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Healthy Meal Prep: 5 Foods for a (Much!) Easier Week

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It's another day of rushing out the door. You've just realized that you've prepared meals for everyone but yourself. You're swamped at work, and have no choice but to grab a fast-food lunch—that you swing past the eyes of a fellow coworker who has healthy meal prep down to a science. Then, on your way home, you have errands to run, and you're stuck in traffic. What happens next? You eat out again. Sound familiar?

Anyone who is constantly pressed for time knows: When schedules get crazy, your healthy diet is usually the first thing to suffer. That's why preparing meals in advance of your busy week is one of the best things you can do.



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If you're on the South Beach Diet, you already enjoy the convenience of having perfectly portioned, nutritionally-balanced and delicious foods delivered right to your door. ([If not, but you're eager to, click here to begin. >](#)) We know how busy life can get, which is why we've built a program that prioritizes convenience along with nutrition and weight loss. But, the same rule still applies for your practice days and snacks: By preparing healthy options during your downtime, you'll stay on course to reach your weight loss goals even when life throws you a chaotic curve ball.

The great news is that so many healthy foods are conducive to preparing in bulk. We love to spend a little time on Sunday afternoons portioning out some of our favorite healthy foods so we have them on hand through the busy workweek. Whether Sundays are your slow time, or you have more downtime during the week, we suggest you pick the time that works best for you, and try your hand at prepping nutritious snacks and meals for the week.

To get you started, here are some healthy meal prep foods:

1. Nuts

Featuring the belly-filling blend of protein, fiber and "good fats" (think monounsaturated fats and omega-3 fatty acids), these nutritious nuggets are the perfect snack to keep you feeling full and satisfied between meals. The best part is, they don't require refrigeration, which means you can leave a bag of them in your purse, your desk drawer at work or even your car—so you'll have healthy, pre-portioned snacks on hand when those menacing munchies rear their ugly head.



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Our suggestion? Buy a big bag of your favorite nuts, then spend 15 minutes portioning them out into individual bags or Tupperwares—one for every day of the week. Assess your hunger habits. Do you tend to fall victim to the 2 p.m. snack slump at the office? Bring all of your servings to work. Are you ravenous by the time you're heading home for dinner? Keep a serving in your car for some crunch and satisfaction on your commute home so you won't eat everything in sight when you walk in the door.

On the South Beach Diet, one ounce (or about a quarter cup) of most nuts counts as a Healthy Fat. Here is a quick breakdown of how many of your favorite nuts constitutes one ounce (refer to your handbook for a more comprehensive list):

NUTS	QUANTITY
Almonds	23
Brazil nuts	6
Cashews	16-18
Hazelnuts	20
Macadamia Nuts	10-12
Peanuts (dry roasted or boiled)	28
Pecans	19 halves
Pistachios	49
Walnuts	14 halves

**Note: If you're following the South Beach Diet, limit nuts, seeds and nut butters to one serving per day.*

2. Hard-Boiled Eggs

Looking for a nutritious snack that will fill you up without filling you out? Enter eggs. Eggs are superfood superstars. Eat just one of these guys and you'll be consuming all 13 essential vitamins and minerals, a whopping six grams of protein, and all nine essential amino acids (the building blocks of protein). All of that for just 70 calories an egg! That's pretty incredible, if you ask us.

The best part about eggs? You can hard-boil a big batch of them at once, portion them out into several different containers, and have easy, portable (protein-packed) snacks on hand through

your busy week.

On the South Beach Diet, one large, whole egg or the whites from three large, whole eggs count as one Lean Protein.



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3. Red Bell Pepper Slices

When it comes to superfoods, it seems that the green guys get all the credit. But just like their green counterparts, red bell peppers provide a whole host of nutrients while also being fat- and cholesterol-free, low in sodium, and low in calories.

Plus, the red varieties have over 10 times more beta-carotene and 1.5 times more vitamin C than the green types, giving them a nutritional edge. The red varieties also tend to offer a slightly sweeter taste, making them an easy snack to savor solo when the munchies strike. (They also taste awesome with a little avocado spread across them. Did someone say Healthy Fat?!).

We like to slice up a bunch of red peppers and section them out into five, one-cup servings so we can be confident we've got at least one veggie serving covered every day of the busy workweek ahead. Another tip: Have fajitas, stir-fry or another recipe including cooked peppers on the menu this week? Slice up some extra peppers and save yourself some time and effort later.



Pork and Pepper Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette

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On the South Beach Diet, one cup of bell peppers is considered one Non-Starchy Vegetable serving.

Not a fan of red bell peppers? Feel free to prep any of your favorites in a similar manner. Snap peas and cherry or grape tomatoes all make for easy and nutritious noshing. We also love cucumber slices at snack time.

Low in calories and carbohydrates, and naturally fat- and cholesterol-free, cucumbers provide you with body-boosting Vitamin K and Vitamin C. With their high water content, cucumbers also provide a dose of hydration with every crunch. Cucumbers are a great food source to pair with cheese instead of crackers, which are often packed with excess calories and sodium.

4. Canned Tuna Fish

Canned tuna is one of the leanest varieties of seafood. A half cup packed in water serves up about 20 grams of protein and around 100 calories, making it a great option for those trying to stay satisfied while slimming down.

Since canned tuna is considered a non-perishable, prep is literally one step: Put a few cans in your lunch bag on Monday and leave them in your desk drawer to keep you covered when your stomach starts grumbling any time throughout the week.

Tuna is also a versatile food, so while you can make a full meal out of it, you can also enjoy it as a dip for veggies like celery sticks or cucumber rounds. Feel free to mix in a dab of mustard, a bit of avocado or even a touch of Greek yogurt for some added flavor and creaminess.

On the South Beach Diet, count canned tuna as a Lean Protein. One three-ounce can counts as one serving in this category.



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5. Grilled Chicken Breast

Chicken breast is a form of lean protein that contains Niacin, which helps support the process by which fat, protein and carbohydrates from food are converted into energy. Low in fat and carbohydrates, grilled chicken is a great source of lean protein.

We love that chicken can easily be prepared in bulk and then portioned out into individual Tupperware containers to cover each day of your busy week. It's also extremely versatile, so you can make a big batch and use one serving to top a salad, one serving in a healthy stir fry with veggies, one serving in a quick and easy soup, and one serving in an easy wrap.

On the South Beach Diet, count three ounces of skinless chicken breast as one Lean Protein.



Yakitori Chicken

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So what's the takeaway? Eating healthy doesn't have to be hard! A little preparation goes a very long way. If you've purchased the South Beach Diet, you've already taken the biggest step toward making healthy eating a part of your life.

healthy eating easy. Put your trust in the South Beach Diet and plan out your practice days, and you'll be well on your way to getting in the best shape of your life!

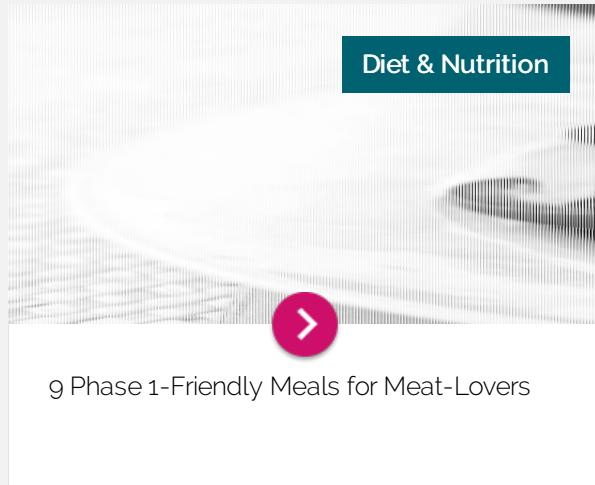
And don't forget: Research has indicated that by recording your intake, weight and activities, you are more likely to progress and see results. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it's important to keep a food diary in which you track everything you eat, and the time of day you ate it to help with your habits.

That's why we offer the [South Beach Diet Tracker app](#). It's a FREE, incredibly helpful resource that enables easy logging of your food, weight, water and activity, plus it's got:

- Full database of South Beach Diet prepared foods
- Easy-to-log recipes for every phase of the program
- Exclusive offers, discounts and promotions
- Ability to manage your order on the spot
- One touch access to the latest content on The Palm
- List of lean proteins, healthy fats, veggies & approved extras

This weight loss app is like having your own personal weight loss guide at your fingertips anytime, anywhere! To start taking advantage of this extremely helpful tool, visit the [Apple app store](#) or [Google Play](#) today.

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