



# Slow Cooker Meal Prep

RACHEL JONES

## What is so great about meal prep?

Prepping your meals on the weekends can be a great way to save time and money during the week. Imagine how fantastic it would be to come home after a long day of work and school and have dinner already prepared and ready to heat and enjoy. Unfortunately, meal prep can be time consuming and monotonous if you don't want to eat the same thing everyday. Who wants to give up an afternoon on the weekend to prep and portion their meals? Afternoons that could be spent cramming for that exam on Monday, spending time with family or taking a much needed nap. Well, I am here to tell you that there is a way you can prepare food at the beginning of the week, still enjoy your weekend and enjoy different meals throughout the week. Keep reading to find out how.

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Follow the link for an affordable slow cooker.

<https://www.amazon.com/West-Bend-87156-Ceramic-Stainless>

*Keep reading for some simple proteins that you can prep in the slow cooker and be paired with a side dish when you are ready to eat.*

## Why you should be using a slow cooker to meal prep

Slow cookers are the perfect appliance for meal prep for so many reasons.

1. As far as kitchen appliances go they are relatively inexpensive. You probably have one in your cupboard collecting dust that you got as a moving gift from your parents and don't know what to do with.
2. They are easy to use. Slow cookers usually have three or four settings: low heat, medium heat, high heat, and warm. It does not get simpler than that! If you want a few more options you can purchase a slow cooker that also has a timer option where it will turn on and off at a certain time but that will cost a little more.
3. They are easy to clean. You only have to clean one piece of equipment instead of two or three sauté pans, a sauce pan and some cookie sheets. To make it even easier to clean, you can get a slow cooker liner that you put in before your ingredients then just throw away when you are done.
4. You set it and forget it. With a slow cooker, you just add the ingredients, set the temp and walk away. Four to eight hours later, with minimal maintenance, the food is ready to go.





## Curry Chicken

### Ingredients:

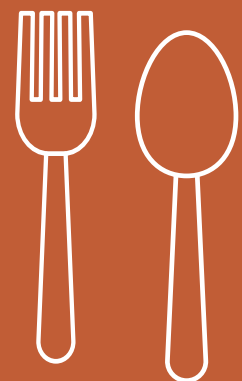
- 2 lbs boneless, skinless chicken breast
- 1 cup 0% plain Greek yogurt
- 3 garlic cloves minced
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1/2 tablespoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

### Method of Preparation:

1. In a bowl, combine Greek yogurt, garlic, honey, lime juice, oil, curry powder, chili powder, cumin, garlic powder, and salt. Mix to combine.
2. Add chicken thighs and toss until well-coated.
3. Cover and marinate for at least 30 minutes. You can also cover and refrigerate for up to 8 hours.
4. Place chicken in slow cooker, cover, and cook on low for 4 to 5 hours or until chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.
5. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to four days.

Pair this chicken with one of the following sides for an easy and quick meal during the week:

1. rice and your favorite vegetable
2. lentils or naan
3. make curry chicken salad
4. with a chickpea salad





## Carnitas

### Ingredients:

- 1 (4-5 pound) lean boneless pork roast, excess fat trimmed, cut into 3-inch chunks
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 medium white onion, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
- 1 chipotle in adobo sauce, minced
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt

### Method of Preparation:

1. Add all ingredients to a large slow cooker and stir to combine. Cook on low for 6-8 hours or on high for 4-5 hours until the pork is completely tender and shreds easily with a fork.

Adapted from: -<https://www.gimmesomeoven.com/crispy-slow-cooker-carnitas/>

These carnitas would be delicious as

1. tacos
2. with rice and beans
3. in quesadillas
4. burritos
5. nachos





# Brisket

## Ingredients:

- 3.5 pound brisket
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon paprika

## Method of Preparation:

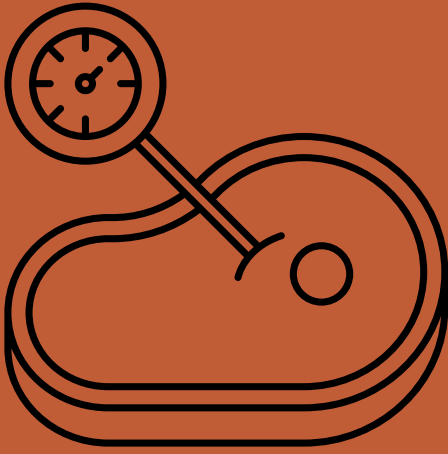
- 1.In a bowl combine the seasonings.
- 2.Place the brisket in the slow cooker, fat side up, with 1 cup of water at the bottom.
- 3.Sprinkle the top of the brisket with the seasoning mixture. Set the slow cooker to low heat and cook for 8 hours.



When you are ready to eat, brisket can be prepared:

- 1.in stroganoff
- 2.on a sandwich
- 3.with potatoes and your favorite vegetables
- 4.in a chili





## Food Safety Tips:

### Safe Cooking Temperatures (degrees Fahrenheit):

- Poultry: 165
- Beef, veal, port, lamb: 145
- ground beef, veal, pork, lamb: 160
- Casseroles, egg dishes: 140

Use a meat thermometer to check when meat, poultry, and dishes containing eggs are done.

For freshness and quality, cooked meats should be consumed within 3-4 days if stored in the refrigerator or 4 - 6 months if stored in the freezer.



### About the Author:

Rachel Jones is a 2022 - 2023 MSU Denver Dietetic intern. She has been working in the fitness industry for 12 years as a personal trainer and group fitness coach. Rachel was inspired to study nutrition and become a Registered Dietitian when she noticed her clients struggling with nutrition due to the abundance of misinformation they found. Her goal is to combine her two passions, nutrition and exercise science, and work with athletes to maximize performance through nutrition.