



Holiday Hacks: 3 Time-Saving Kitchen Tips

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The holidays look a lot different for most of us this year: holiday parties, school concerts, family gatherings, shopping, and vacations may not be happening quite the same way - yet somehow we will all still be VERY busy. Give yourself the gift of taking some shortcuts and holiday hacks to take some of the pressure off so you can relax and be merry [because nobody wants a scrooge in the kitchen].

Go Semi-Homemade

Clearly, we are very pro-cooking around here, but sometimes taking shortcuts can turn a potential take-out night into a total kitchen win. For example:

- Grab a rotisserie chicken and incorporate it into soups or chili's so you can reap the benefits of high-quality protein without spending extra time cooking it. Shred the chicken and stuff lettuce leaves with a squeeze of lime for lunch.
- <https://s3.console.aws.amazon.com/s3/object/nutritionadvantageblog?region=us-east-2&prefix=Rotisserie+chicken-asparagus-mashed-cauliflower.pdf>
- Start with your favorite frozen pizza dough, then add your favorite jarred sauce and vegetable toppings plus a sprinkle of flavorful cheese to make it a meal!
- Buy pre-chopped produce, especially those hard-to-manage vegetables (ahem, squash) that are more time-intensive to prepare. Toss with a tablespoon of olive oil and roast for a side dish or added to salads during the week.
- <https://s3.console.aws.amazon.com/s3/object/nutritionadvantageblog?region=us-east-2&prefix=Roasted-butternut-squash-harvest-bowl.pdf>
- <https://s3.console.aws.amazon.com/s3/object/nutritionadvantageblog?region=us-east-2&prefix=Savory-butternut-squash.pdf>

Cook Once, Eat Twice

Batch cooking is an efficient way to keep up with your healthy eating goals no matter what time of year. It essentially means cooking more than what you need in the moment so you can take advantage of having all of your cooking tools and gadgets out (read: it's way more efficient!). Not to be confused with leftovers, batch cooking usually refers to one component so you can repurpose it later. For instance:

- Need rice or quinoa for your Monday night meal? Make a large batch so you can easily incorporate it in salads and grain bowls all week long.

- <https://s3.console.aws.amazon.com/s3/object/nutritionadvantageblog?region=us-east-2&prefix=Quinoa-greek-salad.pdf>
- <https://nutritionadvantageblog.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/Quinoa-kale-egg-muffins.pdf>
- Making hard-boiled eggs? It takes the same amount of time to make six as it does to make two. Enjoy as a snack, crumble into salads, or mash with some avocado
- <https://nutritionadvantageblog.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/Cucumber-carrot-egg-snack-box.pdf>
- <https://nutritionadvantageblog.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/Avocado-breakfast-toast.pdf>
- Baking sweet potatoes? Make a few more than you need and you'll have the base for an easy, customizable lunch ready to go. You can also purée or mash the flesh for baked goods and use in place of pumpkin in a recipe.
- <https://s3.console.aws.amazon.com/s3/object/nutritionadvantageblog?region=us-east-2&prefix=Warm-farro-sweet-potato-salad.pdf>

Sheet Pan and One Pot Meals

Raise your hand if your least favorite part of cooking is the clean-up. We feel you! Make it easier on yourself by searching for one-dish meals to seriously cut down on time spent doing the dishes. Here are a few to get you started:

- Create baking pockets by lining foil with parchment then crimping for perfectly roasted fish that stays juicy, never dry.
- Roasting your favorite protein with seasonal produce is a tasty no-fuss way to incorporate a few servings of vegetables into a meal
- <https://s3.console.aws.amazon.com/s3/object/nutritionadvantageblog?region=us-east-2&prefix=One-pan-chicken-broccoli-peppers.pdf>
- Still haven't learned how to use your Instant Pot? Now would be a good time! You can get frozen proteins to the table *fast* with this safe and simple pressure cooker. A simple 12-minute recipe: frozen protein [like chicken thighs] + favorite jarred tomato sauce + a jar of olives = yummy cacciatore that will have everyone running to the table for dinner. If you use plant-based protein, like dried chickpeas, just soak the dried beans overnight and be sure they are covered with fluid [jarred sauce + some broth] before cooking in Instant Pot.

Chicken, Asparagus & Mashed Cauliflower

5 ingredients · 20 minutes · 4 servings



Directions

1. Preheat your oven to 425°F (218°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Toss the asparagus with half the olive oil and lay on the baking sheet. Sprinkle with sea salt and roast in the oven for about 12 minutes, flipping halfway through cooking time.
2. While the asparagus is roasting, bring a large pot of water to a boil under a steamer. Steam the cauliflower for 10 to 12 minutes, or until soft. Remove from heat and mash with the remaining olive oil. Season with salt to taste and divide between containers.
3. Add the asparagus to the containers along with the roasted chicken meat. Enjoy!

Notes

Storage

Keeps well in the fridge for 3 to 4 days.

More Carbs

Replace the cauliflower with potatoes, sweet potatoes, quinoa or rice.

Ingredients

- 3 cups** Asparagus (ends trimmed)
- 3 tbsps** Extra Virgin Olive Oil (divided)
- 1/4 tsp** Sea Salt
- 1 head** Cauliflower (chopped into florets)
- 1 lb** Whole Rotisserie Chicken (cooked, meat only, bones removed)

Roasted Butternut Squash Harvest Bowl

8 ingredients · 40 minutes · 4 servings



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 420°F (216°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Toss the butternut squash in half the olive oil and spread across the sheet. Bake in the oven for 20 to 25 minutes, or until lightly browned.
2. Heat remaining olive oil in a large skillet over medium-low heat. Add kale and saute until wilted (about 3 to 5 minutes). Turn off the heat.
3. Add the quinoa, roasted butternut squash and balsamic vinegar to the skillet then toss until well mixed. Season with sea salt and black pepper to taste.
4. Divide into bowls and top with pumpkin seeds and dried cranberries. Enjoy!

Notes

No Butternut Squash

Use sweet potato, carrots or beets instead.

Save Time

Use frozen bagged butternut squash.

Leftovers

Keeps well in the fridge up to 3 - 4 days.

Extra Flavour

Toss the butternut squash in cinnamon before roasting.

Ingredients

4 cups Butternut Squash (Buy pre-diced into cubes)

2 tbsps Extra Virgin Olive Oil (divided)

2 1/4 cups Quinoa (Cooked)

8 cups Kale Leaves (finely chopped)

1 tbsp Balsamic Vinegar

Sea Salt & Black Pepper (to taste)

1/2 cup Pumpkin Seeds

1/2 cup Dried Unsweetened Cranberries

Savory Butternut Squash

6 ingredients · 35 minutes · 4 servings



Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (204°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Add the chopped squash to the baking sheet, drizzle with avocado oil, sea salt and pepper and bake for 22 to 25 minutes, or until tender when pierced with a fork. Add the chopped hazelnuts to the baking sheet at the halfway point.
3. Remove the squash from the oven and transfer to a platter. Garnish with goat cheese and fresh parsley. Serve and enjoy!

Notes

Nut-Free

Omit the hazelnuts and use pumpkin or sunflower seeds instead.

No Parsley

Omit or use another fresh herb of your choice.

No Avocado Oil

Use extra virgin olive oil or melted coconut oil instead.

Ingredients

3 cups Butternut Squash (Buy peeled and pre-chopped)

1 tsp Avocado Oil

Sea Salt & Black Pepper (to taste)

1/4 cup Hazelnuts (roughly chopped)

1/4 cup Goat Cheese (crumbled)

1 tbsp Parsley (chopped)

Quinoa Greek Salad

9 ingredients · 45 minutes · 4 servings



Directions

1. Chop your vegetables and feta. Add everything to a large bowl or container. Add the cooled quinoa, red wine vinegar, olive oil, and season with sea salt and black pepper. This mixture can marinate in the fridge for up to 3 days.
2. Before serving, add the arugula and toss well. Enjoy!

Notes

Dairy-Free

Replace feta cheese with kalamata olives.

Low-Carb

Use cauliflower rice instead of quinoa.

Leftovers

Keeps well in the fridge for 3 days.

Ingredients

- 3 cups** Quinoa (Cooked)
- 2** Tomato (large, diced)
- 1** Cucumber (diced)
- 1/2 cup** Red Onion (diced)
- 1 cup** Feta Cheese (cubed or crumbled)
- 1/4 cup** Red Wine Vinegar
- 1 tbsp** Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Sea Salt & Black Pepper (to taste)
- 4 cups** Arugula

Quinoa & Kale Egg Muffins

8 ingredients · 30 minutes · 6 servings



Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C). Grease a muffin pan with the avocado oil.
2. Heat the extra virgin olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Cook the kale until wilted and tender. Remove from heat.
3. Add the cooked quinoa and the tomato to the wilted kale and stir to combine. Transfer the quinoa mixture evenly into the muffin cups of the prepared pan.
4. In a mixing bowl whisk the eggs until well scrambled. Whisk in the water and salt. Pour the egg mixture into the muffin cups to cover the quinoa, kale and tomatoes.
5. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes or just until the egg is cooked through and no longer liquid on top. Remove from the oven, let cool and enjoy!

Notes

Leftovers

Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to three days.

Serving Size

One serving is approximately two egg muffins.

More Flavor

Add red pepper flakes or black pepper.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 **tsps** Avocado Oil
- 1 **cup** Quinoa (Cooked)
- 1 **tbsp** Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 3 **cups** Kale Leaves (finely chopped)
- 1 Tomato (diced)
- 7 Egg
- 1/4 **cup** Water
- 1/2 **tsp** Sea Salt

Cucumber, Carrot & Egg Snack Box

4 ingredients · 15 minutes · 1 serving



Directions

1. Peel cooled egg and slice in half. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Assemble the cucumber and carrots into a storage container and refrigerate until ready to eat. Enjoy!

Notes

Leftovers

Keep the egg(s) whole after peeling if saving for later.

Additional Toppings

Serve the cucumber and carrots with hummus, baba ganoush, or a dip of your choice.

Make it Vegan

Replace the egg with nuts & seeds.

Ingredients

- 1 Egg
- Sea Salt & Black Pepper (to taste)
- 1/4 Cucumber (large, sliced)
- 1/2 cup Baby Carrots

Avocado Breakfast Toast

5 ingredients · 25 minutes · 2 servings



Directions

1. Spread the mashed avocado on the toast then arrange the tomato and hard-boiled egg slices on top. Season with salt and pepper to taste and enjoy!

Notes

How to Hard-Boil Eggs

Bring a small pot of salted water to a boil then carefully add the eggs. Cover the pot with a lid. Turn off the heat but keep the pot on the hot burner. Let stand for 12 minutes then drain. Place eggs in a bowl of ice water for 10 minutes before peeling.

Gluten-Free

Use gluten-free bread.

No Hard-Boiled Eggs

Use fried, scrambled or poached eggs instead.

Likes it Spicy

Add a pinch of chili flakes or hot sauce to the mashed avocado.

Ingredients

- 1 Avocado (small, mashed)
- 2 slices Whole Grain Bread (toasted)
- 1 Tomato (small, sliced)
- 2 Egg (hard-boiled, peeled and sliced)
- Sea Salt & Black Pepper (to taste)

One Pan Chicken, Broccoli & Peppers

7 ingredients · 25 minutes · 2 servings



Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the oil, vinegar, mustard, and half the salt. Add the broccoli and bell peppers, tossing gently until well covered. Transfer to the baking sheet and evenly space the vegetables.
3. Add the chicken and the remaining salt to the leftover marinade and toss well to coat. Place on top of the vegetables.
4. Bake for 20 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through and the vegetables are tender. Divide onto plates and enjoy!

Notes

Leftovers

Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to three days.

More Flavor

Marinate the chicken for at least 30 minutes before cooking.

Additional Toppings

Chopped fresh herbs.

Ingredients

- 2 **tbps** Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 2 **tbps** Apple Cider Vinegar
- 1 **tsp** Dijon Mustard
- 1/2 **tsp** Sea Salt (divided)
- 4 **cups** Broccoli (chopped into small florets)
- 2 **Red Bell Pepper** (sliced)
- 10 **ozs** Chicken Breast (sliced)

Warm Farro & Sweet Potato Salad

9 ingredients · 40 minutes · 4 servings



Directions

1. Add the farro to a medium sized pot with water and half the sea salt. Bring to a boil. Once water has boiled, reduce heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes. When the farro is done cooking, add the spinach to the pot. Stir and cover until the spinach is wilted.
2. In a small bowl, mix the extra virgin olive oil, lemon juice and remaining sea salt.
3. Divide the farro and spinach mixture between plates. Top with cubed sweet potato, walnuts and parsley. Drizzle the lemon dressing on top. Serve and enjoy!

Notes

Leftovers

Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to three days.

Gluten-Free

Instead of farro, use brown rice cooked according to package directions.

Nut-Free

Use pumpkin seeds instead of walnuts.

Ingredients

- 1 cup Farro (rinsed)
- 3 cups Water
- 1/2 tsp Sea Salt (divided)
- 4 cups Baby Spinach
- 1 Sweet Potato (large, cooked and cubed)
- 1/4 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 2 tbsps Lemon Juice
- 1/2 cup Walnuts (chopped)
- 1/3 cup Parsley (roughly chopped)