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Family meal planner

A month of dinners and a weekly grocery list, built around your family's rules. By Eric Fondren

What it does

You tell your AI assistant about your household once: who eats, what nobody can have, what nobody will eat, how much time you have on a weeknight, and how you shop. It gives you back:

- **A four-week dinner rotation.** 28 dinners, each with how long it takes and a short note (leftovers, what to prep ahead, a plainer version for kids). Lunches too, if you want them.
- **A grocery list for each week**, grouped by store section, with amounts sized for your family. Pantry items you probably already have are in their own list so you can tick them off.
- **Swaps on the spot.** Tell it the store was out of something, or the kids hated Tuesday's dinner, and it offers replacements that still follow your rules and updates the list.

If you share some past grocery orders, it plans meals around the things you already buy, so the list looks like your usual shopping and there are fewer surprises at checkout.

Example. Priya feeds four: two adults and kids aged 6 and 11. Her 11-year-old has a serious tree-nut allergy, her partner eats no pork, and weeknights allow 30 minutes. They do one pickup order on Saturdays. She pastes in her last four orders. The planner sees they buy chicken, eggs, frozen vegetables and pasta almost every week, keeps tree nuts out of every meal (including pesto and some granola), and builds a rotation with pizza on Fridays and a slow-cooker meal on Sundays. Her Saturday order now starts from a list that is already written.

What you need

- **An AI assistant.** Any of these works: Claude Code, Codex, Claude.ai or ChatGPT. To share receipt photos or order files, use one that accepts attachments.
- **Any computer or phone** your assistant runs on.

- **Optional: a few past grocery orders.** Copy them from your store's website or app, download them if the store offers that, forward the receipt emails, or take photos of paper receipts.

The skill itself is free. It needs no extra account beyond your assistant.

How to start

1. Download the zip from the site.
2. Give it to your assistant:
    - **Claude Code or Codex:** unzip it, then say "Set up this skill using its README." The assistant installs it and checks that it works.
    - **Claude.ai:** if your app has a Skills setting, upload the zip there.
    - **ChatGPT or other chat apps:** download the all-in-one file instead, and paste it into a project's instructions (so it is there every time) or at the start of a chat.
3. Start it:
    - **Claude Code:** type `/meal-planner`.
    - **Codex:** type `$meal-planner`.
    - **Any assistant:** say "Plan our dinners for the next four weeks."

What to expect

The first time, it asks you about a dozen short questions, one at a time. It takes about five minutes.

1. Who eats at home, and their ages
2. Allergies and intolerances, and how serious they are
3. Foods anyone avoids for health
4. Foods your household avoids for religious, cultural or personal reasons
5. What anyone refuses to eat
6. Meals everyone already likes
7. How much time you have on weeknights, which nights have more, and whether you have a slow cooker, pressure cooker or air fryer
8. Your weekly grocery budget (you can skip this)
9. Where and how you shop, and anything you buy every week
10. Dinners only, or lunches too
11. How many new meals you want to try
12. Past grocery orders (optional)

It reads your answers back so you can fix anything. Then it saves them as your **profile**:

- **Claude Code and Codex** save it on your computer and read it every time, so you only answer once.
- **Chat apps** show it to you in one block. Save it in a note or document, and paste it in next time to skip the questions. If you set the planner up inside a project, you can add the profile to the project too.

Then you get the plan. A week looks like this:

Day	Dinner	Time	Notes
Mon	Skillet chicken, rice, green beans	30 min	Cook extra for Tuesday lunch
Tue	Turkey tacos, corn, salsa	25 min	Check the salsa label
Wed	Pasta with meat sauce, side salad	30 min	Freeze half the sauce
Thu	Egg fried rice with leftover chicken	20 min	Cook the rice Wednesday
Fri	Pizza night	25 min	Kids top their own
Sat	Leftover night	10 min	
Sun	Slow-cooker chicken chili	8 hours	Lunch leftovers for Monday

Below each week is the grocery list, in store order (produce, meat, dairy, bread, pantry, frozen), with "usual" next to things you already buy and a rough cost.

After that, just ask. For example:

- "Give me next week's list."
- "The store is out of chicken thighs."
- "Nobody liked the chili. Swap it."
- "We have half a bag of spinach to use up."
- "My daughter is vegetarian now. Update our profile."
- "Here's this week's order." (It updates what you usually buy.)

Tips and limits

- **Be exact about allergies.** Say how serious each one is. The planner keeps serious allergens out of every meal for everyone unless you tell it otherwise, and it flags ready-made foods that often contain them. Always read labels yourself, because products change.
- **It plans; it does not prescribe.** If someone follows a diet set by a doctor or dietitian, give the planner those rules and check the plan with that clinician.

- **Prices are estimates.** The planner does not know your local prices. Share orders that show prices and the estimate gets much closer.
- **Recipes on request.** Each dinner has a one-line description. Ask "How do I make Thursday's dinner?" for full steps.
- **If it stalls or forgets a rule,** say "Re-read my profile and check this week against it." In a chat app, paste your profile again.
- **Your information stays with you.** In Claude Code and Codex the profile and plans are plain files on your computer. In a chat app they are only in your chats and wherever you save them.