

# THE SIMPLE KITCHEN

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE FOR STREAMLINED COOKING



A STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO MAKING LIFE IN THE KITCHEN EASY, HEALTHY AND DELICIOUS



# HI THERE! READY TO UP YOUR KITCHEN GAME?

## MY KITCHEN STORY

Cooking has always been in my DNA. From a young age I was always interested in experimenting in the kitchen and, as I got older, became increasingly fascinated with the relationship between food and healing. Food has the power to influence our energy, certain diseases and our moods. Food can be powerful medicine.

To stay consistent with my food as medicine philosophy, I knew I needed to have a streamlined kitchen. The kitchen is where it begins and ends with healthy eating. You need to be in charge of your own food, everyday.

This requires your kitchen to run like a well oiled machine. With the proper pantry setup, kitchen equipment and planning system in place, healthy eating on a daily basis can be simple, creative and delicious.

Happy Cooking!

*Heather*



# START HERE!

READ through the steps below to see about your next move to organized

TAKE action by cleaning out the old, tired and weary

ADD in! Follow the ideas to build a kitchen that works



- **Step 1: Crowd Out**
- **Step 2: Add In**
- **Step 3: The Perfect Pantry List**
- **Step 4: The Right Equipment**
- **Step 5: Make a Meal**
- **Step 6: Grocery Store Tips**
- **Resources: Recipe Search**

# STEP 1: CROWD OUT

## CLEAN OUT THE OLD TO LET IN THE NEW

Kitchens are the workhorse of the house.

We gather here, eat here, share secrets, discuss, cook, and clean. Our mail often gets dumped here, winter coats, shoes, not to mention food and kitchen tools and gadgets. Your kitchen works very hard! When it comes to healthy eating and cooking, the purpose of your kitchen is to be your partner in crime. Your best friend and assistant. You need to keep your kitchen happy in order to run smoothly.

Before introducing anything new into my kitchen I make sure to get rid of the old. At least once a season I will give my kitchen a turnover. I will pull things from the shelves, wipe down nooks and crannies, evaluate the pantry items, and check on the equipment.

At least once a week, ideally before I go grocery shopping, I will do the same with my refrigerator. Out comes old, tired food, anything that is expired or no longer edible. This allows physical and mental space for all the new, healthy fresh foods to come in. See below for a step by step plan to declutter your kitchen, get rid of the old, to allow the new to come in.

*"Letting go is even more  
important than adding in."*

Marie Kondo



# CLEAN IT OUT!

## STEP 1

### GET RID OF THE JUNK!

Processed, packaged and junk foods take up space and interfere with intentions to eat healthy and stay healthy. Some processed foods can feel compelling and even addictive. For now, while you are setting intentions for healthy eating, lose what does not serve you. See below for what to get rid of now.

## STEP 2

### ANYTHING THAT IS EXPIRED.

When is the last time you looked at your spice cabinet? Get rid of:

- Expired spices and herbs
- Spices and herbs that smell funny or bad
- Condiments, dried grains or beans that are expired or smell funny

## STEP 3

### LOOK IN YOUR FREEZER.

Is it iced over? Has it been in there for over 6 months? Toss:

- Any frozen fruits, vegetables, meats, etc. that have been living there too long.
- Frozen vegetables in sauces

## STEP 4

### RID YOUR PANTRY OF CLUTTER.

Are you ever going to use those candied chestnuts you bought two years ago? Do you even like nonfat refried soybeans? Say goodbye and don't look back. Give what you can to a food pantry. If it is too old – toss!

## STEP 5

### GROCERY SHOP AND RESTOCK.

Start small with just things you like to eat, or are curious about trying. Rule of thumb: buy two of anything you think you might use often. Start with some new fruits and vegetables, canned beans or brown rice.

# GET RID OF THE JUNK!

## DONATE IT, GIVE IT AWAY OR TOSS...

- *The white foods - white flour, white bread, white rice*
- *Multigrain products (this is white flour disguised under the name of multigrain)*
- *Artificial sugars (Splenda, Equal, etc.)*
- *Packages with ingredients you can't pronounce*
- *Packages with ingredient lists of more than five ingredients*
- *Any foods with artificial ingredients, food dyes, artificial flavors, natural flavors (the word "natural" is meaningless in the world of food), hydrogenated fats, high fructose corn syrup.*
- *Sugar sweetened iced teas, smart waters, vitamin waters and sports drinks*
- *Gluten free packaged baked goods (almost all of these are refined grain products full of sugar and sodium)*
- *Flavored plant milks such as sweetened almond milk, soy milk and rice milk. Plain and unsweetened are okay.*
- *Energy/protein bars (candy bars in disguise)*
- *Prepackaged spice and rub mixtures (is the first ingredient salt? Toss.)*





## STEP 2: ADD IN

Crowding out undesirable foods from your diet only means there is good news ahead! You can start to think about all the nutritious, delicious foods that you can now add in. There is space in your pantry cabinets, spice rack, refrigerator and freezer for an abundance of real food. .

I am often asked "but what am I supposed to eat?" Well, real food for starters. You just took the time to crowd out all the fakes - the processed, preserved and artificial - and now you're ready to fill your kitchen with all the good stuff. Foods that will contribute to your energy, good moods, stress reduction, and keep weight in check.

In it's simplest form, all food fits into one of three categories: protein, fats and carbohydrates. These nutrients are the building blocks of good health. When people tell me they don't eat carbs, or they're addicted to carbs, I often look at them with curiosity. Yes, carbs are the foundation of candy, baked goods and refined grains. But carbs are also the building blocks for vegetables fruits and whole grains. These foods nourish you and give your brain the fuel it needs. See below for my healthy pantry recommendations.





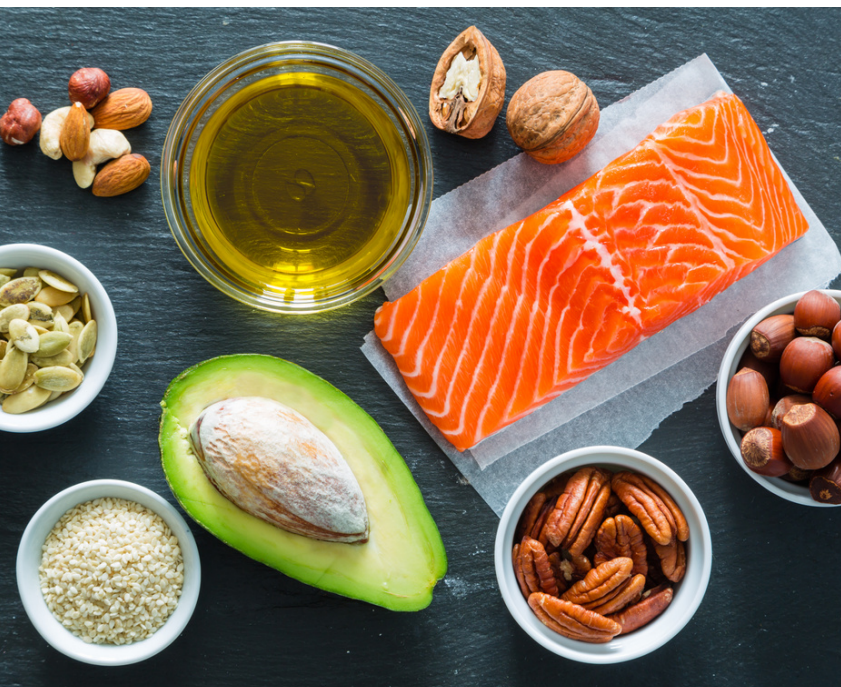
## FIRST, THE BIG THREE



*Carbs give our brains fuel, even out energy, help stabilize moods, provide essential fiber and so much more. But we need the right ones. Great carbs include brown rice, farro, quinoa, popcorn, whole wheat, wild rice, barley, soba noodles, oatmeal. And, they also include vegetables including dark leafy greens, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, red peppers, zucchini, butternut squash, ALL fruits including oranges, berries, peaches, lemons, limes, bananas. The list goes on.*



*Protein helps build muscle and gives us energy. Good quality protein also helps us to feel full and satiated. Best Proteins include a mix of plant based and animal proteins. Great choices include: beans, tofu, nuts and nut butters, fish, shellfish, chicken and grass fed beef. Eating fatty fish, such as salmon or sardines at least twice a week, insures that you get your dose of Omega 3 Fats.*



*Fats are powerful brain food! High quality fats also fill us up and make us feel satisfied with food. Include extra virgin olive oil, avocado, organic canola oil, sesame oil, sunflower oil, almonds and other nuts, almond butter, peanut butter and other nut butters, flaxseeds, chia seeds, hemp seeds and other seeds such as pumpkin and sunflower seeds.*



## STEP 3: THE HEALTHY PANTRY GUIDE

When it comes to your kitchen, what you stock it with should be very personal. We all come from different cultures and backgrounds, have varying taste preferences and desires. This is what makes each of our kitchens so unique.

What matters most in the long run is that you find a healthy way of eating that works for you. If the microwave is more your friend than the stove, that is perfectly okay for right now. If you've heard that eating six small meals a day is superior, but you really like to eat three larger meals, totally fine too. Meet yourself wherever you are at.

One thing I can tell you with certainty is that a well stocked pantry guarantees that you will never be left with the "I don't know what to make for dinner" question. A well stocked pantry can literally generate dozens of ideas for meals and snacks.

An important consideration is to recognize where you are in your life situation – busy mom with a couple of kids at home, or a single women with a high end career – and figure out what obstacles are getting in your way of your health and feeling great. One thing's for sure: a well stocked pantry will help with any life situation you find yourself in.

This pantry list does not mean you need to buy it all right now. A great rule of thumb: buy what you use frequently and buy a lot of it. In the winter, for example, I defer to canned tomatoes rather than fresh, so I will buy a few cans at a time to have on hand for those quick meals.

Let's dig in to the pantry list!

# WHOLE GRAINS



*Whole Grains keep for up to 6 months in airtight containers. When buying wheat products be sure to look for "100% whole wheat" on the label and not multigrain, which is typically white flour in disguise*

Brown Rice (basmati, jasmine, short grain, long grain), Wild Rice, Polenta, Quinoa, Oats (rolled, instant, Irish, steel cut), Millet, Farro, Whole Wheat Pasta, Brown Rice Pasta, Whole Wheat Couscous, Barley





# BEANS

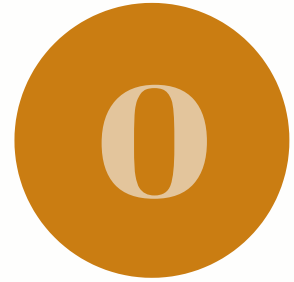


*Keep dried or canned beans stored for up to 1 year. Once a can is opened, beans are good for up to 3 days. Canned beans should be drained and rinsed to reduce sodium content.*

Black Beans, Turtle Beans, Chickpeas,  
Red Kidney Beans, White Beans,  
Lentils, Lima Beans, Pinto Beans, Lentils  
(red, brown and yellow) Split Peas  
(green and yellow)



# OILS



*Oils should be stored in a dark glass container for up to 6 months.*

Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Organic Canola Oil, Sesame Oil and Virgin Coconut Oil are the only fats you really need for cooking, making salad dressings, roasting vegetables, and making marinades. Feel free to experiment with Avocado Oil, Walnut Oil or Safflower Oil.







# NUTS/SEEDS

*High in Omega-3's and other good for you fats, add to cereal or oatmeal, add to yogurt or to garnish salads and for snacks. Store in airtight containers. If not using often you can put them in the refrigerator or freezer.*

Almonds, Cashews, Walnuts, Pistachios,  
Almond Butter, Peanut Butter,  
Pumpkin Seeds, Chia Seeds, Hemp  
Seeds, Sesame Seeds, Flaxseeds,  
Sunflower Seeds, Tahini



# SPICES/HERBS



*A dried spice and herb collection can easily expand your cooking repertoire. Make this worthwhile investment but do so in small quantities, as herbs and spices lose their flavor and potency over time.*

Chili Powder, Cardamon, Cinnamon, Cumin, Curry Powder, Dried Garlic, Oregano, Turmeric, Thyme, Paprika, Parsley, Turmeric, Rosemary, to name a few.





# CONDIMENTS



*Condiments add depth, heat and can make a mediocre dish taste delicious. Many condiments add high flavor while being low in calories.*

Low Sodium Soy Sauce or Tamari, Chili Paste, Fish Sauce, Mustards, Vinegars (red wine, balsamic, rice wine, sherry, apple cider), Oyster Sauce, Cornstarch, Honey, Miso Paste, Curry Paste, Hoisin Sauce





# JARRED/CANNED/ COUNTERTOP

J

Always look for canned goods that are free of preservatives and additives. Canned and jarred foods will keep indefinitely on your shelf. Onions, garlic and ginger can live happily on your counter for at least a week or two.

Artichoke Hearts, Capers, Coconut Milk, Olives, Roasted Red Peppers, Chipotle Peppers, Salsa, Tomato Paste, Canned Whole Tomatoes, Canned Diced Tomatoes, Anchovies, Sun Dried Tomatoes, Pickles, Low Sodium Chicken Stock, Almond Milk, Soy Milk, Onions, Garlic, Ginger



# REFRIGERATOR



**Always check sell by dates and get into the practice of cleaning out your refrigerator often.**

Low Fat Grated Cheeses, Strong Cheeses such as Feta, Cottage Cheese, Tofu, Fresh Ginger Root, Fresh Garlic, Onions, Lemons, Limes, Plain Yogurt, Whole Wheat Tortillas, Brown Rice Tortillas, Berries, Vegetables





# F

## FREEZER

**Cooked, frozen foods should keep up to 3 months, packaged foods should keep up to 6 months. Frozen fruits and veggies are full of nutrition and convenience but the texture changes when freezing.**

Frozen Shrimp, Meats, Chicken, Fruits, Vegetables, Cooked Soups, Sauces, Casseroles, Muffins and other Baked Goods. Other notables are Whole Grains and Cooked Beans





## B

## BAKING

If you have all the necessary ingredients, whipping up healthy muffins and cookies should be a breeze. Whole wheat pastry flour will last up to 6 months. If the flour smells off, discard it.

Whole Wheat Pastry Flour, Organic Cane Sugar, Organic Brown Sugar, Maple Syrup, Honey, Unsweetened Coca Powder, Baking Powder/Soda, Dark Chocolate Chips/Baking Chocolate, Sourdough Starter, Ground Flaxseeds



# STEP 4: BEST KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

## OPERATIVE WORD: STREAMLINE!

Just because cooking is important to our health, it doesn't mean we want to spend all our free time toiling over the stove.

I think it is safe to say that our goal is to save as much time as possible. This starts with having the right tools and equipment.

Like the hundred of fad diets, there are more pieces of kitchen equipment, tools and accessories out there. Some you should not live without and some that can be sold at your next tag sale.

Take the guesswork out of what tools to have so you too can make life easier in the kitchen.

*"One is not born a great cook,  
one learns by doing."*

Julia Child





## High Quality Knives

This is your most important tool in the kitchen for cutting, chopping, slicing and dicing. Having a good knife is like having a reliable kitchen assistant.

**Important Tip:** Dull knives are actually more dangerous than sharp. A honer evens out the blade to make it work better.

*Recommended Brands: Wusthoff or Henkel*

*All You Need: one 8-inch chefs knife, a serrated knife and a paring knife. A honer and a way to sharpen those knives is required too.. No more confusing knife sets!*





## Cutting Boards

For cutting and chopping vegetables, fruits, herbs, nuts.

**Important Tip:** Avoid cross-contamination! Buy plastic liners to put on top of your cutting board when cutting raw meats or seafood.

*Recommended: a large wood or heavy plastic board. Boos Blocks are substantial and high quality.*

*Not Recommended: glass. These boards will dull your knives.*





## Pots and Pans

A good set of pots and pans should last you a lifetime, spending a bit more is well worth the investment.

**Important Tip:** Non-stick pots and pans contain chemicals that are not safe. Using enough heat and a little more oil will help solve the sticking problem.

*Recommended: All Clad*

*Not Recommended: Non-Stick (any brand)*

*All You Need: A large sauté pan, soup pot, sauce pan and smaller frying pan*

## ALL THE REST

**Smart tip:** buy multiple items of things used often such as measuring spoons, cups, mixing bowls and sheet pans.

Mixing Bowls

Measuring Cups and Spoons

Mixing Spoons, Ladles, Tongs, Spatulas and Whisks

Kitchen Shears

Citrus Juicer

Rasp Grater

Garlic Press

Onion Goggles

Peeler and Noodle Peeler

Colanders

Ramekins or Small Prep Bowls

Sheet Pans

Vitamix or blener

Food Processor

Mini Food Prep

Slow Cooker





## THE LET IT GO LIST

These pieces of equipment take up space and can actually slow down cooking:

- Single use tools such as an apple slicer, avocado knife, cherry pitter, strawberry slicer or garlic peeler You get the point: they seemed like a great idea at the last Pampered Chef party, only to hide in the back of a drawer, for years
- Double boilers or steamers (pots, pans or microwaves do just fine)
- Excessive amounts of storage containers, mismatched containers
- Giant knife sets and blocks (remember - you only need three knives)
- Juicers, ice cream makers, bread makers, baby food makers and any big items you only used once



## STEP 5: LET'S MAKE A MEAL!

The pantry is cleaned out, restocked and you have the equipment you need for easy, healthy cooking. Now, what can you make?

I have a few thoughts to get you started. But first, this is my go to list. You might have other ideas of what your favorites are. Depending on tastes and preferences, your pantry, refrigerator and freezer may look very different than mine. That's great! Food should be personal to you. You should cook for you, and no one else.

Nevertheless, on a busy night, when work goes late and stress runs high, you should be able to make a few meals from what you have on hand. Here are some of my ideas:

### **Black Bean Quesadillas**

*Whole Wheat Tortillas*  
*Can Black Beans*  
*Can Diced Tomato*  
*Frozen Spinach*  
*Onion*  
*Garlic*  
*Chili Powder*  
*Cumin*  
*Grated Cheddar*

### **Brown Rice Pasta with Shrimp and Broccoli**

*Brown Rice Pasta*  
*Canned Diced Tomatoes*  
*Garlic*  
*Onion*  
*Dried Thyme*  
*Dried Oregano*  
*Frozen Shrimp*  
*Frozen Broccoli*  
*Grated Parmesan*

### **Thai Tofu Curry over Brown Rice**

*Extra Firm Tofu*  
*Can Coconut Milk*  
*Red Curry Paste*  
*Fish Sauce*  
*Ginger*  
*Garlic*  
*Shallots*  
*Frozen Spinach*  
*Brown Rice*







## STEP 6: GROCERY SHOPPING KNOW HOW

I don't know about you, but I want to spend as little time in the grocery store as possible. Follow my tips to take the stress out of shopping so you can spend more time with your family and kitchen.

### ***Tip #1 MAKE A LIST***

I shudder at the thought of wandering aimlessly through a grocery store, no plan in mind. No list equals poor choices and the potential for wasted food. Know why you are there, what meals you plan to cook and stick to the list.

### ***Tip #2 STICK TO THE PERIMETER***

You many have heard this: shop the perimeter of the grocery store. Most grocery stores keep the healthiest stuff along the edges and try to lure you into the middle with the processed, packaged foods. Make it a rule of thumb to only enter into the middle for basic pantry staples such as oils and vinegars.

### ***Tip #3 BE WARY OF FANCY LABELS***

Packaged foods are filled with fancy foods claims to try to lure you to buy their products (notice that fruits and vegetables have no claims or promises attached to them?). Ignore the words:

- All Natural or 100% Natural
- Made with 100% Real Fruit, or Cheese or any other “real” ingredient
- No High Fructose Corn Syrup
- No Artificial Colors or Ingredients

### ***Tip #4 ADOPT THE FIVE INGREDIENT OR LESS RULE***

The healthiest foods have the least ingredients. Fruits and vegetables are obvious examples. Anything canned (artichoke hearts, beans, etc) should always have one to two ingredients. Cans or boxes with long ingredient lists or ingredients you cannot pronounce should not make it in your cart.

## STEP 7: RECIPE RESOURCES

The internet is ever changing and cookbooks come and go. Still, they are both great resources for getting creative in the kitchen. Here are a few trusted websites and cookbooks that I use to generate meal ideas:

### SOME FAVORITE COOKBOOKS

*The Moosewood Restaurant Collection* - call me old school but these cookbooks are where it really all began for me. Wholesome, reliable, creative recipes, these books have been tried and true.

*Mark Bittman, How To Cook Everything*. Super Simple recipes for just about everything.

*Yotam Ottolenghi, Simple*  
Creative, flavorful recipes with simple ingredients

### WEBSITES I ADMIRE

*Pinch of Yum*

*Love and Lemons*

*Feasting at Home*

*The Kitchn*

*Cookie and Kate*

*Heather Carey.com*





