

Menus

On A Dime

Plan Ahead Leftovers



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How to use these menus

The idea behind Plan Ahead Leftovers is to cook once and eat two or three quicker meals later using the leftovers. With these menu ideas we start out the first night with a whole chicken, roast or ham. Then we list different menu options you can use with the leftovers. You don't necessarily have to fix them in the order listed. Pick and choose and see what works best for you.

Everything doesn't need to be homemade. You can use store-bought pies, cakes, cookies, dinner rolls or bags of salad, especially on what I call "rougher" days. Even though this may not seem very frugal, it is still much cheaper than going out to eat. It would be far less expensive to pay for bagged salad and make the rest of the meal from scratch than to spend more money on delivered pizza.

In making these menus, I have tried to use ingredients and dishes that are found in most homes. I realize that every menu will not be perfect for your family and their tastes so I have made them adaptable and inter-changeable. If your family doesn't like broccoli, use green beans instead. Sometimes you may only need to use the main dish from a menu and will want to create your own menus from that. These menus are not set in stone. You will get much more use out of them if you try mixing and matching.

After you have used them for a while, you may want to start making some menus of your own with your family's favorite recipes. Here are some basic simple guidelines to follow in creating your own menu plans.

Basic Menu

Meat or Main Dish
Starch Side Dish
(potatoes, rice and pasta)
Vegetable Side Dish
Salad
(1 or 2 fresh or cooked vegetables)
Bread or Crackers
Dessert
Drink

Try to have a pleasing balance of color.

Do:

Chicken
Mashed potatoes
Green beans
Sliced strawberries or red Jell-O

Don't:

Chicken
Mashed potatoes
Corn on the cob
Banana

Everything on the don't list is basically the same color. Together, these items fade away and don't have the eye appeal as the first list with it's green and red.

Try to have different types of texture.

Do:

Sausage gravy on toast
Hash browns
Mixed fruit
Jumbo cookies

Don't:

Sausage gravy on toast
Creamed peas
Creamed potatoes
Vanilla pudding

Everything on the don't list is creamy, runny or soft. You need some crunchy, crispy, soft and in between textures.

A couple other things to keep I mind:

The day before you go to the grocery store, clean out your fridge so you can see what leftovers you have so you can include them in your menus.

Have one leftover night a week, where you serve all your little dabs of everything that's left.

Don't serve like items:

If you have mixed fruit for a salad don't serve fruit pie for desert.

If you have milk shakes for a drink, don't serve ice cream for dessert.

The old saying -- "too much of a good thing" or in this case "too much of the same thing" definitely applies here.

Most importantly of all, try not to let these tips overwhelm you and cause you to just give up. You'll find after a couple of months of using my menus that a lot of these things will become habits. Above all, don't worry! I've never heard of a family dying because once in a while you didn't have the right color of vegetable or were served all soft foods. These are only guidelines- not commandments.

If all else fails, don't make your own menus -- just use ours!

Tip: Write down the menu number on your calendar or day planner. Then you'll know at a glance what you need to get at the grocery store, set out of the fridge to thaw or make the day before.

Chicken

Day #1
Roast Chicken
Brown Rice
Garden Salad
Crescent Rolls

Roast Chicken

1 chicken	1 tsp. oregano (to taste)
1-2 cloves garlic	olive oil
1 tsp. thyme (to taste)	salt and pepper
1 tsp. rosemary (to taste)	

Rub the inside of the chicken with garlic cloves. Put thyme, rosemary and oregano to taste inside the bird. Rub the outside of the bird with olive oil and salt and pepper. Bake at 450° to 500° for 15 minutes then turn the oven down to 400° and roast for 35-45 minutes (for a 2 1/2 pound bird) or 1 hour (for a 3-5 pound bird) or until the temperature of the thigh reaches 180°. Allow to rest 10 minutes before serving. Serves 6-8.

Garden Salad

1/3 cup zucchini, sliced	1/3 cup celery, sliced
1/3 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced	1/3 cup green onions with tops
1 small tomato, sliced	1/2 tsp. fresh basil, chopped
1/3 cup green pepper, sliced	

Combine all of the vegetables in a bowl. In a small bowl, whisk together dressing ingredients. Pour over salad and toss to coat. Makes 2 servings. This recipe can be easily doubled or tripled. Serves 4.

Dressing

1/4 cup olive or vegetable oil	1/8 tsp. garlic powder
2 Tbsp. red wine vinegar	1/8 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. dried oregano	1/8 tsp. pepper

Mix and pour over salad.

Day #2
Chicken Fajitas
Five Cup Fruit Salad
Tortilla Chips and Salsa

Fajitas

1 1/2 lbs. chicken
1/2 cup lime juice
2 jalapeno peppers,
 seeded and finely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
6 flour tortillas, warmed

1 tsp. vegetable oil

Salsa

1 Tbsp. fresh cilantro
1 large tomato, chopped
1 small onion, chopped

Cut chicken crosswise into 1/2 inch thick strips. Heat oil in a large skillet on high. Cook pieces 2 at a time, in hot oil for 2-3 minutes, turning once. Season with salt and pepper. Combine lime juice, jalapenos and garlic. Pour over cooked chicken just before removing from pan. Combine tomato, onion and cilantro for salsa. Serve in warm tortillas with salsa. Top with Cheddar cheese if desired. Serves 6.

Five Cup Fruit Salad

1 can Mandarin oranges
1 small can cubed pineapple
1 cup mini marshmallows

1 cup shredded coconut
1 cup sour cream

Mix together and let sit in fridge for approximate 6 hours. Amounts of ingredients can be more or less depending on your needs.

Day #3
Mexican Chicken
Spanish Rice
Steamed Broccoli
Sliced Tomatoes

Mexican Chicken

4-6 pieces chicken (remove skin)
1 cup salsa

Place chicken in a baking dish and top with salsa. Cover. Bake at 350° for about 45 minutes* or until done. Sprinkle grated cheddar cheese on top and serve. Great over rice. Serves 4-6.

*If using leftover chicken, cook until warmed through.

Spanish Rice

1 chicken bouillon cube	1 Tbsp. (or less) taco seasoning
1/2 cup water	1 clove garlic, minced
1 cup rice, cooked	1 cup tomato sauce

Dissolve bouillon in water. Mix all the ingredients and bake uncovered at 350° for 35-40 minutes. Serves 4.

Kid Kitchen Terms

BOIL: The point a parent reaches upon hearing the automatic "Yuck" before a food is even tasted.

Day #4
Chicken Barley Soup
Crackers
Relish Dish
carrots, celery, broccoli
Vegetable Dip

Chicken Barley Soup

1/2 cup barley	4 cups chicken broth
1 stalk celery, sliced	1 cup chicken
1/2 carrot, diced	1/4 tsp. turmeric (optional)
1/4 cup onion, chopped	salt and pepper (to taste)

Rinse and cook barley in broth as instructed on package. Halfway through, add vegetables, chicken and seasonings. Makes 2 quarts.

Vegetable Dip

1 cup mayonnaise	1 tsp. curry powder
1 tsp. horseradish	dash of lemon juice
1 tsp. dry mustard	2 Tbsp. sour cream

Mix well and chill before serving. Serve with raw vegetables. Yogurt or cottage cheese may be added in place of, or with, sour cream. Makes 1 cup.

Day #5
Chicken and Dumplings
Tossed Salad
Green Beans

Chicken and Dumplings

4 cups chicken broth	1/2 cup carrots, sliced
1/2 -1 1/2 cups chicken, cooked	1 bay leaf
1/2 cup celery, sliced	1 tsp. parsley flakes

Dumplings

2 cups baking mix	1/2 tsp. parsley flakes
1/4 tsp. thyme, dried	2/3 cup milk

In a Dutch oven, combine broth, chicken, celery, carrots, bay leaf and parsley. Bring to a boil. In a bowl, combine baking mix, thyme, and parsley. Stir in milk just until moistened. Drop by tablespoonfuls into the boiling broth. Cook uncovered for 10 minutes and then cover and cook an additional 10 minutes. **DO NOT PEEK** or your dumplings will be soggy. Remove dumplings with a slotted spoon and serve in bowls. Remove bay leaf and spoon broth over the top of the dumplings. Serves 4.

Kid Kitchen Terms

CASSEROLE: Combination of favorite foods that go uneaten because they are mixed together.

Beef

Day #1
Slow Cook Roast with
Brown Gravy
Onions, Carrots, Potatoes
(cooked with roast)
Buttermilk Muffins
Tossed Salad & Dressing

Slow Cook Roast

1 beef roast, 3-5 lbs.*
1 can cream of mushroom soup

1 onion, sliced

Place roast in pan. Pour cream of mushroom soup and onion on top. Cover tightly. Bake at 250° cook for 8 or more hours. Serves 4.

*This can also be put in the crockpot in the morning and let cook all day.

*If you have a larger family or want to use the meat for more than 2 or 3 meals use a larger roast.

* Use a meat thermometer to make sure internal temperature reaches 145°

Buttermilk Muffins

1 cup butter or margarine
1 cup sugar
2 eggs

1 tsp. soda
1 cup buttermilk
2 cups flour, sifted

Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and beat well. Stir soda into buttermilk and add alternately with flour to batter mixture. Fill lined or greased muffin tins 2/3 full and bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes. Remove from pan immediately. Makes 12-15 muffins.

Day #2
Hot Roast Beef Sandwich
Mashed Potatoes
Whole Kernel Corn
Sliced Cucumbers and
Tomatoes

Hot Roast Beef Sandwich

1-2 cups leftover roast beef 4 pieces bread
2 cups leftover roast gravy

Warm roast and gravy. Pour over bread or toast. Serve warm. Serves 4.

Mashed Potatoes

5 large potatoes, peeled and cubed 2 Tbsp. sugar
2 Tbsp. butter 1 tsp. salt
1/2 cup milk

In a large saucepan place potatoes and enough water to cover the potatoes. Bring to a boil; reduce heat. Cover and simmer until potatoes are tender (about 10 minutes). Drain. Transfer potatoes to a mixing bowl and mash. Add butter, milk, sugar and salt. Beat until smooth. Serves 5-6.

Day #3
Mexican Scramble
Brown Rice
Carrot and Celery Sticks
Cornbread Muffins

Mexican Scramble

1 cup diced cooked beef	1/2 tsp. chili powder
1 Tbsp. green pepper, diced	1 can whole kernel corn
3 Tbsp. onion, diced	(frozen would work too)
2 Tbsp. cooking oil	salt to taste

In a large skillet sauté beef, peppers and onions in oil. Add remaining ingredients and simmer, covered for 30 minutes. Serve with brown rice.

Corn Muffins

2 cups baking mix	1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 cup cornmeal	2 eggs
1/2 cup sugar	1 cup milk
1/2 cup butter, melted	

Preheat the oven to 350°. In a large bowl, stir all the ingredients together. Blend until smooth. Pour into a lined muffin pan and bake for 20 minutes. Serves 9.

Kid Kitchen Terms

FRUIT: A natural sweet not to be confused with dessert.

Day #5
Beef and Noodles
Steamed Broccoli
Fruit Salad
Buttermilk Muffins

Beef and Noodles

1 lb. leftover roast	salt and pepper (to taste)
1 cup water	1 tsp. garlic powder
1/4 cup flour	1 lb. egg noodles, cooked

Mix water and flour in a jar and shake well. Pour into saucepan and boil until it starts to thicken. Add roast. Cook until roast is heated through. Add garlic powder, salt and pepper. Serve over cooked noodles, mashed potatoes or on toast. Serves 6.

Drop Biscuits

2 cups flour	1 cup milk
1 Tbsp. baking powder	1/4 cup shortening
1/2 tsp. salt	

Mix ingredients together. Batter will be lumpy. Drop by spoonfuls onto an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 450° for 10-12 minutes. Makes 10-12 biscuits.

Kid Kitchen Terms

REFRIGERATOR: A very expensive and inefficient room air conditioner when not being used as an art gallery.

Ham

Day #1
Maple Glazed Ham
Baked Potatoes
Minty Peas & Onions
Fruit Salad

Maple Glazed Ham

1 ham (5-8 lbs.)	4 Tbsp. cornstarch
3/4 cup maple syrup	3 Tbsp. water
4 tsp. ground mustard	2 Tbsp. margarine
2 cups apple juice	6 tart apples, cored and sliced

Combine 1/2 cup maple syrup and mustard. Pour over ham before baking. Pour apple juice in the bottom of the roasting pan. Bake for 250° for 1 hour. Reduce heat to 200° and roast 8-10 hours. Remove ham and keep warm. Transfer juice to a saucepan. Combine cornstarch and water in a bowl and stir until smooth. Add to saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat and boil for 1 minute until thickened. In a skillet, melt margarine over medium heat. Add apples and 1/4 cup maple syrup. Cover and cook for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Slice ham and serve with apples and gravy. Serves 4-6.

Minty Peas and Onions

2 large onions, cut into 1/2 inch wedges	2 (16 oz.) pkgs. frozen peas
1/2 cup sweet red pepper, chopped	2 Tbsp. fresh mint, minced or
2 Tbsp. cooking oil	2 tsp. dried mint

In a large skillet, sauté onions and red pepper in oil just until onions begin to soften. Add peas. Cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes or until heated through. Stir in mint and cook for 1 minute. Serves 4.

Day #2
Ham & Potatoes
Mom's Sweet Muffins
Steamed Broccoli

Ham and Potatoes

6 potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced 1 onion, chopped
2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded 1/2-1 lb. ham, thinly sliced
1 (10 ³/₄ oz.) can cream of mushroom soup

Layer the potatoes, then some cheese, then some ham and chopped onion. Continue to layer to 3 inches from top of crockpot and then pour cream of mushroom soup on top. Let simmer for several hours on low until potatoes are cooked through. Serves 4-6.

Mom's Sweet Muffins

1 egg 1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup buttermilk 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 cup vegetable oil 1/2 tsp. salt
1 1/2 cups flour

Mix all the ingredients in a bowl. The batter will be slightly lumpy. Place in greased muffin tins 2/3 full and bake at 400° for 15-20 minutes. Makes 1 dozen.

Tip: When boiling potatoes always make extra to use in other meals. They can be creamed, fried or used in potato salad.

Day #3
Sliced Ham, fried
Cole Slaw
Applesauce, with cinnamon
and sugar
Whole Wheat Rolls

Cole Slaw

1/2 cup mayonnaise or salad dressing	1 small head cabbage,
1/4 cup sugar	shredded
3 carrots, shredded	

Mix mayonnaise or salad dressing in a bowl with the sugar. Mix cabbage and carrots together. Add sauce to cabbage and carrots just before serving. The dressing can be made in advance and stored in a separate container in the refrigerator. Serves 8.

Homemade Applesauce

4 apples, peeled and chopped	1/4 tsp. cinnamon
1 cup water	3/4 cup sugar
1/8 tsp. each salt, cloves, nutmeg	1/2 tsp. vanilla

Mix everything in a saucepan and boil until apples are tender. Add vanilla. Serve warm or chilled. Serves 4.

Day #4
Sunshine Ham
Rice
Tossed Salad

Sunshine Ham

1 1/4 cups dried apricots	1/3 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup granulated sugar	1/4 tsp. ground cloves
2 slices of ham	

Place apricots in pan and cover with water. Boil 10 minutes. Add granulated sugar and boil 5 minutes. Drain, saving 1 cup liquid. Place ham in greased baking dish and cover with apricots. Sprinkle with brown sugar and cloves. Pour reserved liquid over it all. Cover and bake 425° for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake 45 minutes longer. Serves 6.

Salad Topping

2 cups old-fashioned oats	1 tsp. oregano, dried
1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted	1/2 tsp. thyme, dried
1/3 cup Parmesan cheese, grated	1/4 tsp. seasoned salt
1/3 cup wheat germ (optional)	

Mix all the ingredients in a bowl. Spread onto an un-greased 15x10x1-inch baking pan. Bake at 350° for 15-18 minutes until lightly browned. Cool. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 months. Makes 3 cups.

**Tip: Rice can be used to thicken soups, rice pudding,
rice fluff or in a casserole.**

Day #5
Ham and Beans
Relish dish,
carrots, celery, green peppers
Hush puppies
Coleslaw

Ham and Beans

2 cups dried lima or great northern beans	dash pepper
1 tsp. salt	2 cups ham, cubed in pieces

Soak beans overnight in 6 cups of water. Drain and put in pot with 6 cups fresh water. Season with salt and pepper. Add ham and simmer over low heat for 2-3 hours or until beans are tender. Serves 6.

Hush Puppies

1 1/2 cups cornmeal	3/4 cup milk
1/2 cup flour	1 small onion, grated or
2 tsp. baking powder	1 tsp. onion powder
1/2 tsp. salt	vegetable oil for frying
1 egg, well beaten	Dash Tabasco (optional)

Mix together cornmeal, flour, baking powder, and salt in a bowl. Mix egg, milk, onion and Tabasco in another bowl. Combine with dry ingredients. Drop a teaspoonful at a time into hot oil. When hush puppies are crisp and golden (about 1 minute), remove from oil and drain on a paper towel. Serve hot. Serves 6.

Desserts

Don't forget to use your leftover desserts. It's very rare to have any leftover desserts in our house but if you do here's some way's to use them.

Angel food or white cake- cube and top with pudding, fruit and cool whip

Chocolate cake- top with chocolate pudding and cool whip, chocolate chips, peanut butter chips or chocolate syrup.

Brownies- you have two brownies left and four people who want to eat them. Crumble them up and sprinkle on top of ice cream with chocolate syrup.

Jell-O- cube and fold into whipped cream.

To any of these you could add:

Nuts

Coconut

Sprinkles

2-3 cookies crumbled and sprinkle on top.

Sundae Pie- Crumble leftover cookies, angel food cake, pound cake or brownies in a pie pan. Spoon vanilla ice cream on top. Spread on a thin layer of strawberry jam and cover that with chocolate and butterscotch ice cream topping. Freeze and serve for dessert.

Kid Kitchen Terms

DESSERT: The reason for eating a meal.

Rice Fluff

1 can fruit cocktail, tropical fruit or peaches
leftover rice
1 container of whipped topping

Mix and chill. Serves 4.

Gingerbread

1/2 cup butter	2 1/4 cup flour
1/2 cup sugar	2 tsp. ginger
1 cup molasses	1 tsp. cinnamon
1 cup sour milk or buttermilk	1/4 tsp. ground cloves
1 3/4 tsp. soda	1/2 tsp. salt

Mix everything in a bowl until smooth. Pour in a greased 9x9 inch pan.
Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes. Serves 9.

Apple Crisp

6 apples, peeled and sliced	1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened
1 cup brown sugar	1 tsp. cinnamon and/or nutmeg
1/2 cup oatmeal	1/4 cup water
1/2 cup flour	

Preheat oven to 350°. Arrange apples in well-greased baking dish. Blend all remaining ingredients except water. Spread evenly over top of apples. Pour water over the topping. Bake 45 minutes until apples are tender and top is crisp. Serves 6.

Lemon Bars

Crust

2 cups flour
1 cup butter or margarine, melted

1/2 cup powdered sugar

Filling

4 eggs, well beaten
2 cups granulated sugar
1/3 cup lemon juice (1 lemon)

1/4 cup flour
1/2 tsp. baking powder

Preheat oven to 350°. Mix all the crust ingredients in a bowl. Press into greased 9x13 pan. Make sure the edges are higher than the center to contain the filling. Bake crust for 20 minutes or until it begins to brown. Combine, eggs, sugar and lemon juice and mix well. Stir in flour and baking powder. Pour into baked crust and bake 20-30 minutes at 350°. Bars are done when they are firm to the touch. Cut into small squares and dust with powdered sugar. These bars are extremely rich so cut into small pieces. Makes 18 bars.

Chocolate Pie

1 (8oz.) Hershey's with Almonds candy bar
1 1/2 cups whipping cream
1 (10oz.) bag marshmallows
1 graham cracker crust
whipped cream

Break candy bar into a saucepan. Add 1 cup whipping cream and marshmallows. Cook on medium heat until melted stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Add the rest of the whipping cream. Mix well. Pour into pie shell. Refrigerate for 24 hours before serving. Top with whipped cream. Makes one pie.

Bread Pudding

6 cups bread (about 8 slices), cubed	1 tsp. nutmeg
2/3 cup sugar	2 Tbsp. lemon juice
2 eggs	1/2 tsp. salt
2 cups milk	1 cup raisins (optional)
1 tsp. vanilla	

Mix all the ingredients in a bowl and pour into a greased 8x8 inch pan. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes and top with lemon glaze. Serves 9.

Lemon Glaze

1/3 cup margarine or butter	1 1/2 tsp. lemon juice
2 cups powdered sugar	2 to 4 Tbsp. hot water
1/2 tsp. grated lemon peel	

Heat margarine in a saucepan until melted. Stir in powdered sugar, vanilla and 1 tablespoon water. Mix well. Add the rest of the water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the frosting is smooth.

Banana Cake

1/2 cup shortening	2 cups flour or whole wheat flour
3/4 cup brown sugar, packed	1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 cup sugar	1 tsp. salt
2 eggs	1/2 cup buttermilk
1 cup ripe bananas, (2-3 medium) mashed	1/2 cup nuts, chopped (optional)
1 tsp. vanilla	

In a bowl, cream shortening and sugars. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in bananas and vanilla. Combine flour, baking soda and salt. Add to creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk. Stir in nuts. Pour into a greased 9x13 inch pan. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick put in the center of the cake tests clean. Cool and frost with Buttercream or Caramel Frosting. Serves 18.

What Cake

1 cup oatmeal	1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 cup margarine, cut into pieces	1 1/2 cup flour
1 1/2 cups boiling water	1 cup plus 2 Tbsp. sugar
1 tsp. soda	1 cup brown sugar, packed
1 1/2 tsp. cinnamon	2 eggs, beaten

Mix oatmeal and margarine together; pour boiling water over them to soften. Add soda, cinnamon, salt, flour, sugar, brown sugar, and eggs. Mix well and pour into a greased 9x13 inch pan. Bake at 375° for 25 minutes. Spread topping over cake. Serves 18.

Topping

3/4 cup brown sugar	1 cup coconut
2 Tbsp. milk	nuts (optional)
6 Tbsp. butter	

Combine brown sugar, milk and butter in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Boil for 1 minute. Add coconut and nuts and stir. Spread onto cake. Put under broiler until lightly browned.

Kid Kitchen Terms

SODA POP: Shake 'N Spray.

TABLE LEG: Percussion instrument.

EVAPORATE: Magic trick performed by children when it comes time to clear the table or wash dishes.

Menus At A Glance

	Chicken	Beef	Ham
Day #1	Roast Chicken Brown Rice Crescent Rolls Garden Salad	Slow Cook Roast Brown Gravy Onions, Carrots, Potatoes (cooked with roast) Buttermilk Muffins Tossed Salad	Maple Glazed Ham Baked Potatoes Minty Peas & Onions Fruit Salad
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Day #3	Mexican Chicken Spanish Rice Steamed Broccoli Sliced Tomatoes	Mexican Scramble Brown Rice Carrot and Celery Sticks Cornbread Muffins	Sliced Ham, fried Cole Slaw Applesauce (with cinnamon and sugar) Whole Wheat Rolls
Day #4	Chicken Barley Soup Crackers Relish Dish Vegetable Dip	Barbecued Beef Potato Salad Sliced Cucumber, Green Peppers and Tomatoes Watermelon	Sunshine Ham Rice Tossed Salad
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