



Quick Recipes

20 family classics, 30 minutes or less · Bayou Littles, Houston

Kosher-style: no pork or shellfish, and never meat with dairy in the same recipe. Each recipe is marked Meat, Dairy or Pareve.

Food safety: chicken 165°F · ground meat 160°F · fish 145°F. No honey for babies under 1. For toddlers, quarter grapes and skip whole nuts. Allergen notes are a guide; check your labels.

About these recipes: each one is a popular, widely made dish. We link a highly rated version on a major recipe site (ratings as shown in Oct 2026) and wrote our own simple version.



What's inside

Dinner

Sheet-Pan Chicken Fajitas · Meat · 30 min · p. 3

Turkey Taco Skillet · Meat · 25 min · p. 4

Quick Chicken Tortilla Soup · Meat · 30 min · p. 5

Lemon Garlic Baked Salmon · Pareve · 20 min · p. 6

Chicken Fried Rice (Leftover Rice) · Meat · 22 min · p. 7

Easy Beef and Broccoli · Meat · 22 min · p. 8

Meatless

One-Pan Skillet Baked Ziti · Dairy · 30 min · p. 9

Stovetop Mac and Cheese · Dairy · 20 min · p. 10

Black Bean Quesadillas · Dairy · 15 min · p. 11

Breakfast

Fluffy Banana Pancakes · Dairy · 20 min · p. 12

Potato and Egg Breakfast Tacos · Dairy · 25 min · p. 13

Overnight Oats · Dairy · 5 min · p. 14

Veggie Egg Muffins · Dairy · 30 min · p. 15

Lunchbox

English Muffin Mini Pizzas · Dairy · 15 min · p. 16

No-Bake Energy Bites · Pareve · 10 min · p. 17

Classic Chicken Salad Wraps · Meat · 15 min · p. 18

Veggie Cream Cheese Pinwheels · Dairy · 15 min · p. 19

Treats

3-Ingredient Peanut Butter Cookies · Pareve · 15 min · p. 20

Crispy Rice Marshmallow Treats · Dairy · 10 min · p. 21

1-Ingredient Banana "Nice Cream" · Pareve · 5 min · p. 22

Meat

Dinner

30 min

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Sheet-Pan Chicken Fajitas

One pan, about 30 minutes, and everyone builds their own taco.

Prep 10 min · Cook 20 min · Serves 4

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: no · Dairy: no · Gluten: Flour tortillas contain gluten; use corn tortillas to avoid it.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1½ lb boneless chicken breasts or thighs, cut in thin strips
- ☐ 3 bell peppers (mixed colors), sliced
- ☐ 1 onion, sliced
- ☐ 2 Tbsp olive oil
- ☐ 1 Tbsp chili powder
- ☐ 1 tsp ground cumin
- ☐ 1 tsp garlic powder
- ☐ ½ tsp paprika
- ☐ ¾ tsp salt
- ☐ 1 lime
- ☐ 8 small tortillas, warmed
- ☐ To serve: salsa, sliced avocado or guacamole, shredded lettuce

Storage: Fridge, covered, up to 3 days. Reheat in a skillet until steaming hot. Leftovers make great rice bowls.

STEPS

1. Heat the oven to 425°F and line a large sheet pan with foil or parchment.
2. Toss the chicken, peppers and onion with the oil and all the spices right on the pan.
3. Spread everything out in one layer so it roasts instead of steams.
4. Roast 18–22 minutes, stirring once, until the peppers are soft and the chicken reaches 165°F inside.
5. Squeeze the lime over the pan and pile into warm tortillas with your toppings.

Kid helper: Kids can toss the peppers with the spices (before the raw chicken goes on) and set out the topping bowls.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Picky eater: roast the peppers on one side of the pan and serve plain chicken strips with a little salsa.
- Budget: use thighs, which cost less and stay juicy.
- Too spicy? Halve the chili powder; the cumin and paprika carry plenty of flavor.

Safety: Cook chicken to 165°F. Keep raw chicken away from the toppings and wash hands and boards after handling it.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.8★, 463 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/255038/sheet-pan-chicken-fajitas/> · Also: Budget Bytes (4.79★ from 415 votes, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.budgetbytes.com/oven-fajitas/>

Meat Dinner 25 min \$

Turkey Taco Skillet

Taco night in one skillet: meat, beans, corn and rice together, ready in about 25 minutes.

Prep 5 min · Cook 20 min · Serves 4–6

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: no · Dairy: no · Gluten: Naturally gluten-free if your taco seasoning and broth are gluten-free.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1 Tbsp oil
- ☐ 1 lb ground turkey
- ☐ 1 small onion, diced
- ☐ 2 Tbsp taco seasoning (or 1 Tbsp chili powder + 1 tsp cumin + ½ tsp each garlic powder and salt)
- ☐ 1 can (15 oz) black beans, drained and rinsed
- ☐ 1 cup frozen corn
- ☐ 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes with juice
- ☐ ¾ cup long-grain white rice
- ☐ 1½ cups chicken broth
- ☐ To serve: avocado, salsa, chopped cilantro, tortilla chips

Storage: Fridge up to 4 days; freezes well up to 3 months. Add a splash of water when reheating.

STEPS

1. Heat the oil in a large deep skillet over medium-high. Cook the onion and turkey, breaking it up, until no pink remains and it reaches 160°F.
2. Stir in the taco seasoning for 1 minute.
3. Add the beans, corn, tomatoes, rice and broth. Stir and bring to a boil.
4. Cover, turn the heat to low and simmer 15–18 minutes, until the rice is tender and the liquid is absorbed.
5. Fluff, rest 2 minutes off the heat, then top and serve.

Kid helper: Kids can rinse the beans in a colander and measure the rice and corn.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Swap ground beef or chicken for the turkey.
- Picky eater: skip the tomatoes' heat by using plain (not green-chile) tomatoes and serve chips on the side for scooping.
- Stretch it: add a second can of beans and ½ cup more broth.

Safety: Ground turkey must reach 160°F (until no pink remains).

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Budget Bytes (4.75★ from 39 votes, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.budgetbytes.com/turkey-taco-skillet/>

Meat Dinner 30 min \$

Quick Chicken Tortilla Soup

A Houston-weeknight favorite that tastes slow-simmered but takes 30 minutes.

Prep 10 min · Cook 20 min · Serves 6

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: no · Dairy: no · Gluten: Gluten-free if you use corn tortillas/chips and a gluten-free broth.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1 Tbsp oil
- ☐ 1 onion, diced
- ☐ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ☐ 1 tsp ground cumin
- ☐ 1 tsp chili powder
- ☐ 6 cups chicken broth
- ☐ 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes (or tomatoes with green chiles)
- ☐ 1 lb boneless chicken breasts (or 3 cups cooked shredded chicken)
- ☐ 1 can (15 oz) black beans, drained
- ☐ 1 cup frozen corn
- ☐ Juice of 1 lime, salt to taste
- ☐ To serve: tortilla chips or baked tortilla strips, avocado, cilantro

Storage: Fridge up to 4 days; freeze (without chips) up to 3 months. Add chips only when serving so they stay crunchy.

STEPS

1. In a big pot, cook the onion in oil over medium heat for 4 minutes. Add garlic, cumin and chili powder for 30 seconds.
2. Add the broth and tomatoes and bring to a simmer. Add the whole raw chicken breasts.
3. Simmer gently 12–15 minutes, until the chicken reaches 165°F. Lift it out and shred with two forks.
4. Return the chicken with the beans and corn; simmer 3 more minutes.
5. Stir in lime juice and salt. Ladle into bowls and top with crushed chips and avocado.

Kid helper: Kids can crush the tortilla chips in a zip bag and squeeze the lime (with a citrus press).

TIPS & SWAPS

- Shortcut: use a store rotisserie chicken and add it with the beans.
- Mild for kids: use plain diced tomatoes; set out hot sauce for grown-ups.
- Budget: thighs work too and stay tender.

Safety: Chicken to 165°F. Cool leftovers and refrigerate within 2 hours.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.7★, 2,084 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/13351/chicken-tortilla-soup-i/>

Pareve Dinner 20 min \$\$ Under 20 min

Lemon Garlic Baked Salmon

Five ingredients, 20 minutes, and mild enough for most kids.

Prep 5 min · Cook 15 min · Serves 4

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: no · Dairy: no · Gluten: no · Contains fish.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 4 salmon fillets (about 5 oz each), skin on or off
- ☐ 2 Tbsp olive oil
- ☐ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ☐ 1 lemon: zest plus 2 Tbsp juice, and slices for the pan
- ☐ ½ tsp salt, ¼ tsp pepper
- ☐ 1 Tbsp chopped parsley or dill (optional)

Storage: Fridge up to 2 days. Eat cold flaked over salad or in a wrap, or warm gently.

STEPS

1. Heat the oven to 400°F. Line a baking dish or sheet pan with parchment.
2. Stir the oil, garlic, lemon zest, lemon juice, salt and pepper in a small bowl.
3. Lay the salmon in the pan and spoon the lemon mixture over each piece. Tuck lemon slices around it.
4. Bake 12–15 minutes, until the thickest part flakes easily and reads 145°F.
5. Sprinkle with herbs and serve with rice and a green vegetable.

Kid helper: Kids can zest the lemon (with supervision) and brush the sauce on with a pastry brush.

TIPS & SWAPS

- **Kosher note:** this is pareve because it uses olive oil, not butter. Serve with pareve or dairy sides, but traditionally fish is not served together with meat.
- **Picky eater:** leave one fillet with just oil and salt.
- **Budget:** frozen salmon fillets work; thaw overnight in the fridge.

Safety: Cook fish to 145°F, until it flakes. Check for pin bones before serving to little kids.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.8★, 3,242 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/34746/baked-salmon-ii/> · Also: Allrecipes (4.4★, 128 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/12727/lemon-garlic-salmon/>

Meat Dinner 22 min \$

Chicken Fried Rice (Leftover Rice)

Turns yesterday's rice and a few eggs into dinner faster than takeout.

Prep 10 min · Cook 12 min · Serves 4

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: yes · Dairy: no · Gluten: Soy sauce has wheat; use tamari for gluten-free. · Contains soy.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 2 Tbsp neutral oil, divided
- ☐ 2 eggs, beaten
- ☐ 1 lb boneless chicken, diced small (or 2 cups cooked chicken)
- ☐ 1 small onion, diced
- ☐ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ☐ 1½ cups frozen peas and carrots
- ☐ 4 cups cold cooked rice (day-old is best)
- ☐ 3 Tbsp soy sauce
- ☐ 1 tsp sesame oil (optional)
- ☐ 2 green onions, sliced

Storage: Fridge up to 3 days. Reheat until steaming hot.

STEPS

1. Heat 1 tsp oil in a large skillet over medium. Scramble the eggs until just set; move to a plate.
2. Add 1 Tbsp oil, turn the heat to medium-high and cook the chicken until it reaches 165°F, 5–6 minutes. (Using cooked chicken? Add it in step 4.)
3. Add the onion, garlic, and peas and carrots; cook 2 minutes.
4. Add the remaining oil and the rice. Press it flat and let it sizzle 1–2 minutes, then stir. Repeat twice.
5. Stir in the soy sauce, sesame oil, eggs and green onions. Serve hot.

Kid helper: Kids can crack and beat the eggs and break up clumps of cold rice with clean hands.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Cold rice fries; fresh rice turns mushy. In a pinch, spread fresh rice on a tray and chill 20 minutes.
- Picky eater: serve a scoop before adding green onions.
- Meatless: skip the chicken, use 4 eggs and it becomes pareve.

Safety: Chicken to 165°F. Cooked rice must go in the fridge within an hour or two of cooking and be used within 3–4 days.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.5★, 2,113 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/16954/chinese-chicken-fried-rice-ii/>

Meat Dinner 22 min \$\$

Easy Beef and Broccoli

Takeout-style flavor in 25 minutes; the sauce makes kids eat their broccoli.

Prep 10 min · Cook 12 min · Serves 4

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: no · Dairy: no · Gluten: Soy sauce has wheat; use tamari for gluten-free. · Contains soy.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1 lb flank steak or sirloin, sliced thin across the grain
- ☐ 1 Tbsp cornstarch plus 1 Tbsp soy sauce (to coat the beef)
- ☐ 4 cups broccoli florets
- ☐ 2 Tbsp neutral oil
- ☐ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ☐ 1 tsp grated fresh ginger
- ☐ Sauce: $\frac{1}{3}$ cup soy sauce (low-sodium is fine), $\frac{1}{3}$ cup water, 2 Tbsp brown sugar, 1 Tbsp cornstarch
- ☐ Cooked rice, to serve

Storage: Fridge up to 3 days. Reheat in a skillet with a spoon of water.

STEPS

1. Toss the beef with 1 Tbsp cornstarch and 1 Tbsp soy sauce. Whisk the sauce ingredients in a separate bowl.
2. Steam or microwave the broccoli with a splash of water, covered, 2–3 minutes until bright green.
3. Heat the oil in a large skillet over high. Sear the beef in one layer, in batches, 1–2 minutes per side.
4. Turn the heat to medium, add garlic and ginger for 30 seconds, then pour in the sauce. Stir until thick and glossy, about 1 minute.
5. Return the beef and broccoli, toss to coat and serve over rice.

Kid helper: Kids can whisk the sauce and snap broccoli into little trees.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Slice beef easier: freeze it 15 minutes first.
- Budget: use chicken thighs instead (cook to 165°F).
- Picky eater: keep some plain broccoli and beef aside before saucing.

Safety: Thin-sliced whole cuts of beef are safe at 145°F; they get there fast when seared. Cook ground beef, if you swap it in, to 160°F.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.6★, 1,230 ratings, as of Oct 2026):
<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/191156/restaurant-style-beef-and-broccoli/>

Dairy Meatless 30 min \$

One-Pan Skillet Baked Ziti

All the cheesy baked-ziti comfort, made in one oven-safe skillet in 30 minutes.

Prep 5 min · Cook 25 min · Serves 6

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: no · Dairy: yes · Gluten: Pasta has wheat; gluten-free pasta works (cook time varies).

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1 Tbsp olive oil
- ☐ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ☐ 1 jar (24 oz) marinara sauce
- ☐ 2½ cups water
- ☐ 1 tsp salt, ½ tsp dried oregano or Italian seasoning
- ☐ 12 oz ziti or penne (dry)
- ☐ 1 cup ricotta
- ☐ 1½ cups shredded mozzarella
- ☐ ¼ cup grated Parmesan

Storage: Fridge up to 4 days; freezes well. Reheat covered with a splash of water.

STEPS

1. Heat the oil in a large oven-safe skillet over medium. Add garlic for 30 seconds.
2. Add marinara, water, salt and oregano and bring to a boil. Stir in the dry pasta.
3. Cover and simmer 12–14 minutes, stirring every few minutes, until the pasta is just tender and the sauce is thick. Add a splash of water if it gets dry.
4. Heat the broiler. Dollop ricotta over the pasta and scatter the mozzarella and Parmesan on top.
5. Broil 2–4 minutes, watching closely, until bubbly and spotted brown. Rest 5 minutes.

Kid helper: Kids can spoon on the ricotta dollops and sprinkle the cheese.

TIPS & SWAPS

- No oven-safe pan? Spoon the pasta into a baking dish before topping.
- Sneak in veggies: stir in a handful of spinach or diced zucchini with the pasta.
- Budget: skip the ricotta and use 2 cups mozzarella.

Safety: Use an oven mitt on the skillet handle; it stays hot long after broiling.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.7★, 8,987 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/11758/baked-ziti-i/> · Also: Budget Bytes (4.82★ from 69 votes, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.budgetbytes.com/classic-baked-ziti/>



Dairy

Meatless

20 min

\$

Under 20 min

Stovetop Mac and Cheese

Creamy, real-cheese mac in about 20 minutes, from pantry staples.

Prep 5 min · Cook 15 min · Serves 4

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: no · Dairy: yes · Gluten: Pasta and flour have wheat.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 8 oz elbow macaroni
- ☐ 2 Tbsp butter
- ☐ 2 Tbsp all-purpose flour
- ☐ 2 cups milk
- ☐ 2 cups shredded sharp cheddar (8 oz)
- ☐ ½ tsp salt, pinch of pepper
- ☐ ¼ tsp mustard powder or paprika (optional)

Storage: Fridge up to 3 days. Reheat with a splash of milk, stirring.

STEPS

1. Cook the macaroni in salted boiling water until just tender; drain.
2. Meanwhile melt the butter in a saucepan over medium. Whisk in the flour and cook 1 minute.
3. Slowly whisk in the milk. Keep whisking until it simmers and thickens, 4–5 minutes.
4. Take the pan off the heat and stir in the cheese a handful at a time until smooth. Season.
5. Stir in the pasta and serve right away.

Kid helper: Kids can measure the cheese and stir it into the sauce (off the heat, with a long spoon).

TIPS & SWAPS

- Shred your own cheese; pre-shredded can turn grainy.
- Add frozen peas or steamed broccoli to the pot for the last 2 minutes of pasta cooking.
- Budget: mix half cheddar with any cheese ends you have.

Safety: Toddlers: let it cool, the sauce holds heat.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.6★, 1,153 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/238691/simple-macaroni-and-cheese/>

Dairy Meatless 15 min \$ Under 20 min

Black Bean Quesadillas

Cheap, filling, 15 minutes, and easy to eat with hands.

Prep 5 min · Cook 10 min · Serves 4

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: no · Dairy: yes · Gluten: Flour tortillas have wheat; corn tortillas work.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1 can (15 oz) black beans, drained and rinsed
- ☐ 1 cup frozen corn, thawed
- ☐ ½ tsp ground cumin, ¼ tsp garlic powder, pinch of salt
- ☐ 2 cups shredded Monterey Jack or cheddar
- ☐ 4 large flour tortillas
- ☐ 1 Tbsp oil or butter for the pan
- ☐ To serve: salsa, sour cream or plain yogurt, avocado

Storage: Fridge up to 3 days; reheat in a dry skillet to re-crisp.

STEPS

1. Mash about half the beans with a fork, then mix in the rest with the corn and spices.
2. Spread a quarter of the beans over half of each tortilla. Top with cheese and fold over.
3. Heat a skillet over medium and brush with a little oil.
4. Cook 2 at a time, 2–3 minutes per side, until golden and the cheese melts.
5. Rest 1 minute, cut into wedges and serve with salsa.

Kid helper: Kids can mash the beans and fill and fold their own quesadilla.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Add spinach or leftover roasted vegetables inside.
- Picky eater: make a plain cheese one and serve beans on the side.
- Make ahead: assemble, wrap and freeze; cook from frozen over medium-low.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.7★, 1,959 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/104850/black-bean-and-corn-quesadillas/> · Also: Budget Bytes (4.74★ from 310 votes, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.budgetbytes.com/hearty-black-bean-quesadillas/>



Dairy

Breakfast

20 min

\$

Under 20 min

Fluffy Banana Pancakes

Uses up spotty bananas, and the batter stirs together in one bowl.

Prep 5 min · Cook 15 min · Serves 4 (about 10 pancakes)

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: yes · Dairy: yes · Gluten: Contains wheat flour.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ☐ 1 Tbsp sugar
- ☐ 1 Tbsp baking powder
- ☐ ½ tsp salt
- ☐ ½ tsp cinnamon (optional)
- ☐ 1 egg
- ☐ 1¼ cups milk
- ☐ 2 Tbsp melted butter or oil, plus more for the pan
- ☐ 2 ripe bananas, mashed

Storage: Fridge 3 days or freezer 2 months. Reheat in the toaster.

STEPS

1. Whisk the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and cinnamon in a large bowl.
2. In another bowl, whisk the egg, milk, melted butter and mashed banana.
3. Pour wet into dry and stir just until combined; a few lumps are good.
4. Heat a lightly greased skillet over medium. Pour ¼ cup batter per pancake.
5. Flip when bubbles pop on top and the edges look dry, about 2 minutes; cook 1 more minute.

Kid helper: Kids can mash the bananas and whisk the dry ingredients.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Overmixing makes tough pancakes: stop as soon as the flour disappears.
- Freeze extras flat, then toast for school mornings.
- Dairy-free: use oat milk and oil and it becomes pareve.

Safety: No honey for babies under 1 year, not even as a pancake topping.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.6★, 2,633 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/20334/banana-pancakes-i/>

Dairy Breakfast 25 min \$

Potato and Egg Breakfast Tacos

The Houston breakfast classic, made at home for a fraction of the drive-thru price.

Prep 5 min · Cook 20 min · Serves 4 (8 tacos)

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: yes · Dairy: yes · Gluten: Flour tortillas have wheat; corn tortillas work.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 2 medium potatoes (about 1 lb), diced small
- ☐ 2 Tbsp oil
- ☐ ½ tsp salt, ¼ tsp each garlic powder and chili powder
- ☐ 6 eggs, beaten with a pinch of salt
- ☐ ½ cup shredded cheddar or Monterey Jack
- ☐ 8 small flour or corn tortillas
- ☐ Salsa or pico de gallo

Storage: Filling keeps 3 days in the fridge. Assembled tacos freeze up to 2 months.

STEPS

1. Microwave the diced potatoes in a covered bowl with 1 Tbsp water for 4 minutes, to give them a head start.
2. Heat the oil in a skillet over medium-high. Add potatoes and seasonings; cook 8–10 minutes, stirring now and then, until crisp and tender.
3. Turn the heat to medium-low, pour in the eggs and stir gently until just set, about 2 minutes.
4. Sprinkle with cheese and take off the heat.
5. Warm the tortillas in a dry pan or microwave, fill and top with salsa.

Kid helper: Kids can whisk the eggs and roll their own tacos.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Leftover roasted or baked potatoes make this a 10-minute meal.
- Add black beans or sautéed peppers.
- Make-ahead: roll tacos in foil and freeze; reheat in the oven.

Safety: Cook eggs until no liquid egg remains (160°F).

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.5★, 292 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/85185/authentic-mexican-breakfast-tacos/>

Dairy Breakfast 5 min \$

Overnight Oats

Five minutes the night before, and breakfast is waiting in the fridge.

Prep 5 min · No cooking · Plus overnight (at least 6 hours) in the fridge · Serves 1 (scale up as needed)

Allergens: Nuts: Only if you add nut butter or nuts. · Eggs: no · Dairy: yes · Gluten: Oats are often cross-contaminated; buy certified gluten-free oats if needed.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ ½ cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- ☐ ½ cup milk (any kind)
- ☐ ¼ cup plain or vanilla yogurt
- ☐ 1 tsp chia seeds (optional)
- ☐ 1–2 tsp maple syrup or honey (see safety note)
- ☐ Pinch of cinnamon
- ☐ Toppings: berries, sliced banana, diced apple

Storage: Fridge up to 4 days (add fresh toppings when serving).

STEPS

1. Add the oats, milk, yogurt, chia, sweetener and cinnamon to a jar or container.
2. Stir well, making sure no dry oats are stuck at the bottom.
3. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
4. In the morning, stir, add a splash of milk if it's too thick, and top with fruit.

Kid helper: Kids can make their own jar: measuring, stirring and choosing toppings.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Make 4 jars on Sunday; they keep 4 days.
- Flavor ideas: cocoa + banana, apple + cinnamon, berries + vanilla.
- Dairy-free: use oat or soy milk and dairy-free yogurt, and it becomes pareve.

Safety: No honey for babies under 1 year; use maple syrup or no sweetener for them. Use rolled oats, not instant.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.8★, 287 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/244251/no-cook-overnight-oatmeal/> · Also: Budget Bytes (4.89★ from 53 votes, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.budgetbytes.com/overnight-oats-base-recipe-plus-variations/>

Dairy Breakfast 30 min \$

Veggie Egg Muffins

Grab-and-go protein for busy mornings; make a dozen and reheat all week.

Prep 10 min · Cook 20 min · Serves 12 muffins

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: yes · Dairy: yes · Gluten: no

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 10 eggs
- ☐ ¼ cup milk
- ☐ ½ tsp salt, ¼ tsp pepper
- ☐ 1½ cups finely chopped vegetables (spinach, bell pepper, tomato, green onion, broccoli)
- ☐ ¾ cup shredded cheddar
- ☐ Oil or cooking spray for the pan

Storage: Fridge up to 4 days; freeze up to 2 months. Microwave 30–45 seconds.

STEPS

1. Heat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 12-cup muffin pan well (or use silicone liners).
2. Whisk the eggs, milk, salt and pepper in a large measuring cup.
3. Divide the vegetables and cheese among the cups.
4. Pour the egg mixture over, filling each cup about ¾ full.
5. Bake 18–22 minutes, until puffed and set in the center (160°F). Cool 5 minutes before removing.

Kid helper: Kids can drop the veggies and cheese into each muffin cup.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Picky eater: chop veggies very small, or make a few plain cheese ones.
- Use leftover roasted veggies.
- They sink a little as they cool; that's normal.

Safety: Bake until the centers are set, with no runny egg.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.7★, 94 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/278443/easy-breakfast-egg-muffins/>



Dairy

Lunchbox

15 min

\$

Under 20 min

English Muffin Mini Pizzas

Kids build their own in 15 minutes; also great cold in a lunchbox.

Prep 5 min · Cook 10 min · Serves 4 (8 mini pizzas)

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: no · Dairy: yes · Gluten: English muffins have wheat; gluten-free muffins work.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 4 English muffins, split
- ☐ ½ cup pizza sauce or marinara
- ☐ 1 cup shredded mozzarella
- ☐ ½ tsp dried oregano or Italian seasoning
- ☐ Toppings: diced bell pepper, sliced olives, mushrooms, spinach

Storage: Fridge up to 3 days. Reheat in a toaster oven to re-crisp.

STEPS

1. Heat the oven (or toaster oven) to 400°F. Put the muffin halves on a sheet pan.
2. Toast them 3–4 minutes so the bottoms won't get soggy.
3. Spread each with about 1 Tbsp sauce, then add cheese and toppings.
4. Bake 6–8 minutes, until the cheese melts and bubbles.
5. Cool 2 minutes before eating.

Kid helper: Kids can spread the sauce and make faces with the toppings.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Lunchbox: bake the night before, chill, and pack cold, or in a warm thermos-style container.
- Swap bagels or pita for English muffins.
- Budget: it's a great way to use up odds and ends of vegetables.

Safety: For toddlers, cut into small pieces and quarter any round toppings like olives or cherry tomatoes.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.7★, 340 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/86649/fast-english-muffin-pizzas/>

Pareve Lunchbox 10 min \$

No-Bake Energy Bites

Five-minute stir-and-roll snack; no oven, keeps all week.

Prep 10 min · No cooking · Plus 30 minutes in the fridge · Serves about 20 bites

Allergens: Nuts: Contains peanuts (peanut butter). Use sunflower seed butter for nut-free schools. · Eggs: no · Dairy: Chocolate chips may contain milk; pick dairy-free chips to keep it pareve. · Gluten: Use certified gluten-free oats if needed.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- ☐ ½ cup creamy peanut butter (or sunflower seed butter)
- ☐ ⅓ cup honey or maple syrup (see safety note)
- ☐ ½ cup mini chocolate chips
- ☐ 2 Tbsp ground flaxseed or chia seeds (optional)
- ☐ 1 tsp vanilla

Storage: Fridge up to 1 week; freezer up to 3 months.

STEPS

1. Stir everything together in a bowl until well mixed.
2. Chill 20–30 minutes so it's easier to roll.
3. Scoop level tablespoons and roll into balls.
4. Store in a covered container in the fridge.

Kid helper: Kids can stir the mix and roll the balls (great job for little hands).

TIPS & SWAPS

- Too sticky? Add a spoon more oats. Too dry? A spoon more nut butter.
- Swap the chips for raisins or dried cranberries.
- Nut-free schools: sunflower seed butter works the same.

Safety: No honey for babies under 1 year (use maple syrup). For toddlers, flatten bites or cut in small pieces: sticky nut-butter balls can be a choking risk.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.8★, 778 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/239969/no-bake-energy-bites/> · Also: Gimme Some Oven (4.92★ from 436 votes, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.gimmesomeoven.com/no-bake-energy-bites/>

Meat Lunchbox 15 min \$\$ Under 20 min

Classic Chicken Salad Wraps

A rotisserie chicken turns into a week of lunches in 15 minutes.

Prep 15 min · No cooking · Serves 4

Allergens: Nuts: Only if you add nuts (classic versions often use pecans or almonds). · Eggs: Mayonnaise contains egg. · Dairy: no · Gluten: Tortillas and bread have wheat; serve in lettuce cups to avoid it.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 3 cups cooked chicken, chopped (about 1 rotisserie chicken)
- ☐ ½ cup mayonnaise
- ☐ 1 tsp lemon juice
- ☐ 1 celery stalk, finely diced
- ☐ 1 cup grapes, quartered (see safety note)
- ☐ ¼ tsp salt, pinch of pepper
- ☐ 4 large tortillas, or bread or lettuce leaves

Storage: Fridge up to 3 days. Pack lunches with an ice pack.

STEPS

1. Stir the mayonnaise, lemon juice, salt and pepper in a bowl.
2. Fold in the chicken, celery and grapes.
3. Taste and adjust the seasoning.
4. Spoon onto tortillas, roll up tightly and cut in half.

Kid helper: Kids can pull the chicken off the bone (once cooled) and quarter grapes with a butter knife.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Picky eater: skip the celery or chop it very fine.
- Swap the grapes for diced apple.
- Kosher note: keep it meat. No cheese in the wrap.

Safety: Toddler choking hazard: always cut grapes into quarters lengthwise; leave out whole nuts. Keep chilled; don't let it sit out over 2 hours.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.7★, 837 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/8499/basic-chicken-salad/>

Dairy Lunchbox 15 min \$ Under 20 min

Veggie Cream Cheese Pinwheels

Colorful, no-cook roll-ups that hold up well in a lunchbox.

Prep 15 min · No cooking · Plus 30 minutes chilling (optional, slices neater) · Serves 4 (about 24 pinwheels)

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: no · Dairy: yes · Gluten: Tortillas have wheat; gluten-free wraps work.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 8 oz cream cheese, softened
- ☐ 2 Tbsp plain yogurt or sour cream
- ☐ ½ tsp garlic powder, ½ tsp dried dill, pinch of salt
- ☐ ½ cup finely shredded carrot
- ☐ ½ cup finely chopped bell pepper
- ☐ 1 cup baby spinach, chopped
- ☐ 4 large (10-inch) flour tortillas

Storage: Fridge up to 2 days (wrapped). Pack with an ice pack.

STEPS

1. Mix the cream cheese, yogurt and seasonings until smooth.
2. Spread a thin layer over each tortilla, right to the edges.
3. Scatter the vegetables over the bottom two-thirds.
4. Roll up tightly, wrap in plastic and chill if you have time.
5. Trim the ends and slice into 1-inch rounds.

Kid helper: Kids can spread the cream cheese and sprinkle the veggies.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Pareve option: use hummus instead of cream cheese.
- Picky eater: start with just shredded carrot.
- Make the night before; they slice cleaner chilled.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.5★, 1,032 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/14961/party-pinwheels/>

Pareve Treats 15 min \$ Under 20 min

3-Ingredient Peanut Butter Cookies

No flour, no mixer, three pantry items, and out of the oven in 20 minutes.

Prep 5 min · Cook 10 min · Serves about 18 cookies

Allergens: Nuts: Contains peanuts. · Eggs: yes · Dairy: no · Gluten: No flour; check your peanut butter label if you need gluten-free.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- ☐ 1 cup sugar (white or brown)
- ☐ 1 egg

Storage: Airtight at room temp up to 5 days; freezes well.

STEPS

1. Heat the oven to 350°F and line a baking sheet with parchment.
2. Stir the peanut butter, sugar and egg until smooth.
3. Roll into 1-inch balls and set 2 inches apart.
4. Press each with a fork twice to make a crisscross.
5. Bake 9–11 minutes, until puffed and just set. Cool on the pan 5 minutes; they firm up as they cool.

Kid helper: Kids can roll the balls and press the fork crisscross.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Natural peanut butter spreads more; chill the dough 15 minutes first.
- Add a pinch of salt or a few chocolate chips on top.
- Sunflower seed butter works for nut-free homes (the cookies may turn a little green inside; it's harmless).

Safety: Dough has raw egg: bake it, don't taste it raw.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.6★, 1,935 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/11352/three-ingredient-peanut-butter-cookies/> · Also: Allrecipes (4.7★, 1,019 ratings, as of Oct 2026): <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/244614/3-ingredient-peanut-butter-cookies/>

Dairy Treats 10 min \$

Crispy Rice Marshmallow Treats

The bake-sale classic: three ingredients, stovetop, done in 15 minutes.

Prep 5 min · Cook 5 min · Plus 30 minutes to set · Serves 16 squares

Allergens: Nuts: no · Eggs: no · Dairy: Butter (use margarine or coconut oil for pareve). · Gluten: Many crispy rice cereals contain malt (barley); choose a gluten-free one if needed.

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 3 Tbsp butter (or margarine/coconut oil for pareve)
- ☐ 1 bag (10 oz) mini marshmallows, kosher-certified
- ☐ 6 cups crispy rice cereal
- ☐ Pinch of salt (optional)

Storage: Airtight at room temp up to 3 days.

STEPS

1. Grease a 9x13-inch pan.
2. Melt the butter in a large pot over low heat.
3. Add the marshmallows and stir until fully melted. Remove from heat.
4. Stir in the cereal (and salt) until evenly coated.
5. Press into the pan with a greased spatula, gently, so they stay soft. Cool 30 minutes, then cut.

Kid helper: Kids can measure the cereal and press the mix into the pan with buttered hands (once it's cool enough to touch).

TIPS & SWAPS

- Kosher note: most standard marshmallows contain non-kosher gelatin; look for a kosher-certified bag.
- Press lightly; packing hard makes them tough.
- Fun swap: stir in sprinkles after the cereal.

Safety: Melted marshmallow is very hot and sticky; grown-ups handle the pot.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Allrecipes (4.8★, 1,161 ratings, as of Oct 2026):
<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/9959/marshmallow-treats/>

Pareve Treats 5 min \$

1-Ingredient Banana "Nice Cream"

Soft-serve texture from frozen bananas, no added sugar, 5 minutes.

Prep 5 min · No cooking · Plus bananas frozen ahead (at least 6 hours) · Serves 2–3

Allergens: Nuts: Only if you add peanut butter. · Eggs: no · Dairy: None as written (add milk and it becomes dairy). · Gluten: no

INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 3 ripe bananas, peeled, sliced and frozen
- ☐ 1–2 Tbsp water or any milk, only if needed
- ☐ Optional mix-ins: 1 Tbsp cocoa powder, 1 Tbsp peanut butter, ½ tsp vanilla, a handful of frozen berries

Storage: Best fresh. Freezer up to 1 week; let it soften 10 minutes before scooping.

STEPS

1. Put the frozen banana slices in a food processor or strong blender.
2. Blend, scraping down the sides often. It goes crumbly, then gummy, then suddenly creamy (2–4 minutes).
3. Add a spoon of liquid only if it won't come together.
4. Blend in any mix-ins.
5. Serve right away as soft-serve, or freeze 1 hour for scoops.

Kid helper: Kids can peel and slice the bananas (butter knife) and choose the mix-ins.

TIPS & SWAPS

- Use spotty bananas: riper means sweeter.
- Keep a bag of sliced frozen bananas ready for treat emergencies.
- Chocolate version: add cocoa plus a spoon of maple syrup.

OUR NOTES

Popular classic; see a highly rated version on Food Network: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/banana-ice-cream-recipe-1915601> (rating not verified)