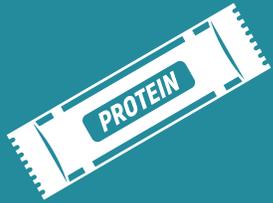


MEAL PREP TIPS

From Olympian Rosie Brennan



Always have food with you!

Life is busy and unpredictable, so always having some food with you ensures that no matter what comes your way, you will have fuel to get you through, skip those hangry moments, and have a good training session. In an ideal world, you make snacks ahead of time and carry them with you, but the world isn't always ideal. There is a place for bars and other packaged snacks and this is probably the best place. Having a box of something in your car, an extra bar in your training bag, school backpack, office, or wherever you are on a regular basis, can be a life saver.



Schedule time & make it fun!

Prepping meals and snacks is important and it deserves a space on the calendar. Find at least one day a week and carve out a chunk of time. Cooking doesn't have to be a chore. Sunday is my snack baking and meal prep day. I like to plan out my meals for the week, make a grocery list, bake a snack for the week, a loaf of bread, and maybe a treat. Once you have a routine, this is quite efficient and only takes 1-2 hours out of your day. Muffins are my go-to snack and they are so versatile. Every week is a new adventure picking out the flavor for the week and testing out new recipes. Treat yourself to a new cookbook, find some food bloggers to give a follow, and crowdsource your friends to make cooking exciting and find inspiration. I've found tons of inspiration from Shalane Flanagan and Elyse Kopecky and their *Run Fast Eat Slow* movement.



Plan meals that match your life.

A big week of racing or training requires not only a greater total quantity of fuel, but a greater proportion of carbohydrates. Understand what you are burning so you can replace it. And don't be fooled by school (or work). The brain also requires fuel and big brain weeks require more fuel. If you have a busy week coming up, that prep time leading into the week is even more important, but remember to plan meals that you are comfortable making. That is not the best time to test out a bunch of new recipes. Lastly, make enough dinner to have lunch the next day. You will save time and make sure lunch is a complete meal.



All nutrients are important!

It's understandable to not want to take a crash course in nutrition just to feed yourself so at the most basic level. If you work to include a variety of food and make sure all meals and even snacks include the three macronutrients – Carbs, Protein, and Fats – you minimize the risk of any deficiencies.



Ingredients are everything.

Muffins are a great example: you can have a muffin that is just a cupcake with blueberries in it or you can have a homemade muffin made with carrots from the garden and whole grain flour. Both are muffins and both have a place in life, but for my everyday training and living, I do my best to work with quality ingredients and stick to fruits and veggies that are in-season. The higher the quality of the ingredients, the more nutrients the food carries, so while it may seem foolish to pay extra for the grass fed butter vs. the cheapest one on the shelf when they are both butter, you are often paying for more nutrients. The denser a food is in nutrients, the less of it you need to feel satisfied. Thus, often in the long run the higher quality food will save you money because you end up eating less.

I have been living on a tight budget my entire professional ski career and I wish more than anything that quality food was subsidized enough to not make that a barrier. Unfortunately, it's a choice we all have to make for which ingredients are the most worth it for the extra splurge to ensure quality.

An average day during a normal training week:

Breakfast: 2 pieces of very dense whole grain bread w/jam & fried eggs, coffee w/cream, steel cut oats w/coconut, seeds, honey, blueberries.

Morning Training ~ 2-3 hours

Post Training Snack: Muffin of the week & chocolate milk on high intensity days

Lunch: Leftovers from last night's dinner. This might mean just reheating the chicken curry from last night or if I cooked a whole chicken, I will repurpose it by making chicken salad to put in a wrap for a few lunches.

Computer work/nap/errands/meetings/ dinner prep/life

Pre-Training Snack: Homemade granola w/whole milk yogurt

Afternoon training ~1.5-2 hours

Post-Training Snack (if I drove to train & won't be home in <15 min): trail mix, bar, cottage cheese. **Snack on whatever I'm cooking for dinner...**

Dinner: Salmon w/roasted cauliflower & potato "salad"

Night Snack: Granola, yogurt, cookies, cottage cheese, etc.

