# Batch Cooking Basics

This playbook outlines the fundamentals of batch cooking. It covers the essentials of preparing, storing, and reheating meals in bulk, ensuring food safety and quality.

### Step 1: Planning

Decide on the recipes you'll be making, ensuring variety and nutrition. Create a shopping list based on the recipes chosen and the number of meals you intend to prepare.

### Step 2: Shopping

Purchase the ingredients from your shopping list, choosing fresh and high-quality products. Buy in bulk where possible to save time and money.

### Step 3: Preparation

Prepare your kitchen by ensuring you have all necessary equipment and clean workspace. Preheat your oven if necessary and start with recipes that take the longest to cook.

### Step 4: Cooking

Follow the recipes, cooking meals in batches. Use efficient cooking techniques such as simultaneous oven and stovetop use. Monitor the cooking process to ensure even cooking and flavor.

### Step 5: Cooling

Allow the cooked food to cool to room temperature before storing. Spread the food out on larger surfaces or use ice baths to speed up the cooling process.

### Step 6: Portioning

Divide the meals into portion sizes that fit your dietary needs. Use meal containers that are suitable for both storage and reheating.

### Step 7: Storing

Label the containers with the contents and date of preparation. Refrigerate or freeze the meals, placing newer meals behind the older ones to ensure proper rotation.

### Step 8: Reheating

Reheat meals safely by using an oven, stovetop, or microwave. Ensure the food reaches the recommended internal temperature to eliminate bacteria.

## General Notes

### Food Safety

Always practice food safety by washing hands, cleaning surfaces, and preventing cross-contamination. Be mindful of cooking times and temperatures to prevent foodborne illnesses.

### Nutrition

Aim for a balance of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats in your batch-cooked meals. Include a variety of vegetables and whole grains for fiber and micronutrients.

### Shelf Life

Familiarize yourself with the shelf life of different meals. Use frozen meals within 2-3 months and refrigerated meals within 3-4 days.