



## Add Up the Savings! On Food Preparation

Consider both time and money when planning meals. It is easy to learn to cook new things with the Mix It Up approach used in this lesson. Make sure to review “Add Up the Savings, When Shopping for Food” as you plan meals and shopping list.

Preparing dinner does not have to be a dreaded chore. What are you to do? By using a Mix It Up approach; you can prepare meals in a matter of minutes with pantry items, flavor mixes, or commercial mixes that can be assembled into an assortment of delicious meals. Meals will be more nutritious and you will save money.

### Cook it Quick:

#### Mix It Up Meals as Easy as 1, 2, 3 (or maybe SPV!)

Let's start thinking; here are some sample foods and formulas that are very versatile and can turn a dinner dilemma into a daily delight. How about a “make your own casserole” that can easily be prepared ahead to bake when arriving at home or microwave quickly in about 15-30 minutes? What about a quick skillet dinner that can be prepared easily on a stove top? Each can be done using Starches, Proteins, Vegetables then mixing in Flavor, Sauce, and adding Topping after heating.

#### Mix It Up One Dish Meal

##### General Directions:

Select food(s) from each of the following categories or use your own favorites. Combine in a buttered 2- to 2 ½ - quart casserole dish. Cover and bake at 350 F for about 50 minutes to 1 hour. You can also use a microwave oven at 50% power for about 15 to 30 minutes, rotating or stirring as necessary; heat until steaming hot (165 F) throughout.

For a skillet dinner, use the similar approach, spraying a 10” non-stick skillet with your favorite cooking spray; add ingredients from each category and heat thoroughly, approximately 15-20 minutes, stirring as necessary.

## Mix It Up One Dish Meal Continued

### Starch - select ONE:

- 2 cups uncooked pasta (macaroni, penne, spiral, bow tie), COOKED
- 1 cup uncooked long-grain white or brown rice, COOKED
- 4 cups uncooked noodles, COOKED

### Protein - select ONE:

- 2 cups cooked ground beef
- 2 cups cooked and diced chicken, turkey, ham, beef, or pork
- 2 cups chopped hard-cooked egg
- 2 (6 to 8-oz.) cans fish or seafood, flaked
- 2 cups cooked or canned dry beans (kidney, etc.)

### Vegetable - select ONE:

- 1 (10-oz.) pkg. thawed and drained frozen spinach, broccoli, green beans, green peas
- 1 (16-oz.) can green beans, peas, carrots, corn, drained
- 2 cups sliced fresh zucchini

### Sauce - select ONE:

- 2 cups white sauce or 1 can sauce-type soup (mushroom, celery, cheese, tomato, etc.) mixed with milk to make 2 cups
- 1 (16-oz.) can diced tomatoes with juice
- 1 bottle (approx. 12 ounces) of your favorite prepared sauce

### Flavor - select ONE or MORE:

- ½ cup chopped celery, ¼ cup chopped onion, ¼ cup sliced black olives
- 1 - 2 teaspoons mixed dried leaf herbs (basil, thyme, marjoram, tarragon)
- Salt and pepper to taste

### Topping- select ONE or MORE: If desired after heating, place on top:

- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup shredded Swiss, Cheddar, or Monterey Jack cheese
- ¼ cup buttered bread crumbs
- ¼ to ½ cup canned fried onion rings
- ¼ cup of your favorite nut

Return casserole with topping(s), uncovered, to oven for about 10 minutes or to microwave for about 2 minutes

## SPV Casserole or Skillet Dinner

2 cups uncooked bow tie pasta, cooked	or	1 cup uncooked Rice, cooked
2 cups of diced chicken, turkey or ham	or	2 cups diced chicken
1 10 ounce package frozen vegetables	or	1 10 ounce pkg. stir fry vegetables
1 can cheese soup	or	1 bottler stir fry sauce
½ cup of flavor mix (onions, celery, pepper) or		½ cup of flavor mix (onions, etc.)
½ cup canned fried onion rings	or	¼ cup almonds

Pre heat the oven 350°. Mix first five ingredients together. Add to a 2 ½ quart buttered dish, cover and bake for 50 minutes to 1 hour at 350°. Add topping and return to oven for 10 minutes.

Spray non stick skillet with cooking spray. Mix first five ingredients together, stir until heated thoroughly; toss in almonds, and serve.

If time is a factor, these recipes can be cooked in the microwave at 50% power for 15-30 minutes, add topping then return to microwave for 2-5 minutes.

### 1, 2, 3, Salad

Choose three fruits or a mixture of fruits and vegetables. They can be fresh, canned or frozen. Frozen fruit should be thawed and drained; canned fruit also needs to be drained. (If using pineapple, reserve juice to use as an anti-darkening agent). Slice or chop fresh fruit or vegetable. Coat apples and bananas with pineapple juice or lemon juice to keep them from turning brown. Add canned fruit or vegetable and mix the ingredients.

1. Add Main Ingredient

1 chopped apple or 1 cup orange slices

2. Add second fruit or vegetable

1 cup chopped celery or ½ cup dried cranberries or 1 can apricots halves or pineapple chunks

3. Add third fruit or vegetable

1 cup seedless grapes or ¼ cup chopped pecans or 1 banana, sliced or 1/4sliced almonds

These salads can stand alone or be served with a dressing over a bed of salad greens. Suggested dressings include bottled poppy seed or ½ cup plain or vanilla yogurt.

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