Cooking Tips and Tricks to Save you Time and Money: At home

To save time:

* **Don’t waste fuel** -If you are cooking a meal, it sometimes makes sense to double the quantity and freeze half for another day. For example, use the oven’s capacity to cook a meal for today and a casserole for tomorrow.
* **Swap dried with canned**- swap dried beans and lentils with canned to cut down on cooking time.
* **Prep first**- always prep and cut up your produce before you start cooking to make your cooking experience quicker and less stressful.
* **Meal prep**- knowing what you’re cooking each day of the week will save you time that you otherwise would be spending trying to decide what to make and shopping each day.
* **Leftovers recipes**- making meals around leftovers, for example from a roast chicken, will save you time on cooking from scratch, whilst saving you money too.
* **Cook in advance**- try making parts or even the entire meal in advance, so you don’t have to spend time cooking when you get home on a busy day.
* **Read the recipe**- read the recipe beforehand so you know exactly what you’re doing before you start cooking.
* **One pot meals**- they are a great way to save time on cooking and on washing-up as an added bonus, for example, stir frys, stews, and casseroles.
* **Get the kids involved**- kids can help with the prep work, cooking, and cleaning, whilst this might not save you time initially, once they get to know what they’re doing they will be able to do it independently, plus they’re more likely to try new foods If they helped cook it and will learn an invaluable life skill.
* **Clean as you go**- when you have a minute when somethings bubbling away, clean up a bit.

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To save money:

* **Swap out pre-prepared meals**- swap expensive pre-prepared meals with easy recipes, that will save you money and time.
* **Change up the recipe**- substituting ingredients in the recipe with those you already have or those that cook quicker is a great way to save time and money, whilst making a recipe your own.
* **Get organised**- Check what’s in your store cupboard and make a list of what you need, once you have got all the basics you will cut down on cost each time you go shopping. Check out what is in your fridge or freezer and use these foods regularly to save waste.
* **Plan ahead**- Decide on your menu for the week and make a shopping list and only buy the items you really need.
* **Know your portions**- making correct portion sizes makes a big difference, as we often make more then we need, this is especially true with foods like pasta and rice.
* **Go plant-based**- try plant-based meals once or twice a week, it’s often a lot cheaper as meat products and fish are expensive.
* **Set a weekly budget**- sticking to a budget will allow you to choose your meals around what you can afford, not the other way around.
* **Cut down on non-essentials**- crisps, biscuits, cakes, and pre-made snacks are high in sugar and fat and cost a lot.

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