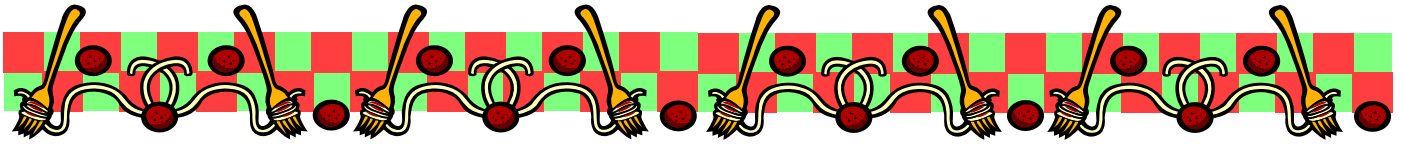


# HINTS FOR WRITING PERFECT MENU



Careful menu planning helps contribute to healthy eating choices, efficient time management and allows us to be better consumers while grocery shopping.

## Tabletop Tips:

- Write out the menu and meal preparation schedule before beginning. What do you have to do ahead or at the last minute? What do you have to do ahead or at the last minute? It may be helpful to write the time needed to prepare and cook. Then decide what time you plan to serve your food. From these two times, you can determine what time you need to begin cooking.
- Keep in mind the time you have available. Know when you need a quick meal or when you can plan something special.
- Make the meals as full of variety as possible. Choosing foods Variety is the key to an appealing meal. Create interesting contrasts with various colors, textures, flavors, and shapes of food.
- Plan to serve only a few, good quality foods that are simple and made well.
- Prepare as many foods beforehand as you can.
- Choose foods that save as much last-minute preparation as possible.
- Use equipment efficiently. If you already have the oven turned on use the oven for two dishes.
- Remember to keep and serve hot foods hot and cold foods cold.

After prepared your menu, you need to put some thought into how you will present your meal. You can make any meal special by adding color to the table by choosing a tablecloth, placemats and perhaps a simple centerpiece.

## To set the table:

- A plate is centered in front of each chair.
- The fork is place to the left of the plate.
- The knife is to the right of the plate with the blade edge pointing towards the plate.
- The spoon is to the right of the knife.
- A beverage glass is set at the tip of the knife.
- The napkin may be place on the plate, or under or to the left of the fork.

Menu planning skills are necessary in providing healthy and appealing meals for your families and when entertaining for special occasions. Some counties have a table setting contests or favorite food contests, that require you to write a menu.

## To write the menu:

- List the foods in the order in which they are served. You do not have to list every item served (salt, pepper, etc.).
- Capitalize main food items. Consider word placement – usually centered.
- Group foods served in one course together - use single line spacing between food items and a double spacing between courses.
- When a food is commonly prepared in more than one way, avoid confusion describe how it will be prepared

(Center words)

*Appetizer*

*Main Dish*

*Starchy Vegetable*

*Other Vegetables*

*Salad*

*Bread*

*Dessert*

*Beverage*