taste

1 lemon juiced

1 sirloin or rump steak (approx. 300g for two)

250g cherry tomatoes, halved

Few sprigs of fresh oregano, to serve (optional)

- Heat BBQ, or cast iron or heavy based non stick frying pan over high heat until hot.

Oil the steaks lightly on both sides, season with a little salt and pepper, to taste, remember the dressing has salt, so don't over salt.

- In a small dish that can just fit the steak later, combine the extra virgin olive , chilli flakes, dried thyme, salt and lemon. Give it a little stir to combine.
- Place the steaks in a dish where they fit snugly.
- Cook for 2 minutes on each side (cook longer if you don't like it rare, as 2 minutes gives you a rare steak as pictured). Once cooked to your liking place the steaks immediately into your chilli marinade and sit the cooked steak in the marinade for 2 minutes on each side.

Remove the steeped steak to a chopping board.

- Place the tomatoes cut side down into the warm chilli marinade, leave them there while you slice up your steak.
- Cut the steak into thin slices on the diagonal and arrange on a serving dish or 2 dinner plates.

## One Pot Wonder Paprika Chicken



I love a 1:1:1:1 meal. One chopping board, one knife, one tray, one hour and maybe include one (other) person to clean it all up and you have yourself a perfect midweek dinner.

I first made something g like this in Italy in 2013. I had a bunch of ingredients and threw it all together and a delicious meal came out. Since then I have change it around many times to include what I have on hand. The following version is great because most of the ingredients are available year round.

### Oven Roasted Paprika Chicken

1 kg (or 6-8) chicken thighs  
4 x ripe tomatoes cut into eighths  
2 x red onions cut into wedges  
1-2 red capsicum cut into wedges  
200 g button mushrooms quartered  
8 x kipfer potatoes peeled and cut into 3cm chunks or SpudLite Potatoes  
4 x garlic cloves squashed/pressed  
thyme sprigs or a shake of dry thyme  
2 x tablespoons balsamic vinegar  
3 x tablespoons oil  
2 x teaspoons of smoked paprika  
1 x bag of spinach thrown in at the end (optional)

### Method

Heat oven to 190 degrees c

Prep all the ingredients and throw them together into a large oven tray or dish. I use a scanpan. Then pop into the oven.

After 30 minutes check the amount of liquid swilling around. All those juicy tomatoes can make a bit of sauce. If you think its a bit much, drain some off, pop it into the fridge for a nice cup of soup lunch with a crusty bread the next day or as the base stock for a soup pop in freezer.

Into the oven for another 30 minutes or until things are browning up and caramelised

Out of the oven and straight to the table. (throw in bag of spinach now if you're using, it will wilt in the pan)

Serve with rice and or a green salad and or crusty bread.

## Nigella Chicken and Pea Tray Bake

This is a fantastic weekend meal.



900 grams frozen peas

400 grams trimmed leeks (cut into approx. 3cm/ 1 inch slices) – You can use french shallots

2 fat cloves garlic (peeled and minced)

4 x 15ml tablespoons dry white vermouth or wine

2 x 15ml tablespoons regular olive oil (plus more for drizzling)

2 teaspoons sea salt flakes (plus more for sprinkling)

1 small bunch fresh dill (torn into pieces)

8 chicken thighs with skin on and bone in

- Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C Fan/400°F and clatter the frozen peas into a large roasting tin, followed by the leeks, garlic, vermouth, 2 tablespoons of oil, 2 teaspoons of sea salt flakes and most of the dill. Turn everything together in the pan – breaking up any large clumps of the frozen peas – until well mixed.
- Arrange the chicken thighs, skin-side up, on top, then drizzle them with a little olive oil and give them a good sprinkling of sea salt flakes, before roasting in the oven for 45 minutes. Remove from the oven, give the peas a small stir or tamp down, so that the few that are sitting on the surface and drying out a little are submerged in the liquid. Don't do the same to the leeks, however, as the bits that are peeking out will become desirably caramelised in the heat. Put back in the oven for a further 30 minutes, by which time the peas and leeks will be soft, and the chicken tender and cooked through, its skin golden and crisp.
- Tear off the remaining dill fronds, and scatter over the top on serving, perhaps with some simply steamed new potatoes to soak up the pea and chicken juices.

## Chicken on BBQ

You can use breast or thighs.

We use breast and BBQ them until they are still pink inside, then slice up and throw back on for a couple of minutes, throw into a bowl and sprinkle with Worcestershire sauce.

For thighs I rub with a little oil and then sprinkle with dry rub of choice (I use one from [herbies https://www.herbies.com.au/shop/herbs-and-spices/spice-herb-blends/chicken-bbq-roast-rub-40g/](https://www.herbies.com.au/shop/herbs-and-spices/spice-herb-blends/chicken-bbq-roast-rub-40g/)) and then cook really well on BBQ. This is the most simple option as you can cook them for a long time and they are juicy and tasty.

Buy and cook double what you need as I use this for lunches in coming days in the snack packs.

## Simple Lemon Muffins

2 cups self raising flour  
3/4 cup sugar  
4 tablespoons butter  
1 cup milk  
1 egg whisked  
Grated rind of one lemon.

### **Topping**

1/4 cup lemon juice  
1/4 cup raw sugar

### **Method**

- Melt butter, add milk, egg and lemon rind and beat well with a fork.
- Add liquids to dry mix and combine lightly.
- Divide into patty papers in tin (12)
- Bake 200 degrees C or 375 degrees F for 10 mins or until lightly browning and springing back when touched.
- Stir lemon juice and sugar and drizzle over muffins while still hot straight from oven.

Perfect warm, cold and great to freeze for school lunches too!

<https://toitalywithlove.com/2014/11/14/simple-lemon-muffins/>

## Mediterranean Vegetable Bake

This is my veggie bake as listed in the meal plan.

This will turn out as a baked version of an adaptation of ratatouille style dish.

Great to eat hot and fantastic cold - make into salads, cooked with eggs, chopped down and onto sandwiches with ham or chicken. See salad following.

Large baking tray (approx 40 cm x 25cm)

6 x tomatoes  
1 x sweet potato  
6 potatoes (optional)  
10 pieces of pumpkin  
3 x red onions  
4 x medium zucchini  
2 x sticks of celery  
3 x cloves of garlic or 3 x teaspoons crushed garlic from a jar  
1/3 cup oil  
Parsley x 1/3 cup (if using dry a few shakes of jar)  
Dill x 1/2 tablespoon (if using dry a shake of jar)  
Mint x 1 tablespoon (if using dry a shake of jar)

### Method

- Cut the following and put into a large bowl
  - Into wedges cut potatoes (if using) pumpkin, onions
  - Cut zucchini in half length ways, then into 3cm lengths
  - Cut celery into 3cm lengths
- Cut 1/2 of the tomatoes into thin slices then put on bottom of the baking tray
- Tip over the veggies from the bowl
- Top with herbs, garlic, salt and pepper
- Slice remaining tomatoes and put on top of vegetables then drizzle over oil
- Bake uncovered 230 degrees c for 30 mins
- Turn down to 210 and bake for another 40 mins stirring half way through

## Mediterranean Vegetable Bake – Salad

This is such a delicious salad.

Using left over veggie bake

Some chopped tomatoes

Red onion

Cucumber

Lettuce

Whatever else you want.

## Tuna Pasta

Seriously the most simple pasta you could ever make.

And I change it up whenever.



### Sirena Tuna in Oil Italian Style

**\$7.00**

425g | \$16.47 per 1Kg

Add to list

✓ 1 for \$7.00

Large, succulent chunks of premium Sirena Tuna in our uni



### Toscano Cherry Tomato Sugo Pasta Sauce

**\$3.20** save \$0.80

330g | \$0.97 per 100G

Add to list

Add 1 for \$3.20



### Barilla Farfalle Pasta No 65

**\$1.95**

500g | \$0.39 per 100G

Add to list

Add 1 for \$1.95

## Method

- Put large bowl of water on to boil for pasta (use kettle to speed things up)
- Put fry pan on medium
- Open the tuna
- Tip the oil from the tuna into a frypan
- Cook the crushed garlic in the oil for a min. (you can use jar garlic)
- Tip in the tuna breaking up as you go
- Pour over the sugo and cook for 5 mins until warmed through. Turn off
- Cook pasta as directed / to your liking.
- After pasta is drained put it back into large pot and pour over the tuna mix.
- Serve.



## Tuna, Artichoke and Lemon Pasta (family size)



<https://toitalywithlove.com/2014/10/29/tuna-artichoke-and-lemon-pasta/> (my recipe)

You will need

- 425g tin of Tuna (I prefer Sirena Oil Italian Style)
- 500g Pack of pasta – farfalle and penne or the one pictured are perfect style/shaped pasta
- 1 small jar of preserved artichokes cut in to small pieces (sometimes they come whole or already cut)
- 1 onion
- 2 cloves of garlic (or more if you love it like we do)
- 1 lemon (rind of whole lemon and juice of half a lemon or to your taste)
- A few tablespoons of chopped parsley
- Salt and pepper.

Method

- Get big saucepan of water on the stove to commence boiling for pasta.
- Slice the onion.
- Drain the oil from the tuna into a deep frypan and heat on a medium heat for a minute.
- Add the onion to oil and about 1 teaspoon of salt and turn the heat to low. (The salt helps the onion not to burn).
- Once onion starts to become translucent stir and pop on a lid. Sweat the onions for at least 10 minutes checking and stirring regularly. This makes the onions very soft and sweet.
- When the onions are very soft, remove lid and turn heat to medium- hot and throw in the garlic and fry for 2 minutes.
- Add the tuna, breaking up as you go.
- Grate in the rind of the lemon, artichokes and parsley and pop the lid back on and turn to low for a few minutes.
- Add the juice of half the lemon then turn off and leave to rest with lid on.
- Cook pasta as usual and to your preference, or use the box as a guide to timings.
- Drain pasta keeping a cup of the pasta water aside.
- Add pasta to tuna mix gently stirring in and then pour over half of the cup of pasta water, add more water if you need it to make a juicy but not wet mix.
- Serve to table with a bit more parsley over the top if you like.

To scale down for one or two people, I use this formula:

1 person, 3/4 cup pasta, small tuna tin, 1/4 onion, half clove of garlic, a couple of the artichokes and squeeze of lemon.

2 people, 1.5 cups pasta, medium tuna tin, 1/2 onion, clove of Garlic, a few artichokes and 2 tablespoons of lemon.

The other thing- just make the whole batch and take for lunch the next day. It's even PERFECT cold as a salad!  
True

## Our Muesli Bars



Adapted from Nigella's Breakfast Bar.

250g rolled oats  
75g Shredded coconut moist flakes  
100g dried cranberries  
125g mixed seeds  
125g unsalted nuts  
1 x 397 can condensed milk

- Preheat oven to 130 degrees
- Oil a 23 x 33 x 4 cm baking tin or a throw away foil one.
- Warm condensed milk in a pan
- Mix all dry ingredients together then add warmed condensed milk
- Using rubber gloves you wet a little, press down into baking pan
- Bake around 1 hour.
- Let cool on bench for about 15 mins then cut up.

## Salmon Meal

Two options here. Both are following.

### Salmon on the BBQ

Lightly oil the salmon.

Cover the skin in salt and pepper

Cook salmon on BBQ 5 mins skin side down first

Flip over and 3 mins on the other side.

Serve with steamed greens which while still hot you toss over olive oil. Or even better this stuff:



## One Tray Salmon Bake

Stole this recipe from Baby Mac blog and I have been making it for years. <https://www.baby-mac.com/2012/10/just-call-me-bev-episode-26-one-pot/>

Potatoes (however enough for people you are cooking for)

1 small piece salmon per person

Bag washed baby spinach

Lemon: Cut a few potatoes into wedges

- Throw into a roasting pan with some olive oil, salt & pepper.
- Whack into a hot oven (220 degrees) to roast until crispy (takes my oven about 35 to 40 mins).
- Scanpan roasting pans are the best
- Once the potatoes are almost done open the oven, move the potatoes aside and whack the salmon into the pan skin side down into the sizzling oil. Put back in the oven for 5-6 mins
- After 5 mins it will be cooked and look like this. Take the pan out of the oven



- Throw the entire pack of spinach into the pan, pushing the cooked salmon down to one end so you can toss the spinach with the potatoes



Serve up with a show pony CHEEK of lemon. Looks all restaurant like. You could also add a dollop of aioli if you wanted.



## Breakfast Bruschetta

Anything you like: This recipe looks good. We go to the local amazing bakery for a big loaf of delicious bread. Toddle home and drink more coffee. We throw together yummy toast and we often add eggs.

<https://www.taste.com.au/recipes/breakfast-bruschetta-2/0189f41e-07da-494d-bcb3-16699617059e>



## Apricot Chicken

1 kg chicken thighs cut into chunks

2 onions chopped

2 large carrots grated

1 large zucchini grated

1 large tin apricots in juice

1 pack French onion soup mix or apricot mix pack

1 teaspoon curry powder

Fresh or dried thyme

Dash white wine

- Brown chicken
- Sweat off onions, add grated carrot and zucchini
- Add curry powder, wine, soup mix
- Add apricots in juice and thyme
- Cook low in oven for 2-3 hours 150 degrees with lid on
- Or slow cooker 3 hours.

## Breakfast – Poached Eggs for Wednesday

On Wednesdays we have a bit of an easier morning. We still get up around 5am but my husband likes to cook breakfast.

Poached eggs.

Cut small tomatoes, drizzle with oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper and into the oven for approx. 20 mins 180 degrees.

Mushrooms fried in a pan with a little butter, salt and pepper, once cooked take off heat and throw in a handful of spinach and it will wilt quickly.

Build up a mound of items with the mushroom and spinach mix first, then tomatoes, then eggs on top.

You can just boil the eggs or fry them. I know that not everyone can poach an egg – I can not!

## Apple Crumble Topping

For a bloody easy dessert in almost no time, I make this topping in advance and keep it in containers / zip lock bags in the freezer.

This is totally scalable. I normally make about 4 times the recipe.

Then, you just chop some apples and throw it together and into the oven until brown.

### Topping

1/3 cup brown sugar

1 cup wholemeal self raising flour

90g butter

½ teaspoon cinnamon

¼ cup walnuts

½ cup oats

¼ cup cornflakes

- Place all ingredients in food processor or thermomix until crumbly.
- Put on top of apples (1 peeled apple per person diced in 3 cm bits approx) don't need to cook.
- Bake 30 mins on 180 degrees or until brown.

## Northern Italian Cacciatore

Another Baby Mac recipe we make all the time.

1 kg Chicken thighs  
2 cloves garlic  
1 x onion diced  
100g bacon  
Rosemary chopped  
1 cup white wine  
Splash of red wine vinegar  
2 thin slices of lemon skin chopped finely

½ cup chicken stock  
½ cup seeded green olives chopped  
¼ teaspoon chilli flakes (optional)

### Method

- Brown chicken in batches
- Cook onion, bacon, rosemary, garlic
- Add wine, vinegar, lemon, stock, chili and simmer for a few minutes
- Add olives and return the chicken
- Simmer gently for 25 mins
- Serve with new potatoes, mashed potato/cauliflower and simple salad.

## Most Simple Chocolate Cake Ever

4 eggs  
2 cups sugar  
2 cups of self raising flour  
1 cup cold water with ½ teaspoon of bi-carb soda  
185 grams melted butter  
4 tablespoons cocoa  
2 tablespoons of hot water  
Splash vanilla essence

### Method

- Preheat oven to 150 degrees and grease and line a 25 cm tin.
- All ingredients into your mixing bowl
- Turn the mixer onto high for 2 minutes
- Pour into the tin and bake for approx. 45 minutes or until skewer comes out clean

### Chocolate frosting

2 cups icing mixture  
1 cup melted butter  
2 tablespoons cocoa  
Splash milk

### Frosting

- Mix all ingredients into mixer and beat 2 mins.
- Cover cake with frosting and serve!

# No Time to Bake School Birthday Cake Hack

So you haven't had time to bake and your kid needs to take something to school this is the best hack I have ever discovered.

Cheap, no cutting, no container, no mess.

Buy as many cakes as you need for the kids and the teachers. Open the packs and sprinkle over the sprinkles, shut the packs again and you are set.



## Coles Vanilla Mini Cupcakes 9 Pack

**\$4.00**

216g | \$1.85 per 100G

Temporarily unavailable

Add to list

View alternatives



Made in Australia from at least 91% Australian ingredients



## Queen Sugar Strands

**\$2.00**

55g | \$3.64 per 100G

Add to list

Add 1 for \$2.00

# Picnic Lunches

This is our go-to picnic lunch.

It is the slightly pimped up version of a bbq chicken, breadrolls and coleslaw 😊



## Mountain Bread Rye

**\$4.00**

200g | \$2.00 per 100G



## Meredith Dairy Mar

**\$20.00**

550g | \$36.36 per 1Kg





## DIY Meal Plan

If you can not face the thought of a whole terms worth of meal plans.

Just do a week in advance. Following is a printable for you to print and completely yourself.

DAY	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

Dairy / Cold Items	Vegetables and Fruit
Butcher	Pantry
Cleaning Products	Other shops (bottle shop, butcher etc)

