The Close Page

Fill it in once, then keep it where dinner usually ends. The fixed order, who handles each move, what goes into the Morning Set-Out, and what waits if the evening runs short. About ten minutes when the evening allows, an example, not a deadline. Not a cleanup.

Usual start _____ · Page lives _____

1 Clear the counters

Done means:

_____

Who: _____

Start with:

_____

Only the surfaces needed for breakfast and lunches. Not every surface, not the whole kitchen.

2 Start the dishwasher

Who loads: _____
Who starts: _____

Our start point:

_____

If it is not ready to run:

_____

Example: start it after the dinner dishes are loaded. No second round of hand washing.

3 Set out tomorrow's breakfast and school lunch parts

Breakfast parts:

_____

Lunch parts:

_____

Who: _____ Where: _____

Stays in the fridge until morning: _____

Only the parts you choose to place tonight. Cold food stays cold.

4 Take one glance through the fridge

Who checks: _____

Look for:

_____

If a planned item is missing:

_____

One glance, only what affects tomorrow's breakfast or lunch. Not an inventory.

OUR FIXED ORDER AND HANDOFFS

a name beside each move, so nobody assigns work at bedtime

#	Move	Who
1	Clear the counters	
2	Start the dishwasher	
3	Set out tomorrow's breakfast and school lunch parts (the Morning Set-Out)	
4	Take one glance through the fridge	
→	If the assigned person is not available, the move passes to	

> *Fewer Moves check: is any step here extra to clearing the counters, running the dishwasher, setting out breakfast and lunch parts, and checking the fridge once? If yes, remove it or move it outside the Close.*

OUR SKIP RULE

a missed close does not create a debt you repay tomorrow night

When the close does not happen: _____

1. Name the morning need 2. Do only that action 3. Leave the rest for its normal place

Sample rule: if the close does not happen, check whether breakfast and lunch have what they need for the morning. Handle only an item that would stop us from serving breakfast or packing lunch. Leave the remaining dishes and counters for the usual routine.

FILLED EXAMPLE OF THE SEQUENCE

one workable sequence, not a required menu or time

Clear wrappers and dishes from the breakfast counter. Load dinner dishes and start the dishwasher. Put a bowl, spoon, and cereal out for breakfast. Set the lunchbox and shelf-stable lunch parts together. Keep refrigerated lunch food in the fridge. Take one glance to confirm the planned lunch item is there; if it is missing, choose an available substitute.

It goes wrong when "clear the counters" quietly becomes a full kitchen cleanup, the fridge glance turns into sorting shelves, or the Morning Set-Out includes food that needs refrigeration.

A household routine, not a cleaning system, not nutrition or medical advice, and not parenting advice. Allergy and diet questions belong with your family's doctor. Every time and food example is an example, not a rule.

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The Standing List

One page, never rebuilt. Written in store language, with quantities, so either adult can make the weekly trip from it without a separate explanation. Change a line only when a meal stops coming back.

Built on _____ · Shopping day: _____

1 · THE HOUSEHOLD TEN

eaten · repeatable on a tired week · ordinary groceries — a meal must clear all three

#	Meal	Job	Ingredients that belong only to this meal, with quantity
1		ordinary · busy · backup	
2		ordinary · busy · backup	
3		ordinary · busy · backup	
4		ordinary · busy · backup	
5		ordinary · busy · backup	
6		ordinary · busy · backup	
7		ordinary · busy · backup	
8		ordinary · busy · backup	
9		ordinary · busy · backup	
10		ordinary · busy · backup	
ex.	tacos with ground turkey	busy night	1 lb ground turkey · 1 box taco shells · 1 bag shredded cheese

2 · RECURRING STAPLES

item and quantity, written once

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Example: 1 gallon milk · 1 dozen eggs · 1 loaf sandwich bread · 1 bag apples · 1 bag rice · 1 pack tortillas · 1 bag shredded cheese

3 · FLEXIBLE ADDITIONS

the role, then the options the house accepts

Vegetable: _____

Fruit: _____

Lunchbox item: _____

Breakfast item: _____

Topping or sauce: _____

_____: _____

Example: vegetable = broccoli, green beans, or baby carrots · fruit = bananas or grapes · topping = salsa or plain yogurt

4 · THIS WEEK'S CHANGES

cleared after the trip

Add this trip

Skip this trip

Only what the Ten-Minute Check changed. Not a second list.

5 · THE MID-WEEK RULE

lives on this page

> *One missing ingredient triggers a decision, not a new planning session: substitute · skip · add it here for the next trip. If it is not part of tonight's meal, it is not a store run.*

6 · THE STANDING LIST TEST

before you save this page

> *Can either adult look at it and make the weekly grocery trip without a separate explanation?*

The usual mistake is turning this into a catalog of everything you buy. A meal earns a place by being repeatable on a tired week, not by being impressive on paper. Keep the page tied to the Household Ten, keep the staples short, and keep the Mid-Week Rule written down.

A household planning method, not nutrition, medical, or financial advice. Every food, price, and time example is an example, not a rule.

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The Rotation Page

Five lunches your kid already eats. Each line has four parts: the lunch, the grocery needs, the Sunday Twenty note, and one substitution that keeps the lunch recognizable. Fill it once; change a line only when a lunch stops working.

Week of _____ · Sunday Twenty at _____

1 · THE FIVE LUNCHES

a main, a side, and a familiar filler · more columns turn into bookkeeping

Day	Lunch	Grocery Needs	Sunday Twenty Note	Substitution
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Example	turkey and cheese roll-up, apple slices, pretzels	sliced turkey, cheese slices, tortillas, apples, pretzels	wash apples; portion pretzels ×1	ham for turkey; grapes for apple

2 · GROCERY NEEDS, GATHERED FOR THE STORE

one trip

Main item: _____

Bread, wrap, or grain: _____

Fruit: _____

Vegetable or crunchy side: _____

Dairy or other filler item: _____

Drinks, if you pack them: _____

3 · BUY BEFORE SUNDAY

_____

_____

_____

Anything the Sunday Twenty cannot start without. If it is not in the house by Sunday, the block turns into a store trip.

4 · CONTAINER PLAN

only where a lunch depends on one

Main lunch container: _____

Small snack container: _____

Fruit container: _____

Cold item spot in the fridge: _____

Backup container if one is dirty: _____

5 · THE SUBSTITUTION RULE

from chapter 5, for the morning something is missing

> *A substitution earns its place when it does three things at once. It preserves the fewest moves. It uses food already available. It leaves the other four lunches alone.*

If the swap changes the rest of the lunch, that is a rebuild, and rebuilds belong on Sunday, not at 7:12.

6 · FRIDAY REVIEW

thirty seconds, then leave the page alone

Lunch that came home uneaten: _____

Item that ran out mid-week: _____

One line to change for next week (or none): _____

It goes wrong when the page tries to do too much: new recipes, extra columns, a container for every food. Keep the lunches, the grocery needs, the prep note, the substitution.

A kitchen planning method, not nutrition or medical advice. Allergy and diet questions belong with your family's doctor. Every food and time example is an example, not a rule.

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The Two-Limit Page

Two food lines, a starting amount and a current amount for each, plus a short list of savings moves. Fill it once when the month starts; update the current amount right after each store run or order. No receipts.

Month of _____ · Tuesday Check time: _____

1 · THE TWO LINES

the starting amount is the limit for the month; the current amount is what is left right now

Line	Starting amount	Current amount	Current amount (next)	What this line covers here
Groceries				the regular store run, staples, lunch supplies, planned bulk buys. Comes home as ingredients.
Takeout				delivery, pickup, drive-through, the Friday order, any restaurant meal you count as takeout money. Comes home ready to eat.
Example	$720 / $240	$534 / $162	$472 / $162	Write the new current amount right after each purchase. Never move money from one line to the other mid-month.

2 · WHERE THE STARTING AMOUNTS CAME FROM

fit the limits to real life, not a perfect month

Busiest week this month (activities, late nights): _____

Store runs I actually make in a month: _____ usual total per run: _____

Takeout nights I honestly expect: _____ usual order total: _____

A good starting amount feels slightly uncomfortable, not impossible. It is allowed to be temporary.

3 · THE THREE SAVINGS MOVES

reach for these before a tight line becomes a problem

1. Buy one planned pantry meal instead of the full weekly shop.
2. Shift one dinner from takeout to groceries already on hand.
3. Choose the least expensive takeout option that still solves the night.

Busy Week Decision Rule: start with the next meal, check the correct remaining line, and pick the option that uses the fewest moves while staying inside that line. The three options are a grocery run, food already on hand, or takeout.

4 · THREE PANTRY DINNERS FROM WHAT IS ALREADY HERE

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Example: eggs and toast · pasta with jar sauce · rice bowls with leftover chicken. Cheap, on hand, no store trip.

5 · TUESDAY CHECK LOG

one line per week, before the big shop and the weekend orders

Week	Groceries remaining	Takeout remaining	Line the next meal will use
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

6 · END OF MONTH: KEEP, REVISE, OR PROTECT

review what happened, not every receipt

> *Keep a line if it still works on a normal Tuesday, revise it if it keeps failing in the same kind of week, and protect it only when the pressure is temporary.*

☐ Groceries: keep / revise to _____ / protect this month only because _____

☐ Takeout: keep / revise to _____ / protect this month only because _____

It goes wrong when the two amounts are written once and never updated, when takeout quietly covers groceries because it feels simpler, or when the pantry list is vague. Two lines, current amounts, one short rule.

A budgeting method, not financial advice. Every dollar amount here is an example, not a target; your limits are yours. © Fewer Moves · fewermoves.com

The Shelf Page

The one page the method runs on: five dinners your family already eats, every part each one needs, and where each part lives. Fill in a dinner only after it has passed the Missing Ingredient Test. Keep the page where you can read it standing in the kitchen. On the night the plan fails it answers one question: which complete dinner can we make from what is already here?

Shelf location _____

Freezer spot _____

DINNER 1

Dinner name _____

Part	Item and amount for one dinner	Location	Mark when used
Main item			☐
Side or sides			☐
Other required parts sauce, bread, tortillas			☐

Complete now? Yes / No — looked at, not assumed

DINNER 2

Dinner name _____

Part	Item and amount for one dinner	Location	Mark when used
Main item			☐
Side or sides			☐
Other required parts sauce, bread, tortillas			☐

Complete now? Yes / No — looked at, not assumed

DINNER 3

Dinner name _____

Part	Item and amount for one dinner	Location	Mark when used
Main item			☐
Side or sides			☐
Other required parts sauce, bread, tortillas			☐

Complete now? Yes / No — looked at, not assumed

DINNER 4

Dinner name _____

Part	Item and amount for one dinner	Location	Mark when used
Main item			☐
Side or sides			☐
Other required parts sauce, bread, tortillas			☐

Complete now? Yes / No — looked at, not assumed

DINNER 5

Dinner name _____

Part	Item and amount for one dinner	Location	Mark when used
Main item			☐
Side or sides			☐
Other required parts sauce, bread, tortillas			☐

Complete now? Yes / No — looked at, not assumed

EXAMPLE

example, not a required meal

Dinner name: pasta with jarred sauce and frozen vegetables

Part	Item and amount for one dinner	Location	Mark when used
Main item	One box of pasta	Backup shelf, left section	☐
Side or sides	One bag of frozen vegetables	Freezer basket	☐
Other required parts	One jar of pasta sauce	Backup shelf, left section	☐

Complete now? Yes / No — all three parts seen on the shelf tonight

HOW TO KEEP THIS PAGE TRUE

1. Write **Yes** only when every part is on the shelf or in the freezer spot tonight, looked at, not assumed.
2. The night you use a backup, check **Mark when used** beside each part you used.
3. Clear a mark only on the grocery trip that puts the part back. A dinner is ready again only when every mark is clear.
4. If a part moves, update its location the same day, in the words you would use while opening the cabinet.
5. The shelf and the freezer spot are the default. A third location is an exception you write down, not a habit.

THE RULES THIS PAGE SERVES

> ***Restock Rule:*** *After you use a backup dinner, mark its used parts on the Shelf Page that same night, and replace them on the weekly grocery trip you already make.*

> ***Missing Ingredient Test:*** *Name the dinner, list its main item, its sides, and every other part you need to serve it, and find each part in the pantry or freezer. A backup that needs a fresh ingredient is not a backup.*

Fewer Moves question: what is the fewest number of moves that still gets this done?

This is a household planning method, not nutrition, medical, or food safety advice. Follow the package storage instructions for the food you keep, and take allergy and diet questions to your family's doctor.

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The Fewer Moves Kitchen Check

Run it once, in order, before the burner goes on. Stop at the first item that needs replacing.

Tape inside a cabinet door. Same check every time, so the safety part happens once and the rest of the night is just cooking.

1 Packaged ingredients

- ☐ Label read on every packaged item that touches the pan, bowl, board, or serving spoon
- ☐ Sauces, broth, seasoning blends, sausage, frozen vegetable mixes checked again this time (formulas change)
- ☐ Label missing or unclear? Different brand or ingredient, not a guess

2 The pan

- ☐ No visible flour dust, bread crumbs, or cooked-on residue
- ☐ Used for pasta, breaded food, or flour thickening? Hot soapy wash first, or a different pan
- ☐ Cast iron only if your household already treats it as gluten-free and it has not seen breaded food

3 The cooking utensil

- ☐ Spatula, spoon, tongs, or whisk with no trapped crumbs in seams, holes, or textured handles
- ☐ Any doubt about residue in a crack? Swap it for this meal

One designated gluten-free utensil in the drawer saves this step every night. A solid silicone spatula beats a worn wooden spoon.

4 The prep surface

- ☐ Counter wiped with soap and water or a fresh wipe before cutting, mixing, seasoning
- ☐ Open bread, flour bags, crumb-covered items moved out of the prep zone
- ☐ Not prepping beside the toaster if someone already made toast

5 The cutting board

- ☐ No deep knife grooves packed with residue
- ☐ Wood board used for bread? Different board for this meal
- ☐ If you pause and wonder whether it is clean, choose another one

6 Serving tools, set out now

- ☐ Serving spoon, spatula, tongs, or ladle chosen before cooking and kept with the pan
- ☐ Nothing that has touched bread, pasta, or a crumb-filled condiment jar

7 Shared toppings and condiments

- ☐ Fresh jar, clean spoon, or squeeze bottle for ketchup, mustard, salsa, mayo, dressing
- ☐ Toppings in small bowls, not everyone dipping into the original container
- ☐ A spoon that went into a crumb-covered dish does not go back into a shared jar

8 Replace for safety, not preference

- ☐ Anything with visible crumbs, flour dust, or an unlabeled blend
- ☐ Anything that sat next to bread, crackers, or a shared toaster and cannot be trusted
- ☐ Anything that would keep you checking yourself while cooking. If you keep hesitating, it is not the ingredient for this meal

9 Final check before the first ingredient goes in

☐ Clean pan ☐ Clean utensil ☐ Clean board ☐ Clean surface ☐ Labels checked

One of the five not ready? Stop and fix that one piece. Do not start cooking and hope to manage it later. Then: checked ingredients in one place, safe utensil beside the pan, unused condiments away, and stay with the pan.

A cooking method, not medical advice. Your care team decides what is safe for celiac disease; labels and shared-kitchen risks are yours to check every time.

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