

5 Tips To Make Meatless Mondays Happen

Trying to boost more plant-based foods in your diet? Here are steps you can take from planning to execution to make Meatless Monday's happen.

Plan ahead. Monday will be here before you know it. Look through your pantry, freezer, and fridge. Check and see what you have that's about to expire or succumb to freezer burn. Then think about how you can put those ingredients into a meal. Struggling with creativity in the kitchen, search online the list of meatless ingredients you have on hand and see what comes up. You will be surprised as to how simple basic ingredients can be transformed into a delicious and satisfying meal! For example, tofu, marinated artichokes, frozen defrosted spinach blended with herbs make a [great dip](#) with baked corn chips or casserole.

Make a list. Keep a list of meatless Monday favorites on your fridge. Over time, just keep the hits! Refried beans (without the lard) and toasted corn tacos with fresh salsa verde are always a hit in my home. They are super easy to prepare and everyone will be asking for more! Watch this how-to video for [sweet potato nachos](#) a sweet, savory and delicious dinner!

Swap it out. No one said you have to come up with a brand new "meatless" recipe every time. Many of your go-to meat recipes can be used by just substituting the meat in a recipe for a plant-based protein including [tofu](#), seitan, beans, and [quinoa](#)! For some good ideas, check out these [plant-based protein swaps](#).

Spice it up. Use this opportunity to go crazy with your [spice and herb](#) cabinet. Did you know smoked paprika gives a baconesque flavor to [potatoes](#) and [polenta](#)! Coming up with meatless recipes can be fun. Vegetables and plant-based protein options are versatile allowing us to get creative in the kitchen and expand our nutritional and flavor profiles! Try making some ethnic variations. No one said Meatless Mondays should be boring!

Find the balance. Don't get so worked up on making sure you have enough protein. As long as you are including a variety of plant-based foods you will be getting what you need! Try not to overthink it.

Slow-cook it! Slow-cookers can take the intimidation out of Meatless Mondays! Throw some veggies in a pot with a plant-based protein option (think beans and lentils) and have yourself a delicious meatless dinner without all the fuss! We love the recipe below:

Meatless Mondays Croc-pot Minestrone Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 cup [mushrooms](#), chopped
- 1 cup carrots, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced

- 1 can black beans/cannelloni beans
- 1 can garbanzo beans (or second can of kidney beans)
- 1 can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- Water or low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon of cumin or 1 Italian seasoning

Directions:

1. Place all of the ingredients in the crockpot.
2. Cover most of the ingredients with water.
3. Cook on high for 4 to 6 hours or low for 8 to 10 hours.