DRIVE BY NUTRITION
Nourish and Thrive

# The Busy Mom's Dinner Reset

Simple steps to reduce decision fatigue, take the stress out of dinner, and make evenings feel more manageable — one bite and one step at a time.

Drive By Nutrition
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*Designed for busy moms who want to simplify dinner without overhauling their life."*

# Welcome to Your Dinner Reset

## Getting Started

If you feel overwhelmed at dinner time… you're not alone.

"What's for dinner?" might be the most dreaded question for moms. By 5 PM, you've already made so many decisions that one more feels overwhelming.  It's not just a simple answer — you have to think about what to make, how long it will take, and what ingredients you have.

Some days are really busy with after school activities for kids.  This can mean a small window of time to make and eat dinner before practice, grab a snack and eat it on the way to practice, or dinner has to wait until everything is over and everyone is starving.

On nights with practice it is so easy to stop and pick up take out on the way to practice or on the way home.  The temptation is real even if you want to feed your family well.

Follow these five simple steps to get started.

# Step 1: Inventory

Before planning meals it is helpful to know what is available for meals. I hate being excited to make a meal only to realize I don't actually have all the needed ingredients.

This isn't meant to be an exhaustive list.  It is just a quick look to see what you have.  This should only take 15 -20 minutes max.

This might include a list of veggies (fresh, frozen, or canned).

This might look like making a list of all the protein you have on hand.

This could include making a list of fruit that is available (fresh, frozen, or canned).

Make a list of condiments.  There is nothing worse than going to put out a spread and realizing you are out of ketchup or pickles.

Are there any other staples that you like to use?  Garlic, Ginger paste, dehydrated onions.

Don't spend a lot of time but do a quick spice check to make sure you have your staples and that you aren't low on anything.

Taking inventory helps you to know what you have on hand when making decisions about what to eat and it also helps to know what you have before going shopping so you can buy what you're low on without buying extras you don't need.

# Step 2: Choose Simple Meals

Look ahead at the coming week.  Based on the ingredients that you know you have pick 3-5 easy meals.

This could look like family favorites, go to meals, or recipes you have been wanting to try.

You can also ask your family what they would like to eat this week and let each person pick a meal.

Picking meals can also go with themes if you do this each week.  Think Taco Tuesday, Breakfast for Dinner, or Meatless or Meatball Monday.

Keep in mind the prep time and the cook time.

This activity is not meant to take a lot of time.  Since you are making this decision ahead of time emotions are less likely to play a part of the decision making.

Dinner time is a great time to have this conversation with your family.

Some of my kids favorite go to meals are Spaghetti, Beef and Broccoli, Tacos, Roast and Potatoes, and Chicken Noodle Soup.

Some meals might sound like a lot of work but if you plan ahead your crockpot can be your best friend.

# Step 3: Prep One Thing

When you think about meal prep, it can start to feel overwhelming really quickly.  That is not the intention.  Think about one thing that you could do to make your life at dinner time easier.

One step could look like pulling the meat out of the freezer so it is thawed and ready to cook at dinner time.

One step could look like chopping veggies in the morning then putting them in the fridge so they are ready to cook at dinner time.

One step might look like throwing a few veggies and spices in with some meat and broth into the crockpot in the morning.

One step might look like batch cooking meat so that it can be used later in the week.

One step might also look like doubling a meal and freezing half for later.

Your future self will thank you.

## Step 4: Keep It Simple

If you already have a lot on your plate, don't overwhelm yourself with more.  Keep meals simple!

The whole idea is to reduce decision fatigue at the end of the day.

Simple doesn't mean boring. It means repeatable.
And repeatable is what creates less stress at dinner time.

## Step 5: Repeat

Use the time that you save to continue to plan meals for the next week, write out your grocery list for next week, or take a deep breath.
You've got this!

One bite and one step at a time leads to lasting change.

If this helped you, my full Weeknight Dinner System walks you through exactly how to do this every week. This free guide is just the starting point. When you're ready for a simple system you can follow, I'd love to support you inside it.