

>Meal Prep< GUIDE

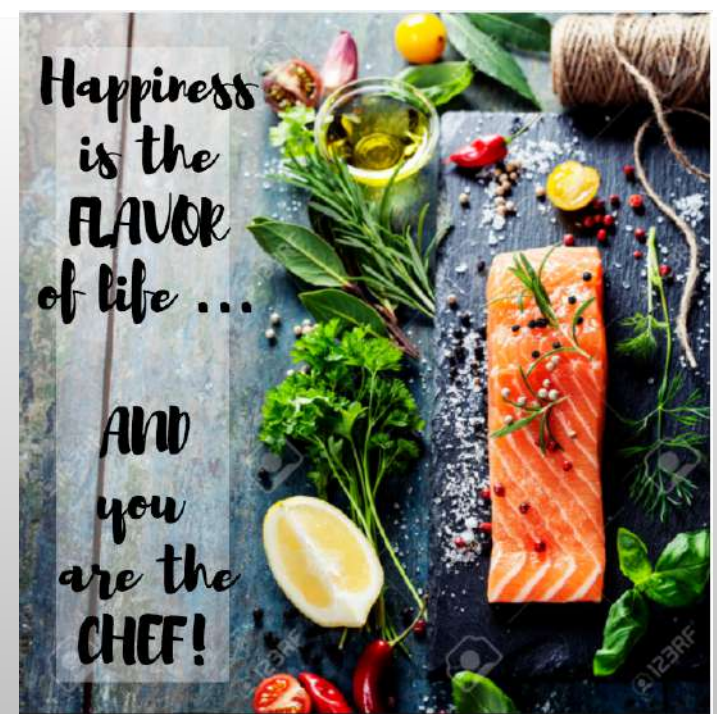
Hi there! I am SO happy you to share my best tips on how make Meal Planning and Prepping just a little bit easier for you! First off, congratulations on taking the step towards making your health a *priority* and stepping up to make adjustments towards a healthier lifestyle change!

And meal planning is a HUGE part of that! So let's dive right in and get started!

In this guide, you will learn the fundamentals to have **SUCCESS** in the kitchen. I will teach you the tools to make it as simplified for you as possible!

Bottom line...without healthy eating habits, you will not be successful in your fitness and/or weight loss journey! Having healthy foods ON HAND is essential to living a healthy lifestyle - and prepping is the KEY to making those healthier choices!

Here you will find tricks and hacks to meal planning and prepping that will make your time in the kitchen productive and efficient. This is my system to a Prepping Session and I'm happy to share it with you!



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**Don't for to PRINT OUT:
Meal Planner Page
Clean Eating Recipes!**



Why is Meal Planning important?

BECAUSE IT WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE!

You will eat healthier.

No more relying on takeout, fast food or convenience (and usually highly processed) foods when mealtime comes around and you are starving! Now you can grab from meals that are prepped and balanced with proteins, veggies and carbs.

You will save money.

No more eating out because you don't have food available in the house or you are too tired to figure out what "everyone" wants to eat for dinner. No more extra trips to the grocery store, that in itself saves \$\$\$ bigtime! When you make a plan, you can get your shopping done just once or twice a week as opposed to 4 or 5 times each week.

You will save time.

When you set time aside to focus on just planning, prepping (cooking) and getting your shopping done, you will be more efficient. I have become someone who makes an effort every day to make the most of my time. Toggling is NOT for me. Focused tasks get things done quickly and efficiently. Even right now, as I'm sitting here writing this, THIS is what I'm focused on. I'm not checking my Facebook notifications, my emails, or scrolling through social media. I'm focused on this. I will check the other things when I'm done. ;)

You will waste less food.

Once you create that meal plan for the week, you will then make a grocery list. This will ensure that you buy only what you need. If you have food in your pantry or fridge that will expire soon, you'll know to add those into your meal plan earlier in the week. Not to mention that when you take the time to prep and cook your own food, chances are, you won't want it to go to waste.

You will have LESS STRESS!

Going into your week knowing your meals are situated is an AWESOME feeling. No more guesswork about what you'll eat or if you'll have time to actually cook your food! If you've got a 30 minute lunch, all you have to do is heat up your container, or dump your chicken salad into a bowl. Otherwise, you're out finding something quick (& usually not the healthiest) and hoping the line isn't too long so you're not late!

-----> You will also feel that PRIDE that "I did this". And this is the feeling that becomes addicting and what keeps you in the habit of taking just a couple of hours, a couple of times a week to get it done!

What is Clean Eating?

At its simplest, clean eating is about eating **whole foods**, or "real" foods – those that are un- or minimally processed, refined, and handled, making them as close to their **natural form as possible**.

Here is a picture of what I base my "clean eating" menu on. Choose from these items and you're good to go! I will reference items directly from this list here in this guide. You will see that all of what I prepare (individually and in recipes) are listed here <3 Remember...its all about choices.

If I can do this...so can YOU!



Clean Eating GUIDE



VEGGIES

- Kale, cooked or raw
- Collard greens, cooked or raw
- Spinach, cooked or raw
- Brussels sprouts, chopped or 5 medium
- Broccoli, chopped
- Asparagus, 10 large spears
- Beets, 2 medium
- Tomatoes, chopped, cherry, or 2 medium
- Squash (summer), sliced
- Winter squash (all varieties), cubed
- String beans
- Peppers, sweet, sliced
- Carrots, sliced or 10 medium baby
- Cauliflower, chopped
- Artichokes, ½ large
- Eggplant, ½ medium
- Okra
- Jicama, sliced
- Snow peas
- Cabbage, chopped
- Cucumbers
- Celery
- Lettuce (NOT iceberg)
- Mushrooms
- Radishes
- Onions, chopped
- Sprouts

CARBS

- Sweet potato
- Yams
- Quinoa, cooked
- Beans (kidney, black, garbanzo, white, lima, etc.), cooked, drained
- Lentils, cooked, drained
- Edamame, shelled
- Peas
- Refried beans, nonfat
- Brown rice, cooked
- Wild rice, cooked
- Potato, mashed or ½ medium
- Corn on the cob, 1 ear
- Amaranth, cooked
- Millet, cooked
- Buckwheat, cooked
- Barley, cooked
- Bulgur, cooked
- Oatmeal, steel-cut, cooked
- Oatmeal, rolled, cooked
- Pasta, whole-grain, cooked
- Couscous, whole wheat, cooked
- Crackers, whole-grain, 8 small crackers
- Cereal, whole-grain, low sugar
- Bread, whole-grain, 1 slice*
- Pita bread, whole wheat, 1 small (4-inch)*
- Wafes, whole-grain, 1 wafe*
- Pancakes, whole-grain, 1 small (4-inch)*
- English muffin, whole-grain, ½ muffin*
- Bagel, whole-grain, ½ small (3-inch)*
- Tortilla, whole wheat, 1 small (6-inch)*
- Tortilla, corn, 2 small (6-inch)*

FRUIT

- Raspberries
- Blueberries
- Blackberries
- Strawberries
- Watermelon, diced
- Cantaloupe, diced
- Orange, divided into sections or 1 med
- Tangerine, 2 small
- Apple, sliced or 1 small
- Apricots, 4 small
- Grapefruit, divided into sections or ½ lg
- Cherries
- Grapes
- Kiwifruit, 2 medium
- Mango, sliced
- Peach, sliced or 1 large
- Nectarine, sliced or 1 large
- Pear, sliced or 1 large
- Pineapple, diced
- Banana, ½ large
- Papaya, diced
- Figs, 2 small
- Honeydew melon, diced
- Salsa, pico de gallo
- Tomato sauce, plain

HEALTHY FATS & CHEESE

- Avocado, mashed or ¼ medium
- 12 almonds, whole, raw
- 8 cashews, whole, raw
- 14 peanuts, whole, raw
- 20 pistachios, whole, raw
- 10 pecan halves, raw
- 8 walnut halves, raw
- Hummus
- Coconut milk, canned
- Feta cheese, crumbled
- Goat cheese, crumbled
- Mozzarella (low-moisture), shredded
- Cheddar, shredded
- Provolone, shredded
- Monterey jack, shredded
- Parmesan, shredded

FREE FOODS

- Lemon and/or lime juice (not lemonade)
- Vinegars (cider, white wine, or red wine)
- Mustard
- Herbs (fresh and dry)
- Spices (except salt)
- Garlic
- Ginger
- Hot sauce (Tabasco or Mexican hot sauce)
- Flavor extracts (pure vanilla, peppermint, almond, etc.)

PROTEIN

- Sardines (fresh or canned in water), 7 medium
- Boneless, skinless chicken or turkey breast, cooked, diced
- Lean ground chicken or turkey (≥ 93% lean), cooked
- Fish, fresh water (catfish, tilapia, trout), cooked, faked
- Fish, cold water, wild-caught (cod, salmon, halibut, tuna), cooked, faked
- Game: buffalo (bison, ostrich, venison), cooked, diced
- Game: lean ground (≥ 95% lean), cooked, diced
- Eggs, 2 large
- Egg whites, 8 large
- Greek yogurt, plain, 1%
- Yogurt, plain, 2%
- Shellfish (shrimp, crab, lobster), cooked
- Clams, canned, drained
- Red meat, extra-lean, cooked, diced
- Lean ground red meat (≥ 95% lean), cooked
- Shakeology, 1 scoop
- Tempeh
- Tofu, firm
- Pork tenderloin, diced, cooked
- Tuna, canned light in water, drained
- Turkey slices, low-sodium, fat-free, 6 slices
- Ham slices, low-sodium, fat-free, 6 slices
- Ricotta cheese, light
- Cottage cheese, 2%
- (approx. 42 g depending on variety)
- Protein powder (whey, hemp, rice, pea), 1½ scoops
- Veggie burger, 1 medium patty
- Turkey bacon (reduced fat), 4 slices

TEASPOON

- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Extra-virgin coconut oil
- Flaxseed oil
- Walnut oil
- Pumpkin seed oil
- Nut butters (peanut, almond, cashew, etc.)
- Seed butters (pumpkin, sunflower, sesame [tahini])

SEEDS & OILS

- Pumpkin seeds, raw
- Sunflower seeds, raw
- Sesame seeds, raw
- Flaxseed, ground
- Olives, 10 medium
- Peanuts
- Coconut, unsweetened, shredded
- Healthy salad dressings



15 TOP Grocery Shopping Tips!

1. Always go with a list and stick to it!
2. Plan out your menu for the entire week.
3. Don't ever go shopping HUNGRY!
4. Have a budget...this will keep you on track and \$\$\$ conscious!
5. While shopping, do a rough running tally on what you are spending.
6. Keep a list on or near your refrigerator and when you are running low on something, write it down immediately.
7. Buy in bulk when it makes sense.
8. Stock up on frozen veggies! They are just fine in a pinch.
9. Try the store brands...usually they are just as good as name brands and you'll save \$\$\$\$. I am a Target girl, so Market Pantry is my go-to. And if you have one near, try shopping at Aldi's - they are a great money saver as well!
10. Stock up on pantry items when there is a sale!
11. Go during slower times if possible, get in and out quickly!
12. Prepare your grocery list by aisle, helps speed up your trip.
13. Shop the perimeter of the grocery store, where fresh foods like fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and fish are usually located.
14. Avoid the center aisles where junk foods lurk.
15. Choose "real" foods, such as 100% fruit juice or 100% whole-grain items with as little processing and as few additives as possible.

***Healthy eating is a journey that begins
at the grocery store!***

Meal Planning 101

Why do we all get on board with this meal planning nonsense? Is it a fad? I don't think so!

I've been at it for over three years now and it is a staple part of my week - EVERY week. The benefits truly are endless and taking an hour or two out of your weekend to plan and prep takes the guess work out of eating healthy. When it's Wednesday and 5 pm and you're EXHAUSTED - guess what? Your dinner is already planned and prepped. And it's good for you! No more pizza bloat mid week because you're too tired to 'figure out what's for dinner'. Trust me - I am the WORST when it comes to the mid week woes and lack of motivation. This is why planning is so important to my healthy lifestyle success!



One of the BIGGEST benefits of meal planning - **it saves buckets of money!** The biggest complaint about healthy eating I hear - 'clean eating is too expensive.' Ummmm...hellllloooooo, so is eating out multiple times a week! Do you have kids? A trip to McDonald's costs over \$25 for my family. I can make a health filled dinner at home for MUCH cheaper than that. It's truly a no brainer. Once you get into a routine and have your staples in your pantry, you'll be surprised at how much you can save by eating at home. The best way to do that is when you go to the grocery store, have a list and STICK TO IT!

Also, meal planning helps us to eat healthy! That's kinda the point, right? It removes the daily stress of 'what's for dinner'? Seriously nothing feels better than having it all planned, prepped, and ready to go!

Additionally, we all have fun trying new recipes, right? I try at least one new recipe per week - if my family enjoys it, I add it to my recipe book and it's a keeper!

Adding variety to our routine keeps things interesting and exciting for us!

Biggest TIP: Keep it SIMPLE!

1. Grab your Meal Planning Sheet (download it and save it to your computer!).
2. Have an idea of what you want to make for your meal (s). Have your recipes handy and ready to go so you know what ingredients you will need to add to your shopping list.
3. Before you start planning your week, double check your calendar. Be sure to add any events, parties, or special occasions going on. Write them on your Meal Planning Sheet so you aren't planning a dinner when you are supposed to have DATE NIGHT out!
4. Start plugging in what meals you want for the week. Each day should have a breakfast, lunch and dinner, and a couple of snacks throughout the day.

Again...Keep it SIMPLE - especially if you are new to PREPPING! Stick to just 2 or 3 different meals at first to get the hang of it. As you find your rhythm, you'll get quicker and THEN you can add more dishes and new recipes!

5. Fridge & Pantry Check: Make sure you have all the ingredients you will need on hand. If you do not, add them to your shopping list!

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EASY PEASY, right?!?!?

Meal Planning TIPS!

Meal prepping can be stressful, especially if you don't have a general plan set in place. I want to give you some tips to make the process easier and more efficient so you can save yourself some time - and maybe even some tears. ;)

And remember...the more you do it, the better you will get at it!

Here are some meal prepping tips to keep in mind BEFORE you actually get started!

(if the video link doesn't work...copy/paste into your browser!)



Buffet Style Meal Prep

Instead of planning all of your breakfasts, lunches, and dinners for the week, you can prepare simple foods that can be mixed and matched to create a variety of meals. Easy-peasy! This is also a good way to "prep" meals for larger families.

An example of a buffet-style menu: you can bake salmon filets and chicken breasts, make soft-boiled eggs, steam broccolini, sauté mushrooms with broccoli, baked sweet potatoes, and maybe even keep it super simple and get an Asian vegetable stir-fry that comes pre-chopped.

Cook up a large batch of oatmeal, and stocked your fridge with salad fixings, pre-cooked lentils, apples, bananas, hummus, almonds, and balsamic vinaigrette.

When it's meal time all you need to do is portion it out!

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Container Meal Prep

Here's my secret...I always start with "buffet style prep". ;) I portion out each of the containers and BAM! Done...

It's important to remember to not get overwhelmed when you are a beginner. Too often people get bogged down in details when sticking to the basics will do more good. Don't try to incorporate too many new things at once. For example, don't try meal prepping with all new healthy recipes.

Start prepping with recipes you already know. When you feel comfortable, add more.

I get my Meal Prep Containers on AMAZON!
(The colored containers shown go with with Meal Guide I follow - Portion Fix. Let me know when you're ready to kick it up a notch and I can tell you more about it!)



Mason Jar Salads

Mason jar recipes are a serious food trend right now! WHY?!

Well, FIRST reason -- mason jars are a fantastic way to transport healthy, nutrient-packed salads to work without getting all soggy! Creating this perfectly portioned grab and go lunch ahead of time requires minimal effort and it's a well-balanced meal with wholesome and real ingredients. In addition to taking them to work, they're great for picnics at the park, or even when traveling.


SECOND, mason jars are not just for salads! They're useful for making overnight oats, parfaits, smoothies, sides, and even fancy pasta dishes.

THIRD, let's face it, they're simply FUN and pretty to make! A totally valid reason right? Score!

How to Make a MASON JAR SALAD

Mason jar salads are a fun and practical way for assembling and transporting salads. Individual components of a salad are layered in glass mason (or canning) jars for easy transport, so you can eat healthy from anywhere!


You want to always start with dressing at the bottom, so most ingredients remain fresh and untouched by dressing. After the dressing base, simply layer ingredients by order of sog-resistance, meaning heartier ingredients that can withstand dressing go in first. Here's an easy guide to help you build your mason jar salad:



- 10 Cheeses**
Goat cheese, feta, gorgonzola, queso fresco, mozzarella*
- 8 Herbs***
Basil, cilantro, mint, parsley
- 6 Grains and pastas**
Barley, farro, quinoa, rice, short pastas, cut-up soba noodles
- 4 Dried fruit and seeds**
Apricots, dried cranberries, raisins, sunflower seeds, pepitas
- 2 Dense vegetables**
Beets, bell peppers, brussels sprouts, broccoli, carrots, celery, fennel, green beans, radishes
- 1 Dressing**
Choose your favorite!
- 9 Salad greens**
Any mix of your favorite greens
- 7 Delicate vegetables and fruits**
Asparagus, avocado*, corn, sprouts*, strawberries*, peaches*, apples, pears, orange segments, grapes, tomatoes*, zucchini
- 5 Proteins**
Tofu, chicken*, tuna*, salmon*, steak*, hard-boiled eggs*, edamame
- 3 Legumes and nuts**
Garbanzo, kidney, white and black beans, lentils, peanuts, walnuts, almonds, pine nuts, pecans

*If you're packing >2 salads ahead of time, it's best to add these items the day of for maximum freshness.

3 Dressing Options



Balsamic Vinaigrette

1 ½ Tbsp balsamic vinegar	2 tsp honey
2 tsp Dijon mustard	2 Tbsp cooking oil
	Salt and pepper

Asian Vinaigrette

1 clove garlic, crushed	½ tsp brown sugar
2 ¼ tsp soy sauce	½ tsp toasted sesame oil
2 ¼ tsp rice vinegar	2 ½ Tbsp cooking oil

Creamy Paprika Dressing

1 clove garlic, minced	¼ cup sour cream
3 Tbsp red wine vinegar	½ tsp paprika
2 tsp Dijon mustard	2 Tbsp cooking oil
	Salt and pepper

When you transport your salad, keep it upright as possible, so the dressing stays on the bottom. When you're ready to eat, simply shake up the jar or if things are really tightly packed, transfer to a large bowl and toss everything through with a fork.

Here are TIPS for your mason jar prep:

1. Salad dressing: Pour 1 to 4 tablespoons of your favorite salad dressing in the bottom of the jar. Adjust the amount depending on the size of the salad you are making and personal preference.
2. Hard vegetables: Next, add any hard chopped vegetables you're including in your salad, like carrots, cucumbers, red and green peppers, cooked beets, and fennel.
3. Beans, grains, and pasta: Next, add any beans, grains, and/or pasta, like chickpeas, black beans, cooked barley, cooked rice, and pasta corkscrews.
4. Cheese and proteins (optional): If eating the salad within the day, add a layer of diced or crumbled cheese and proteins like tuna fish, diced (cooked) chicken, hard-boiled eggs, or cubed tofu. If making salads ahead to eat throughout the week, wait to add these until the day of.
5. Softer vegetables and fruits (optional): Next, add any soft vegetables or fruits, like avocados, tomatoes, diced strawberries, or dried apricots. If making salads ahead to eat throughout the week, wait to add these ingredients until the day of.
6. Nuts, seeds, and lighter grains: Next, add any nuts or seeds, like almonds, walnuts, and sunflower seeds. If making a salad with lighter, more absorbent grains like quinoa or millet, add them in this layer instead of with the beans.
7. Salad greens: Last but not least, fill the rest of the jar with salad greens. Use your hands to tear them into bite-sized pieces. It's fine to pack them into the jar fairly compactly.
8. Storing the salad: Screw the lid on the jar and refrigerate for up to 5 days. If you're including any cheese, proteins, or soft fruits and vegetables, add these to the top of the jar the morning you plan to eat your salad.
9. Shake it up or dump into a bowl and ENJOY!

Salads are not the ONLY things you can prep in Mason Jars!

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By now, you may be wondering... hey coaches since you've been doing this for a few years now -- what are some of YOUR favorite go-to simple recipes you make every week that could help me get started?! WELL we are so glad you asked! :) Our TOP FAVE because it's super EASY, super QUICK, super HEALTHY, super DELICIOUS and super FILLING is...

OVERNIGHT OATS!! 🙌🙌

Here's the basic recipe:

- 1/2 cup Oats (rolled or steel cut)
- 1-1/4 cup Almond Milk (or until oats are covered)
- 1 Tbsp Chia Seeds
- 1 Tbsp Maple Syrup
- 1-2 tsp Vanilla



Mix well together in a small container or mason jar. Add your favorite toppings now or right before you eat. Soak at least 6 hours or overnight. If you prep multiple at a time, these can keep in the fridge for up to 3 days. Eat it cold or heat it up!

But salads are my favorite things to put in mason jars...so here are a few more for ya!

:: Bean Salads ::

A simple combination with ingredients like white beans, chickpeas, kidney beans, cucumber, tomato, onion, olives, cilantro, lemon juice, and vinegar.

:: Quinoa & Pasta Salads ::

Choose your base (quinoa or a type of pasta). Mix in your favorite veggies such as cherry tomatoes, cucumber, mushroom, bell pepper, zucchini and season with your favorite dressings and spices.

:: Sweet Potato & Roasted Veggies ::

Bake up a large tray of bell peppers, brussel sprouts, onions, carrots, zucchini, broccoli, cauliflower (whatever veggies you like really!) and some sliced sweet potatoes.



:: Smoothie Bags ::

Fill Ziploc freezer quart size bags with your favorite greens and fruit! Freeze right away.

- When ready to prepare, throw your packet ingredients in a high powered blender.
- Add a scoop of your favorite healthy shake mix (mine is *Shakeology*...if you want to know more, let me know!)
- Add 1 cup liquid such as ice cold water, coconut milk, almond milk...etc.

TIP...cut your banana into chunks! Then all you have to do is pull out a baggie to blend into your smoothie each day.

These are best used within 30 days once frozen.



*****Mix and match your favorite fruits & greens to create your personal smoothies!*****

BONUS: ALL ABOUT JUICING!

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Juicing is something I've come to LOVE doing every week. It's yummy...gives me energy and the process somehow relaxes me. As you may have been able to tell, I'm all about keeping things simple. Most of the meals I cook are quick preps and easy cooking.

However, the process of cutting up my fruits and washing the veggies relaxes me. Sort of like meditation I guess. I use the time to "visualize" goals and how I'm going to get myself there. It's basically like daydreaming.



This is a huge batch...will probably make about 8-10 bottles (I usually make 4-6 bottles at a time) but because I have limited fridge space today...I'm juicing a bit more than usual ❤️

Today I have CARROTS | APPLES | ORANGES | LEMONS | GINGER | CUCUMBER | MINT
It's gonna be yummy!

TIPS:

✖ You should drink your juice within 48 hours.

✖ I use airtight GLASS juicing bottles. If you're juicing lemon, don't use plastic.



✖ Try different recipes and different combinations - there are tons online too.

✖ Like anything, the more you do it, the easier and faster the process will be.

✖ I know, I know...it's a pain to clean up the juicer. But don't be lazy...it takes 5 minutes. It's really not that bad. 🙄

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RECIPES & RESOURCES!

Having our favorite go-to recipes handy along with finding awesome new ones is vital to a successful and fulfilling (literally) meal planning session!! 🙌

I am always on the lookout for new things to make. I keep a notebook with all my favorite healthy recipes in my pantry. I add to it when we try something new that we love.

When I come across a recipe online, I screenshot it and keep it on my phone for the following Friday. I add it to my meal plan, then transfer to my recipe book once it's family approved. :)



Other ways to save your recipes would be by pinning from websites onto a Pinterest board (but make sure to go back and look at them!), use a recipe saver app, save them to a folder on your computer, print out and put in a binder with category dividers (soups, salads, mexican, smoothies...), etc.

*I had so much fun creating this guide for you!
I hope you were able to learn some helpful tips and that you start putting them into practice **RIGHT NOW!** I would LOVE to see your pictures.*

--> Tag me on your social media so I can see what you're doing! <--

READY FOR MORE? If you are interested in dialing in your nutrition and fitness, and want info about my exclusive online Health & Fitness group, please let me know! Email me directly anytime at charlani.livelifehappy@gmail.com and I will get back to you ASAP!

Nutrition + Fitness + Support & Accountability = SUCCESS & RESULTS!



And don't forget to download & SAVE your Meal Planner and Recipes so you can access them easily when you need them!

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