

Set the table and light a candle for yourself! Single-person households are on the rise and if you find yourself in this situation, do not despair. Grocery stores are taking notice and are catering more to single-person households. Every department offers plenty of choices for individual purchases.

MAXIMIZE YOUR MEALS AND SAVE MONEY:

- Make a shopping list, plan out your menus for the week.
- Look for any sale items or coupons to save money.
- Try to buy only the amount of food you will eat in a week.
- Repackage, label, and freeze extra food in single servings.
- Cook once, eat twice. Label and freeze in heat-and-eat individual portions.

The family dynamics of today are diverse, and the markets have adapted to offer many choices and sizes. Cooking for one can be creative and rewarding with or without leftovers. Indulge, choose what you like to cook, and get the good smells going in your kitchen!



The key to success is planning. Planning helps to minimize trips to the grocery store and decrease impulse purchases. With good planning, you can save time and money. It can also help by reducing food waste. Cooking for one begins with making a plan to buy the right ingredients to make meals for a week. Eat a wide variety of foods each week. Variety helps you get all the essential nutrients and makes eating more fun! Enjoy trying a new fruit, vegetable, or grain product. Choose foods from all food groups using [ChooseMyPlate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov). Take advantage of quality convenience products packaged for one or two persons.

CUT YOUR RECIPES IN HALF USING THESE EASY MEASUREMENTS

Half of 1/4 Cup equals 2 Tablespoons

Half of 1/3 Cup equals 2 Tablespoons + 2 teaspoons

Half of 1/2 Cup equals 1/4 Cup

Half of 2/3 Cup equals 1/3 Cup

Half of 1 Tablespoon equals 1 1/2 teaspoons

Half of 1 teaspoon equals 1/2 teaspoon

Half of 1/2 teaspoon equals 1/4 teaspoon

Half of 1/4 teaspoon equals 1/8 teaspoon

Half of 1/8 teaspoon equals a dash





STORE FOR ANOTHER MEAL

- Invest in reusable single-serving containers.
- Label, date, and freeze in individual servings (place a dissolvable label on the side of the package for easy identification).
- Package leftovers into multiple containers so they can be reheated in smaller quantities.

CONDIMENTS AND SAUCES

- Choose smaller bottles of condiments or sauces.
- Buy spice mixes instead of containers of single spices, e.g. Italian seasoning, taco seasoning, pumpkin pie spice, etc.

CONVENIENCE FOODS

- Use the markets deli or kitchen departments and select only what you need. Ask for a quarter pound of roasted poultry or two scoops of bean salad. Choose a couple of main entrée's and side dishes for days you may not feel like cooking.
- Break down bakery items and freeze them for later.
- Buy desserts in single servings, choose cake mixes for one, puddings, or frozen fruit bars.

SHOPPING TIPS

Fruits and Vegetables: Instead of purchasing larger amounts of prepackaged produce, buy it by the piece or buy a mixed bag. For example, choose 3-5 bananas and a bag of grapes (they are great frozen), 2 oranges and apples, add a bunch of carrots, a couple onions, a zucchini, and some greens. You are good to go for a week! Add individual serving sizes of canned and frozen items which have extended shelf lives.

Proteins: Select meat and fish from the butcher counter to get what you like. For example, choose a pork chop, a chicken breast, and a salmon filet. They wrap each piece individually with a label! Add one-half dozen eggs for the week.

Grains: Buy smaller sized servings of rice, pasta, and cereals and enjoy the variety of smaller packages. Buy bread and freeze half for next week!

Dairy: Choose single-serving cheese sticks and individual yogurts. Add shelf-stable milk (don't forget to refrigerate after opening) instead of larger containers with quick expiration dates.

COOK QUICKLY

- Use a **toaster oven** to broil, roast, or heat single servings of meat.
- **Stir-fry** small amounts of food at a time.
- Use a **waffle maker** or other kitchen equipment to make a panini-style sandwich.
- **Air fry** for healthier foods that taste delicious.
- Use **pressure cookers** to make easy-peel hardboiled eggs, rice, and soups.
- Experiment with **new recipes** and cooking techniques.
- Take pleasure in cooking and **learn to maximize food** and its health benefits.
- **Treat yourself** to occasional extravagances, such as expensive cuts of meat.

References

US Census Bureau, *One Person Households Are On The Rise*, November 19, 2019.
<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2019/comm/one-person-households.html>

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<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/myplate-mywins-tips-meal-planning-one->

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, *Cooking Healthy Meals for One or Two — A Checklist*,
<https://food.unl.edu/fnh/cooking-for-1-or-2>