

PERCOLATE KITCHEN

weeknight cooking for working parents

1 Week Kid-Friendly Meal Plan

Creamy Tomato and Spinach Pasta: PREP CHECKLIST

Creamy, dreamy, kid-friendly and makes great leftovers (or an easy cold-lunch option!)

Supplies needed:

- Cutting board
- Chef's knife
- Measuring cup and spoons
- Large pot
- Colander
- Large pan

Prep Notes:

- Bring salted water to boil and add pasta
- Melt cream cheese (or substitute) over medium heat or in the microwave
- Measure out spinach, fresh or frozen

Label instructions:

Thaw if needed, reheat gently over medium heat while stirring. For best reheated results, store pasta and sauce separately and mix before serving.

Suggested Sides:

[Kid-Friendly Salad](#)

[Maple Butter Carrots](#)

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CREAMY TOMATO AND SPINACH PASTA: RECIPE

Swaps: Sub same amount of tofutti or other vegan cream cheese in place of cream cheese. Swap gluten free pasta for regular pasta.

Ingredients:

8 ounces pasta in your favorite shape

12 ounces tomato sauce

1 teaspoon dried basil

2 cloves garlic, grated

2 tablespoons olive oil

½ cup cream cheese

½ cup frozen chopped spinach OR 1 cup fresh baby spinach leaves

Method:

1. Heat a large pot of water over high heat until boiling. Add the pasta and cook until al dente, about 8 minutes. Drain and set aside.
2. While the water is boiling: In a large saucepan over medium-low heat, combine the tomato sauce, basil, olive oil and garlic until smooth. Stir in the cream cheese until well blended.
3. Add the spinach and stir to coat. If using fresh spinach, cook for another 5-8 minutes, stirring often, until the spinach has wilted.
4. Add the cooked pasta and toss to coat. Serve warm.

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STUFFED POBLANO PEPPERS: PREP CHECKLIST

These little peppers have a taco-ey flair to them; when my kids are being stubborn at the dinner table I let them scoop the insides out of the peppers and eat just that.

Supplies needed:

- Cutting board
- Chef's knife
- Measuring cup and spoons
- 9x13" baking dish
- Aluminum foil

Prep Notes:

- Start with pre-cooked rice or begin cooking the rice before anything else, so it cooks in the background while you prepare the rest of the meal
- Slice the poblanos in half and scoop out seeds

Label instructions:

Thaw if needed. Cover with foil and bake until peppers are cooked through and cheese has melted, about 20 minutes.

Suggested Sides:

[Easy 10-Minute Edamame](#)

[Parmesan Roasted Broccoli](#)

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Cheesy Rice Stuffed Poblano Peppers: RECIPE

Kids love the cheesy rice in this meal. It also stores great and can be used as a leftover side the next night, too.

Swaps: Use daiya shreds in place of shredded cheddar. White rice can be used in place of brown rice but may get slightly mushier while cooking, so beware.

Ingredients:

- 6 poblano peppers, sliced in half and seeds removed
- 2 cups cooked brown or wholegrain rice
- 1 cup shredded cheddar Jack cheese
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and grated
- 1/2 cup cooked black beans
- 1/2 cup corn kernels

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a large bowl, combine the cooked brown rice, cheddar cheese, black beans and corn.
3. Arrange the poblanos skin side down in a 9x13" greased casserole dish. Fill each poblano with the rice mixture.
4. Cover with foil, and bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 35-40 minutes or until the poblanos have softened all the way through and the cheese has melted.
5. If freezing, wrap tightly and store for up to one month. Thaw in the fridge overnight and then bake in a preheated oven of 350°F for 35 minutes or until the poblanos has softened and the cheese mixture has melted.

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WHITE BEAN HUMMUS SNACKY DINNER: PREP CHECKLIST

White beans make for a slightly smoother hummus, and when paired with “snacky” items like cut carrots, cucumbers, and crackers it feels like a picnic for dinner!

Supplies needed:

- Cutting board
- Chef's knife
- Food processor

Prep Notes:

- Feel free to swap in any veggies you love dipping: broccoli florets, sliced peppers, etc! If your kids will dip it, add it to the plate.

Label instructions:

Hummus will keep for up to 5 days if stored in a tightly covered container in the refrigerator.

Suggested Sides:

[Roasted Maple Sweet Potatoes](#)

[Baked Parmesan Zucchini Rounds](#)

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WHITE BEAN HUMMUS SNACKY DINNER: RECIPE

I love using white beans in place of chickpeas in this simple hummus as an easy way to change the flavor profile. If you prefer chickpea-based hummus, swap it in here.

Swaps: Can use sunflower butter instead of tahini.

Ingredients:

1 14.5 ounce can white cannellini beans

¼ cup tahini paste

1/2 cup olive oil, or more

2 cloves peeled garlic

¼ cup lemon juice

For the dippers: use crackers, cut cucumbers, carrots, peppers, and more.

Prepare the ingredients:

Add the beans, tahini, garlic and lemon juice to a food processor and blend til somewhat smooth. Scrape down the sides of the processor, then add the oil in a thin stream while the processor is running, pausing every minute or so to scrape down the sides of the machine and before starting it again.

Hummus will keep for up to a week if covered tightly and stored in the cold.

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VEGGIE NUGGETS: PREP CHECKLIST

I feel good about serving these nuggets to my kids, who I sometimes think will eat just about anything if it's dipped in ketchup.

Supplies needed:

- Cutting board
- Chef's knife
- Food processor
- Sheet pan

Prep Notes:

- I've included my favorite blend-able veggies in the recipe below, but feel free to play around and use other veggies as you have them.
- If you're making these ahead of time for later, you can mix the vegetables and store separately, then coat with breadcrumbs before baking.

Label instructions:

These veggies will freeze if first placed on a pan or plate until frozen solid, then transferred to a bag. Thaw in the fridge before cooking and bake uncovered. After freezing they will not be as crispy as when cooked from fresh.

Suggested Sides:

[Cheesy Zucchini Rice](#)

[Honey Butter Corn](#)

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VEGGIE NUGGETS: RECIPE

I add in whichever veggies I've got on hand and make sure to always coat with breadcrumbs. It makes them crispier and adds to the "nugget" feel! Make sure to have plenty of ketchup for dipping! I prefer panko breadcrumbs always because they are crispier, but regular breadcrumbs will work fine, too.

Swaps: substitute any other vegetables you have on hand and know your kids enjoy the flavor of; feel free to play around. GF breadcrumbs are a straight swap here. For the eggs, swap 1 tablespoon flax seed soaked for about 5 minutes in 3 tablespoons water as a replacement and add to the food processor instead of dipping the nuggets, as described below. The water should wet the nuggets enough to coat; if not, dip again in water before coating with breadcrumbs.

Ingredients:

1 large cooked sweet potato, skin removed and mashed
1 cup broccoli florets (frozen or fresh)
½ cup corn kernels
2 cloves garlic, peeled
2 egg, whisked
1 cup breadcrumbs

Method:

Combine the sweet potato, broccoli, corn, and garlic in a food processor and blend, pausing occasionally to scrape down the sides, until smooth.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Whisk the eggs in a small bowl and set aside.

Pour the breadcrumbs into another small bowl and set beside the eggs.

Scoop the nuggets out of the processor and roll into a ball, then flatten with your hands. Dip first in eggs, then breadcrumbs.

Arrange the nuggets side-by-side on a large sheet pan.

Bake for 10-12 minutes until browned.

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PUMPKIN BAKED TAQUITOS: PREP CHECKLIST

I love the nutty, sweet flavor of roasted butternut squash and it goes PERFECTLY in this Latin-flavored taquito!

Supplies needed:

- Cutting board
- Chef's knife
- Sheet pan

Prep Notes:

- Make sure the canned pumpkin you use is unsweetened.
- Swap in roasted and mashed fresh pumpkin in place of canned if you have it!
- You can use corn tortillas here as well but they may not cook as crispy as flour tortillas. If they're too stiff to roll at first, microwave them for 10-15 seconds and store in a kitchen towel to keep the heat.
- Not a pumpkin lover? Roasted and mashed sweet potato or butternut squash work great here, too.

Label instructions:

These freeze great! Freeze on a pan or plate until frozen through, then transfer to a large ziplock bag for up to 3 months. Thaw in the fridge before baking.

Suggested Sides:

[Cauliflower tots](#)

[Brown sugar glazed beets](#)

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PUMPKIN BAKED TAQUITOS: RECIPE

Swaps: Use roasted sweet potatoes or roasted butternut squash in place of pumpkin. Can swap corn tortillas for flour.

Ingredients:

1 14.5 ounce can unsweetened pumpkin mash

8-10 small (6") flour tortillas

½ cup corn kernels

½ teaspoon cumin

½ teaspoon garlic powder

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Mix the pumpkin, cumin, corn and garlic in large bowl until combined.
3. Place 2-3 tablespoons pumpkin mix in a line just off center of the flour tortillas, then roll the tortillas in a cigar shape around the puree.
4. Place the taquitos seam side down on a large sheet pan.
5. Bake 10-12 minutes until crispy, then serve

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