

BUDDHA BOWL FOOD PREP: A WEEK'S WORTH OF VEGAN DINNERS

...in 60 minutes or less

YOUR OVERALL ACTION PLAN

You're going to prepare several different ingredients and store them in separate containers. Your food will have a longer shelf life this way, instead of storing fully assembled Buddha bowls. When you're ready to eat, it'll take about 5 minutes to assemble your bowl. You can then eat it as is, or heat in a microwave for 3 minutes.

Plan ahead so you can have an hour available to focus only on food prep for the coming week. Start with a clean kitchen, have all your equipment ready to go and your ingredients purchased, and be sure to read through these instructions beforehand.

You can make this as simple or as elaborate as you like. I went pretty hardcore and used a total of 16 ingredients (you can certainly use fewer), but it still took me only 55 minutes to prepare. Also keep in mind that the more often you make Buddha bowls, the faster you'll get at preparing them (full disclosure: I make them a lot so I've got lots of practice!)

FOUR IMPORTANT NOTES

NOTE #1: My 60-minute timeframe assumes that you'll be using a food processor. If you don't have one and need to chop your veggies by hand, it'll take a bit longer.

NOTE #2: All amounts are for one person. If you're preparing meals for two, double all amounts.

NOTE #3: Consider this guide as just that – a guide. It's not an exact recipe to follow, and you can use any plant-based protein source and any veggies you fancy. I'm showing you what I do and the ingredients I use merely as a starting point.

NOTE #4: With only an hour of food prep for the whole week, we're making the assumption that you're OK with eating the same thing for dinner for a week. However, unlike other pre-made meals, you have lots of opportunity to switch things up throughout the week if you use slightly different toppings each day. For example, alternate between tofu and tempeh for your main protein, use cashews + almonds as a topping one day and hemp hearts + crispy onion the next, etc. Or you can enjoy the exact same Buddha bowl 7 times in a row if you're a serious creature of routine. Up to you!

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT YOU'LL NEED

- Large pot with well-fitting lid
- Blender
You'll need this to make smooth dressing.
- Large smoothie cup or screw-top jar
- 5-8 large airtight storage containers
- 1 small airtight storage container
- 1 medium bowl
- Food processor
Note that you don't *have* to have a food processor to make this meal, but it greatly cuts down the time involved. I use a simple [Cuisinart 8-cup food processor](#).
- Cutting board and chef's knife

YOUR GROCERY LIST

- 3 cups uncooked quinoa or brown rice
- 2 large cans beans of your choice
- 1 jar salsa
- 1 bunch green onion
- 1 package cherry tomatoes
- 1 large cucumber, or 5 mini cucumbers
- Smoked tofu, tofu puffs, and/or tempeh (7 servings total)
- 6 carrots
- 4 beets
- 1/2 small Napa cabbage
- 1/2 head cauliflower
- 1 package pre-washed greens (e.g. arugula, baby kale, spinach)

STAPLES TO HAVE ON HAND

(ADD TO GROCERY LIST IF NEEDED)

- Nutritional yeast
- Tamari or soy sauce
- Apple cider vinegar or rice vinegar
- Garlic (3 cloves)
- Olive oil
- Tahini
- Black pepper

YOUR EASY FOOD PREP STEPS

1. In a large pot, cook 3 cups (dry) **quinoa or brown rice** as per package directions. This will give you just under a cup of grain per meal for the week. If you need larger serving sizes, use 4 cups of dry grain instead.

2. While quinoa or brown rice is cooking, prepare **Buddha bowl dressing**. Just throw all these ingredients into a blender, and blend! I make mine in a smoothie container with a handheld immersion blender. The smoothie container is an easy way to store this dressing for the week; it's the perfect size and pours easily.

[Dressing adapted from [Whitewater Cooks](#)]

- 1 cup nutritional yeast flakes
- 2/3 cup water
- 1/3 cup tamari or soy sauce
- 1/3 cup apple cider vinegar or rice vinegar
- 3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup tahini
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste

3. Rinse canned **beans**. Place in storage container and mix with **salsa**.

4. Chop **green onion** and store in small storage container.

5. Rinse **cherry tomatoes** and store in a bowl (they don't need to be refrigerated). You may want them handy to snack on, anyway!

6. Slice **cucumbers** into rounds and store in large storage container. Note: cucumbers don't last as long as other veggies, so you may need to slice up a second batch halfway through the week.

7. If you're using **smoked tofu**, dice it into cubes. **Tempeh strips** and **tofu puffs** can be stored in their original packaging, placed into a plastic bag or large Ziploc.

8. Now you'll prepare your main veggie ingredients. Use your food processor to grate or slice **carrots, beets, Napa cabbage, cauliflower**, or any other veggies you'd like to use. I don't bother to peel my carrots or beets, and first cut them into medium-sized chunks so they fit into the food processor's chute.

Store veggies separately in large airtight storage containers.

YOUR PREP IS DONE!

5-MINUTE BUDDHA BOWL ASSEMBLY FOR MEALS

1. Place **brown rice or quinoa** in bottom of bowl.

2. Top with prepared **carrots, beets, cauliflower, black beans with salsa**, and **tofu/tempeh** of choice.

3. If you want a warm meal, add **dressing** and heat in microwave, then top with **green onion**, your **greens** of choice, **cherry tomatoes**, and **cucumber** slices. Otherwise pile everything into your bowl and your feast is ready.

If you're packing Buddha bowls for lunches at work, take 5 minutes in the morning to assemble one in a portable container. I pack my dressing separately in a small screw-top container and add right before eating.

TOPPING IDEAS

- Sauerkraut
- Crispy onions
- Green radish or daikon radish
- Hemp hearts
- Slivered almonds
- Shredded nori seaweed
- Pumpkin seeds
- Sunflower seeds
- Cashews
- Peanuts
- Walnuts
- Kimchi
- Avocado

OTHER PROTEIN SOURCES TO TRY

- Pan fried seitan
- Veggie meatballs (e.g. Yves brand)
- Veggie ground round
- Gardein brand faux meat (e.g. "Mandarin Chick'n")
- Edamame beans
- Chickpeas
- Brown, green, or red lentils

OTHER BASES TO TRY (INSTEAD OF QUINOA/BROWN RICE)

- Farro
- Spelt
- Amaranth

OTHER VEGGIES TO TRY

- Mushrooms
- Purple cabbage
- Daikon radish
- Red/green/yellow peppers
- Snow peas
- Asparagus
- Fennel
- Broccoli
- Zucchini

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AN EXAMPLE OF KARINA'S OWN BUDDHA BOWLS

Here are the 16 ingredients I used last time I made Buddha bowls. I never make the same Buddha bowls 2 weeks in a row! With countless options for grain bases, veggies, protein sources, and toppings, you'll never get bored of this meal.



1. White kidney
beans + salsa

2. Sauerkraut

3. Jackfruit

4. Green onion

5. Buddha bowl dressing

6. Napa cabbage

7. Arugula + spinach

8. Green radish

9. Brown rice

10. Grape tomatoes

11. Crispy onions

12. Mini cucumber

13. Smoked tempeh

14. Carrots

15. Cauliflower

16. Beets