

5 Easy Steps for Creating a THM-Friendly Meal Plan:

Healthy Eating on a Budget

☐ Check What's in Your Fridge and Pantry

Before meal-planning, you'll want to make sure you know what ingredients you have. I like to make a list of several key ingredients I have, especially protein sources since that's what my meals are centered around. In order to do healthy eating on a budget, you'll want to come up with as many meals as you can using ingredients you already have.

☐ Consult your Cookbooks and Pinterest

The next step is to flip through your cookbooks (or scroll Pinterest) to find recipe ideas. It's a good idea to already have a list (written down or in your head) of your favorite go-to recipes. The more you repeat recipes you're already familiar with, the easier meal planning and prep will become. I have [Trim Healthy Mama cookbooks](#) I use and I like to save THM-friendly recipes on Pinterest. You can find links to recipes I created on [this Pinterest board](#). Another way to simplify is by not always using recipes. You can do something simple like salmon, seasoned brown rice, and a side of broccoli.

☐ Count Your Protein Grams

Protein does so many incredible things for you! It helps you build and keep muscle, nourishes your hair and skin, causes your metabolism to burn fat... the list goes on and on! Because of this, I would argue that meeting your protein goal should be your biggest concern when meal planning. Protein might seem expensive, but so are doctor bills. And, I'm not saying you have to eat steak for every meal. You can focus on more affordable protein sources like cottage cheese, [protein powder bought in bulk](#), nonfat plain greek yogurt, eggs, meat that's on sale...

☐ Write Down Your Plan

Grab a blank piece of paper and write down your THM-friendly meal plan. My plan usually includes two kinds of breakfasts I batch make ahead (usually one carb breakfast and one fat breakfast) and 5 or 6 dinners. I only plan for 5 or 6 dinners because we usually often up having leftovers or eating somewhere else at least once or twice. Lunches aren't usually on my meal plan. I usually just have leftovers, sandwiches or scramble random ingredients together. Your plan doesn't have to say exactly which day you're having which dinners, just make sure you have your list of ideas for the week somewhere you can easily find.

☐ **Make a Grocery List and a Meal-Prep List**

Now that you have your meals chosen, you're going to make a list of the ingredients you need to buy. If my list starts looking expensive, I'll often revise my plan. That may mean swapping recipes for cheaper recipes or omitting ingredients. The second list you're making is a meal-prep list. If you can set aside an hour or two for meal prep, it could make the rest of your week a lot easier. Often if I get meal prep time in, it feels like the rest of the week my meals just make themselves. Things you can prep ahead are breakfasts, easy grab snacks, beans, meat or rice can be cooked ahead of time...all of this will save you time later on.



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