



From Robin Miller's Kitchen to Yours

Simple Dinnertime Shortcuts for Lighter, Budget-Friendly Family Favorites

As a chef, nutrition expert and mother of two boys, Robin Miller, host of Food Network's *Quick Fix Meals with Robin Miller*, knows the challenges of fitting a family dinner into a jam-packed, busy schedule. Getting dinner on the table fast is a top priority, but serving a lighter, delicious meal is important, too. That's why Robin has developed the following tips and strategies for making faster, lighter *and* budget-friendly versions of family favorites that can help home cooks avoid the six o'clock dinnertime scramble:

Simple and Speedy Dinnertime Shortcuts

Quick Fix Stash:

You can assemble a home-cooked meal in just minutes if you plan ahead and have your own "quick fix stash" of stored food. Stocking up on items like bottled sauces, frozen chopped vegetables and fruits and pre-cooked, seasoned and recipe-ready **Tyson® Fully Cooked Chicken and Steak Strips** will help dramatically cut down on preparation time for your favorite recipes. And, a great way to keep your "quick fix stash" organized is to create your very own fridge and freezer diary. Make a list of all of the food items you have stored and tape it to the outside of your fridge. This list will help you plan meals and ensure you use all of your stored items while they're fresh.

Design a Weekly Dinner Directory:

Dinnertime can roll around fast, leaving you fresh out of ideas as your family waits around the kitchen table. To have dinnertime solutions readily available, take time on a weekend afternoon to create a Dinner Directory, which can serve as your one-stop shop for the upcoming week's dinnertime dishes. Browse food Web sites like Tyson.com and your favorite cookbooks like *Robin To The Rescue*, and also get input from your family on meals they'd like to eat. Then, take an empty notebook and fill it with fast family meals for Monday-Friday. By making meal decisions at the beginning of the week, you'll save yourself time on both planning and preparation.

Learn to Makeover Leftovers:

Don't be too quick to label your leftovers as boring – they can be a key ingredient for future family meals. For example, green peppers and onions from yesterday's stir-fry can be combined with **Tyson® Fully Cooked Fajita Chicken Breast Strips** for tonight's Family Fajita Night dinner. Or take extra potatoes from dinner and use them to create a delicious baked potato soup for lunch. This approach will save you time in the kitchen, giving you an opportunity to reconnect with your family, help the kids with homework or just take a breather.

Bank a Batch:

Keeping extra meals in your freezer or refrigerator "bank" to withdraw as necessary is a simple solution for even the busiest of days. When you're making a dish, cook double the servings and stash the rest in your freezer or fridge for another day. That way, when you're starved for time and you're family is just *starved*, you can pull out your dinner of choice, pop it in the microwave and have a delicious dish on the table in no time.

Prep Your Produce:

Prepare yourself for a busy week by chopping and prepping your produce on the weekends. Chop onions, carrots, bell peppers and celery for salads, soups and stews. Cut up pears, apples, oranges and grapes for a healthy fruit side salad to serve with dinner. Chopping and prepping produce up to four days in advance and throwing it in the fridge is a simple step that's a serious time saver.



Make Cooking Time Family Time:

Getting family members involved in the kitchen not only speeds up the cooking process, but allows you to spend more quality time with your loved ones. Assign each family member a different night of the week to be the “sous chef” in the kitchen, whether it’s helping to cut up herbs with kid-safe scissors, peel potatoes or even set the table. This will not only help get your kids interested in foods they may not have considered eating before, but it will also cut down your own dinner prep time, leaving you more quality time with your family.

“Lightening Up” Family Favorites

Swap This For That:

Ease your mind about the meals you serve to your family by swapping out unhealthy ingredients for lighter, better-for-you options. When making a classic dish like a Chicken Parmesan Casserole, swap out regular cheese and pasta sauce for part skim mozzarella and low-sodium marinara sauce. Use lean, non-breaded **Tyson® Fully Cooked Grilled Chicken Breast Strips** to give your family an excellent source of protein, and put the entire meal over a bed of whole-wheat pasta versus regular spaghetti. Not only will you be serving a lighter, more nutritious meal, but it will still taste like the classic dish your family has grown to love!

Guilt-Free Pleasures:

Many convenience items are incredibly healthy, so don’t beat yourself up for relying on them when time’s at a minimum. Canned veggies and fruits (such as roasted red peppers, sundried tomatoes, and canned fruit in water) can be a quick cook’s ultimate ally in the kitchen. Ready-to-use bottled sauces from the international section of the grocery store (such as, hoisin, teriyaki, Thai peanut and many others) can help you create a sensational dish in a flash. Items like **Tyson® Fully Cooked Chicken and Steak Strips** are rich in protein and make lighter cooking a snap. Stocking up on convenience items like these will help to create healthy, balanced and quick meals—minus the guilt.

Saving “Green” at the Grocery

Stick To The List:

Putting together and sticking to a detailed grocery list will make your shopping trip more efficient and help you avoid impulse purchases. Divide your list into organized sections (e.g., pantry items and snack foods, fruits and veggies, frozen items, etc.) and check off each item as it goes in your cart. Try sticking to only what’s on your list to help keep your grocery bill low, but don’t let it prevent you from trying new food items that may help you save time in the kitchen.

Smart Spending:

Being conscious of what you buy at the grocery store *and* how you buy it can help to keep supermarket spending at a minimum. Always purchase produce when it’s in season (i.e., grapefruits and kiwis in the winter and berries in the spring and summer) to avoid overspending. As an excellent alternative to fresh, buy canned and frozen items, which are a good value given how long they can be kept on hand. Buy in bulk; purchasing larger quantities of regular used items (such as pasta, rice, cereals, meat, chicken, etc.) can be a great money-saver as long as you are mindful of using up the food you’ve purchased. And before you head to the checkout counter, make sure to read store flyers and check out the displays at the end of each aisle for special items and products boasting reduced prices.

For more information on **Tyson® Fully Cooked Chicken and Steak Strips** and other recipe-ready ingredients, or to learn more about Robin Miller’s tips and recipes for quick, light and budget-friendly meals, please visit www.tyson.com.