



The Scratch

BUILD YOUR CAPSULE

KITCHEN CAPSULE

FEED YOUR FAMILY

KAREN REEDER



WHO IS THIS EBOOK FOR?

If you've ever felt tired of relying on takeout, it might be time to let go of the constant dependency on fast food and return to real, scratch cooking—the simple, practical way our grandparents cooked. It's for people who want to eat better without chasing trends, complicated recipes, or expensive specialty ingredients.

If you've ever felt tired of relying on takeout, frozen dinners, or ultra-processed foods—but weren't sure how to realistically cook at home—this book is for you.

This Scratch Capsule approach is especially helpful if you:

- Want to move away from fast food and convenience meals
- Are new to cooking or feel out of practice
- Want simple, repeatable meals instead of complicated recipes
- Need a system that works for busy days and tight budgets
- Want to feed yourself or your family real food without stress or perfection

You don't need gourmet skills, fancy tools, or hours in the kitchen. You just need a solid foundation—simple ingredients, a few basic methods, and a system that supports you. That's exactly what this book is designed to give you.

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WELCOME TO THE BEGINNING OF YOUR SCRATCH COOKING JOURNEY

CHAPTER



NUMBER 1

**MOVING FROM FAST FOOD
TO SCRATCH COOKING**

1 PAGE

LET'S
DO IT

Why return to real food?

In this chapter, we'll revisit a time when meals were built from simple, wholesome ingredients—before fast food became the norm. We'll explore a straightforward guide to eating well, focusing on real, nourishing foods. You'll learn why returning to scratch cooking gives you control over what you eat. Finally, we'll introduce the Scratch Capsule—your personalized collection of pantry, fridge, and freezer essentials—to help you build a healthier lifestyle, one scratch meal at a time.



WHAT IS A SCRATCH CAPSULE

A Scratch Capsule is a thoughtfully chosen collection of pantry staples customized based on your eating preferences, refrigerator basics, freezer items, and simple tools that allow you to cook nourishing meals from scratch at any time.

It's not a strict meal plan. It's a practical system that keeps your home stocked with ingredients that actually turn into meals – even when you're tired, busy, or trying to save money.

Think of it as:

- A backup plan for busy days
- A bridge from fast food to real food
- A confidence builder for beginner cooks

When your Scratch Capsule is stocked, you are never truly “out of food.” You may be out of one specific ingredient, but you still have enough building blocks to make something filling, comforting, and real.

The No-Cans Rule (Simple and Practical)

If you prefer less processed food and want to avoid cans, your kitchen stability comes from:

- Dry staples (pantry staple)
- Fresh produce you preserve (freeze or dehydrate)
- Refrigerator basics that rotate
- Freezer basics that keep you consistent

LET'S SCRATCH



CHAPTER



NUMBER 2

**HIDDEN COST OF EATING FOR
CONVENIENCE**

4 PAGES

Health on the line, food on your side

In this chapter, we'll uncover the real impact of fast, processed foods on our health—like heart disease, diabetes, and hidden sugars. But we don't stop there. We'll show you how real, scratch cooking gives you back control—so you can eat well, feel better, and build a healthier life, one meal at a time. We'll also offer simple comparisons, showing you how easy swaps—like scratch ingredients over fast food—can make a lifelong difference for you and your family.

CHAPTER 2

HIDDEN COST OF CONVENIENCE

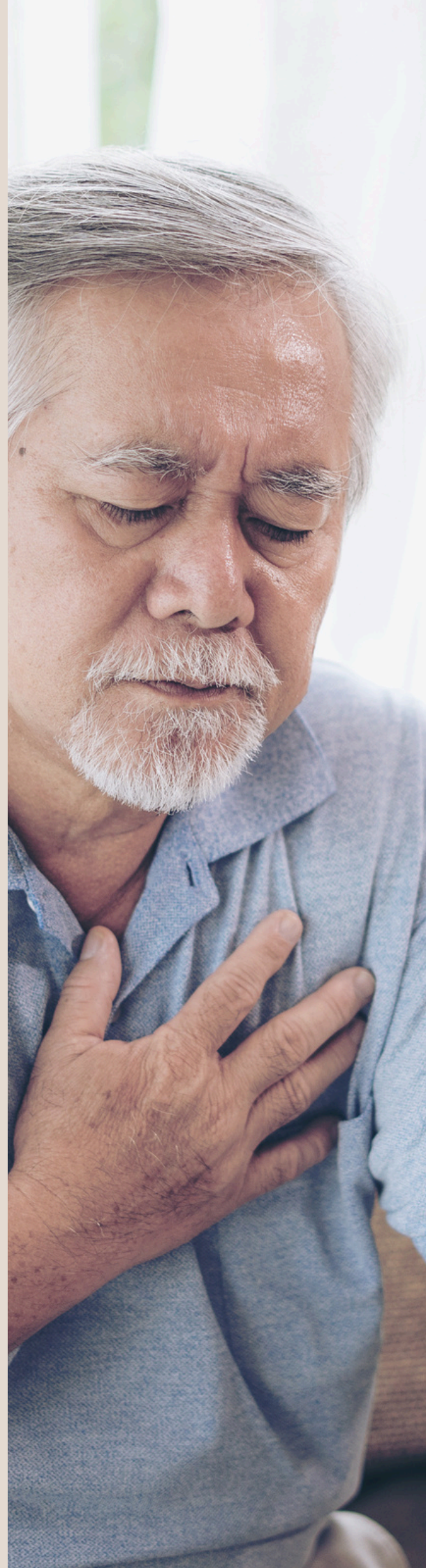
In the United States, heart disease remains the leading cause of death year after year. Many of today's most common health challenges—high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, and heart-related complications—are strongly influenced by everyday food and beverage habits.

That doesn't mean every condition is fully preventable or that health is as simple as "eat this, not that." But it does mean your daily choices can reduce risk, improve lab numbers, and support long-term wellness—especially when small changes become consistent patterns.

This chapter isn't about fear or guilt. It's about clarity. When you understand how convenience food is built, labeled, and portioned, you can make smarter choices without chasing perfection or turning your life upside down.

The Health Reality Behind "Fast" Food

These trends didn't happen overnight, and they aren't caused by one single food. They're shaped by modern patterns—ultra-processed meals, sugary drinks, and oversized restaurant portions—that add up over time and quietly show up in your energy, blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol.





Most convenience foods are engineered to taste strong, store long, and keep you coming back. That usually means higher levels of three ingredients that quietly move health markers in the wrong direction: sodium, added sugar, and saturated fat.

Sodium (Salt): The Silent Overload

Sodium is often overloaded in fast food and packaged foods because it boosts flavor and extends shelf life—so it becomes easy to exceed recommended amounts without realizing it.

Added sugar shows up far beyond desserts. It's in drinks, cereals, snacks, flavored coffees, sauces, and “healthy” packaged foods—so it sneaks into the day in ways people don't always notice.

Saturated fat is common in fried foods, pastries, processed meats, and cheesy or creamy fast-food combinations. Too much saturated fat can raise LDL (“bad”) cholesterol, which is linked to increased cardiovascular risk over time.

Added Sugar: The Sneaky Everyday Habit

Added sugar is one of the biggest reasons convenience food quietly derails health goals—because it shows up in sodas, sweet teas, flavored coffees, cereals, snacks, sauces, and even “healthy” packaged foods. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend keeping added sugars to less than 10% of daily calories (about 50 grams per day on a 2,000-calorie diet). The American Heart Association recommends an even lower everyday target: about 25 grams per day for women and 36 grams per day for men.

The Serving-Size Trap

Even when people try to “eat better,” labels can be misleading—because nutrition facts are based on a serving size that's often smaller than what people actually eat. When you multiply “reasonable” numbers by the full package, the totals change fast.

That's why this chapter teaches you how to quickly check:

- servings per container
- sugar/sodium per serving vs. per package
- how small servings quietly multiply into big totals

A REALISTIC WAY FORWARD

A Realistic Way Forward

This is where we shift from awareness to hope. The goal isn't perfection—it's progress and consistency. Scratch cooking doesn't mean you never eat out again. It means convenience food is no longer your baseline.

When you build a scratch capsule—starting with staples, fresh essentials, and a few simple methods—you naturally reduce reliance on the foods that overload sodium, sugar, and saturated fat. And you gain three benefits that make healthier eating feel doable:

- More control (ingredients and portions are in your hands)
- Better taste (fresh food seasoned well feels like comfort, not compromise)
- Confidence (you know exactly what's in your meals)

Scratch cooking isn't a trend. It's a return to a system that works—one meal at a time.



“SKIP THIS” FOODS AND WHAT TO REPLACE THEM WITH

SKIP THIS (COMMON HABIT)	REPLACE WITH (SCRATCH-FRIENDLY)
SODA	SPARKLING WATER + LIME, FRUIT-INFUSED WATER, UNSWEET TEA
BOTTLED SWEET TEA / LEMONADE	HOMEMADE TEA LIGHTLY SWEETENED, WATER + CITRUS
ENERGY DRINKS	COFFEE/TEA, SMOOTHIE, WATER + ELECTROLYTES
PACKAGED COOKIES / SNACK CAKES	HOMEMADE OATMEAL COOKIES, BANANA BREAD, YOGURT + FRUIT
CANDY	FRUIT, SMALL PORTION DARK CHOCOLATE, NUTS + DRIED FRUIT
BOXED MAC & CHEESE	PASTA + MILK + CHEESE (SIMPLE SCRATCH MAC)
INSTANT RAMEN CUPS	NOODLES + BROTH + EGG + GREENS
FROZEN FRIED SNACKS (PIZZA ROLLS, ETC.)	FREEZER BURRITOS, FREEZER SOUP, HOMEMADE PIZZA SLICES
SUGARY CEREAL	OATS/OVERNIGHT OATS, EGGS + TOAST
POP-TARTS / PASTRIES	HOMEMADE MUFFINS, TOAST + BUTTER/PEANUT BUTTER, YOGURT BOWL
BOXED RICE MIXES	PLAIN RICE + HERBS + BOUILLON + ONIONS
INSTANT MASHED POTATOES	REAL POTATOES + BUTTER + MILK
CANNED PASTA MEALS	TOMATO SAUCE + PASTA, SCRATCH SOUP
DELI MEATS	ROASTED CHICKEN, BOILED EGGS, TUNA/SALMON PACKETS
HOT DOGS	SAUSAGE IN MODERATION, CHICKEN, BEANS/LENTILS
BOTTLED PASTA SAUCE	HOMEMADE TOMATO SAUCE + HERBS
STORE-BOUGHT SALAD DRESSINGS	OLIVE OIL + VINEGAR + SALT + PEPPER (+ MUSTARD)
SUGARY BBQ SAUCE	HOMEMADE BBQ-STYLE BASE (TOMATO + VINEGAR + SPICES)
CHIPS	ROASTED POTATOES, AIR-POPPED POPCORN, ROASTED CHICKPEAS
CRACKERS	TOAST POINTS, CORNBREAD, HOMEMADE BISCUITS
FLAVORED COFFEE-SHOP DRINKS	COFFEE + MILK + CINNAMON, HOMEMADE LATTE WITH LESS SUGAR
BOTTLED FRAPPES	SMOOTHIE, ICED COFFEE YOU SWEETEN LIGHTLY

CHAPTER



NUMBER 3

**THE HEART OF YOUR PANTRY
STARTS WITH STAPLES**

2 PAGES

Building blocks for every meal

In this chapter, we'll break down the essential pantry staples that form the foundation of scratch cooking. These shelf-stable ingredients are versatile, long-lasting, and ready to help you create countless meals—whether it's a quick dinner or a comforting favorite. You'll learn how to stock, store, and use these staples to always have the building blocks of a meal at your fingertips."

CHAPTER 3

CORE PANTRY STAPLES

There was a time when meals didn't come from a drive-thru window or a box with a long ingredient list. Our grandparents cooked from what they had: simple staples, seasonal vegetables, a little meat, and a lot of know-how. This book helps you return to that way of eating—without stress, perfection, or expensive specialty foods.

The Scratch Capsule is your foundation: a small set of reliable pantry basics that makes scratch cooking feel doable in real life. When you keep the right staples on hand, you can build filling meals by pairing them with a few fresh ingredients and a simple protein.

Staple items matter because they create structure. They store well, stretch your budget, and keep you from feeling “stuck” when the fridge is low. When your pantry has a dependable base, you're less reliant on last-minute takeout—and more confident that you can make real food at home, even on busy weeks.



Scratch

SHELF STABLE ITEMS

These are the ingredients that keep your kitchen steady. They store well, stretch far, and give you reliable options even when the fridge is low. When your pantry is stocked with a few core staples, you're never starting from scratch—you're simply combining what you already have.

Grains & Starches (the backbone)

- Rice (Jasmine/Brown/White)
- Grits
- Rolled oats
- Cornmeal

Flour

- All-purpose flour
- Bread flour
- Cake flour
- Cornstarch

Pasta

- Macaroni
- Penne
- Lasagna
- Spaghetti

Beans & Legumes (budget protein)

- Pinto beans
- Black beans
- Black eye peas
- Kidney beans
- Navy beans
- Lima beans
- Split peas
- Chick peas

Baking & Thickening Essentials

- Sugar (white or cane)
- Brown sugar
- Baking powder
- Baking soda
- Vanilla
- Yeast (highly recommended)
- Apple cider vinegar
- White vinegar (flavor + preservation + cleaning)

Starches

- White Potatoes (stored cool and dark)
- Sweet Potatoes

CHAPTER



NUMBER 4

**FLAVOR BUILDERS SPICES
AND SEASONINGS**

3 PAGES

Layering flavor one spice at a time

In this chapter, we'll dive into the herbs, spices, and aromatics that transform basic ingredients into delicious meals. These flavor builders help you elevate simple dishes, giving them personality, warmth, and variety—so no two meals ever feel the same.

CHAPTER 4

FLAVOR BUILDERS

Flavor builders are the small-but-mighty ingredients that turn basic food into something comforting and satisfying. When you're cooking from scratch—especially with simple staples like rice, beans, flour, and vegetables—flavor is what makes the meal feel “complete.” Herbs and aromatics help you create that familiar, home-cooked taste without relying on packaged seasonings, heavy sauces, or processed shortcuts.

Aromatics like onions, garlic, ginger, celery, and carrots are often the first step in great cooking because they build a rich base of flavor before anything else even hits the pot. Herbs like oregano, thyme, rosemary, basil, and bay leaf add warmth and personality, helping the same ingredients taste different throughout the week. With a few dependable flavor builders on hand, you can make simple meals taste like you planned them—because you did.



Scratch

SPICES AND HERBS

Spices and herbs are how simple food starts tasting like your food. They turn basics like rice, beans, chicken, and vegetables into meals that feel finished—without needing a long ingredient list. A small, well-chosen spice cabinet gives you variety all week, even when you're cooking the same staples.

Salts & Peppers

- Iodized salt
- Sea salt
- Pink Himalayan salt
- Seasoned salt
- Black /White pepper
- MSG

Core Warm Spices

- Paprika
- Smoked paprika
- Cumin
- Coriander
- Turmeric
- Cinnamon
- Nutmeg
- Cloves
- Allspice

Heat & Chili

- Chili powder
- Cayenne pepper
- Crushed red pepper flakes
- Gochugaru (Korean red pepper flakes)

Herbs

- Thyme
- Oregano
- Basil
- Rosemary
- Bay leaf
- Rubbed sage
- Mixed herbs

Blends & Seasoning Mixes

- Curry powder
- Italian seasoning
- Poultry seasoning
- Sazón (seasoning)
- Bouillon cubes or bouillon powder

Seeds & Pantry Add-Ins

- Sesame seeds
- Celery seed
- Mustard powder

Scratch **OILS AND SAUCES**

Oils are the foundation of texture and satisfaction. They help you sauté, roast, fry, and finish dishes with richness that makes food feel complete. When you keep just one or two dependable oils stocked, scratch cooking becomes smoother, faster, and more consistent.

Oils

- Olive oil
- Avocado oil
- Vegetable oil
- Canola oil
- Grapeseed oil
- Coconut oil (optional)
- Sesame oil (toasted)
- Butter (also refrigerator essential)
- Ghee (optional)
- Lard or bacon fat (optional)

Vinegars

- Distilled white vinegar
- Apple cider vinegar
- Red wine vinegar
- Rice vinegar
- Balsamic vinegar (optional)

Korean Staples (Optional)

- Gochujang
- Doenjang
- Ganjang (Korean soy sauce, optional)

Jamaican/Soul Food

- Jerk seasoning paste or marinade
- Pickapeppa sauce (optional)
- Browning sauce (optional)

Condiments and Bases

- Tomato paste
- Tomato sauce (or homemade tomato base)
- Bouillon cubes or bouillon powder
- Bouillon paste/base
- Mustard (Dijon or yellow)
- Ketchup
- Mayonnaise
- Hot sauce
- Soy sauce
- Tamari (optional)
- Fish sauce (optional)
- Worcestershire sauce
- BBQ sauce (optional)
- Honey (or syrup)
- Molasses (optional)

Chinese Food Staples (Pantry + Fridge)

- Dark/ Light soy sauce
- Oyster sauce
- Hoisin sauce
- Chinese black vinegar
- Shaoxing wine
- Sesame oil (toasted)
- Chili oil (optional)
- Doubanjiang (spicy bean paste, optional)
- MSG (optional)

CHAPTER



NUMBER 5

**REFRIGERATOR STAPLES FOR
FRESH MEALS**

4 PAGES

Keeping freshness within reach

This chapter focuses on the fridge essentials that bring freshness, flavor, and nourishment to your scratch cooking. We'll show you how a few well-chosen, frequently replenished items can elevate meals, reduce waste, and keep your scratch capsule flexible. From proteins to fresh herbs, these staples will make sure you always have the building blocks for something delicious.

CHAPTER 5

REFRIGERATOR ESSENTIALS

Refrigerator items are the fresh foundation of your Scratch Capsule. Pantry staples give you structure, but your fridge brings the comfort—adding protein, richness, and nourishment that make simple meals feel complete. When you keep a few reliable items cold and ready, you can turn basic ingredients into real food without needing a complicated plan. It's the difference between having “ingredients” and having meals.

Because these are the ingredients you'll refresh most often, it helps to purchase them with your weekly meal plan in mind—unless an item has a longer expiration date, which you should still check regularly. Think of your refrigerator as your fresh zone. It isn't meant to hold food indefinitely; it's meant to store the foods you use the most at the right temperature so you can cook consistently and comfortably.

Most fresh items realistically last about a week once they're opened, cut, or brought home—and that's okay, because a scratch capsule is meant to be used. If ingredients sit in the refrigerator untouched until they spoil, it's usually not because you did anything “wrong,” but because they weren't prepped in a way that made cooking easy. A scratch capsule isn't just what you buy—it's what you use.



Scratch

KEEP IT MOVING

The secret to scratch cooking isn't buying more food—it's using what you buy. Your refrigerator is your fresh zone, and fresh ingredients work best when they're prepped and visible. When you decide your meals for the week, take a few minutes to set yourself up: wash produce, portion proteins, and store items where you can actually see them.

If ingredients sit untouched until they spoil, it's usually not a motivation problem—it's a setup problem. Small prep habits make cooking faster, reduce waste, and keep you from defaulting to takeout. Over time, this one routine makes home meals feel more consistent, balanced, and doable.



MEAL PLANNING

Start with a simple plan for the week so your pantry and refrigerator work together on purpose. Choose a few repeatable meals you already like, then shop for what supports those meals. Meal planning doesn't need to be complicated—it's just a quick decision ahead of time so cooking feels easier when life gets busy.



PREP YOUR SCRATCH INGREDIENTS

When groceries come home, give your ingredients a quick “ready to use” reset. Wash and dry produce, trim greens, chop a few aromatics, and portion proteins. Store everything where it's easy to grab. Prepping up front prevents waste and makes it much more likely you'll actually cook.



CHECK EXPIRATION DATES OFTEN AND REPLACE

Your refrigerator is a working space, not long-term storage. Do a fast “use first” scan every few days and move items that need to be eaten soon to the front. This keeps your plan realistic, reduces spoilage, and helps your ingredients flow through your kitchen the way a true scratch system is meant to.

Scratch

FRESH INGREDIENTS

Fresh ingredients are the “life” of your Scratch Capsule—the items that bring color, flavor, and real nourishment to your pantry staples. You don’t need a fridge packed with everything; you just need a few dependable fresh items that you actually use.

Proteins

- Eggs
- Chicken
- Ground beef
- Beef
- Sausage
- Bacon
- Shrimp
- Fish
- Smoked turkey (wings/neck)

Dairy

- Butter
- Milk (or lactose-free alternative)
- Yogurt
- Block cheeses
- Heavy cream (optional)
- Sour cream (optional)
- Half and Half

Fresh Brighteners

- Lemons and/or limes
- Hot peppers

Meal Bases & Add-Ins

- Tomato paste (tube or jar)
- Bouillon paste/base
- Garlic paste

Fresh Vegetables, Aromatics, and Herbs

- Onions / Green onions (scallions)
- Garlic / Ginger
- Celery
- Carrots
- Bell Peppers (red/green)
- Cabbage
- Cucumbers
- Avocados
- Greens (collards, mustard, or kale)
- Mushrooms
- Fresh tomatoes
- Potatoes

Fresh Fruit

- Apples
- Grapes
- Oranges
- Red Grapefruit
- Berries / Cherries
- Strawberries
- Seasonal fruit

Fresh Herbs

- Thyme (fresh)
- Parsley
- Cilantro
- Basil (optional)

MEAL PREP CHECKLIST

Plan (10–15 minutes)

- Pick 3–5 meals for the week
- Choose 1–2 breakfasts + 1–2 quick lunches
- Decide “use-first” items (what must be cooked early)
- Write your grocery list from the plan
- Check pantry/freezer before shopping (so you don’t double-buy)

Shop + Put Away (15 minutes)

- Unpack groceries by zone: pantry / fridge / freezer
- Date-label leftovers, meats, and prepped items
- Put “use-first” foods front and center in the fridge

Wash + Dry Produce (10–20 minutes)

- Wash and dry leafy greens
- Rinse and dry berries/grapes (if prepping now)
- Scrub potatoes/sweet potatoes
- Wipe and store tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers (if using soon)

Prep Vegetables + Aromatics (20–30 minutes)

- Chop onions
- Mince/peel garlic
- Peel/chop ginger
- Chop bell peppers
- Slice celery + carrots
- Shred or slice cabbage/greens (if using this week)

Prep Proteins (15–25 minutes)

- Portion chicken into meal-size bags/containers
- Season or marinate 1–2 proteins (optional)
- Portion ground meat (if using)
- Peel/devein shrimp (if using)
- Drain/press tofu (if using)

Cook 2 “Foundations” (30–90 minutes total)

- Cook a grain (rice or oats)
- Cook a pot of beans or lentils
- Make broth (optional) or mix bouillon base with water as needed
- Make a simple tomato sauce (optional)

Portion + Store (10–15 minutes)

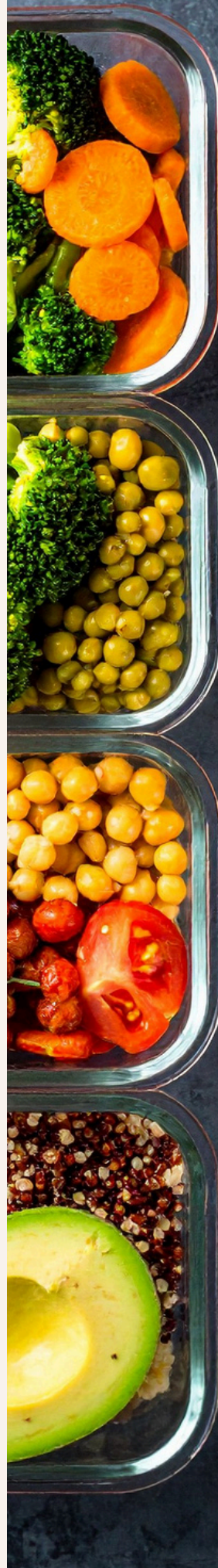
- Portion cooked grains/beans into meal containers
- Freeze extras in flat bags (label + date)
- Store chopped aromatics in airtight containers
- Put “ready-to-use” items at eye level

Midweek “Use-It-Up” Reset (5 minutes)

- Check produce and expiration dates
- Move items that need to be used to the front
- Adjust one meal to use what’s close to spoiling
- Restock one quick protein (eggs/tofu) if needed

Quick Finish

- Wipe counters and reset your prep area
- Take out trash/compost
- Set out tomorrow’s “easy meal” ingredients (optional)



CHAPTER



NUMBER 6

**FREEZER STAPLES- YOUR
LONGTERM LIFESAVERS**

3 PAGES

Prepared for tomorrow's meal today

Your freezer isn't just for emergencies; it's for your future self. In this chapter, we'll focus on freezing ingredients, leftovers, and scratch-made bases—so you always have something ready to build on. When you plan ahead, thawing out a soup base or prepped protein means you're just minutes from a scratch meal, without last-minute grocery trips.

CHAPTER 6

FREEZER ESSENTIALS

Freezer essentials are a core part of a true scratch cabecause they protect your progress. Your pantry gives you structure and your refrigerator gives you freshness—but your freezer gives you consistency. It’s what keeps you cooking real food on the weeks when life is busy, schedules change, or you simply don’t have the energy to start from zero. When your freezer is stocked intentionally, you always have a way to pull together a meal without relying on takeout or heavily processed convenience foods.

The freezer also supports scratch cooking financially. It lets you buy in bulk, shop sales with confidence, and take advantage of seasonal deals—without worrying that everything will spoil before you can use it. If chicken is discounted, you can portion and freeze it. If produce is abundant and affordable, you can freeze it at peak quality. Freezing is one of the best ways to keep ingredients “fresh,” because you can freeze foods shortly after buying them, locking in flavor and nutrition while giving yourself more time to use what you have.

Most importantly, the freezer helps you waste less and cook more. It’s the perfect place for “scratch foundations” like cooked rice, beans, broth, and sauces—stored in meal-sized portions so future-you can win on a tired day.



Scratch

FREEZER FOUNDATIONS

Freezer staples give you the ingredients to cook from scratch anytime—but they require a little planning. If you batch-cook or buy in bulk, freezing helps save money and reduce waste. But remember—take it out in advance! A little planning ensures that what’s in your freezer actually makes it to your table, turning busy nights into scratch success

Frozen Proteins

Poultry

- Chicken thighs/drumsticks
- Chicken breast (optional)
- Ground turkey (optional)

Beef/Pork

- Ground beef
- Stew beef
- Sausage links or patties
- Bacon (freezes well)
- Pork chops

Seafood

- Shrimp
- Salmon fillets
- White fish fillets

Frozen Vegetables

- Peas
- Corn
- Green beans
- Mixed vegetables
- Broccoli florets
- Spinach (chopped)
- Stir-fry vegetable blend
- Bell pepper/onion blend
- Collard greens / kale
- Sweet potato cubes

“Scratch Foundations” to Freeze

- Cooked rice (white/brown)
- Cooked beans (black, pinto) and lentils
- Bread
- Cornbread slices
- Biscuits/rolls (baked or unbaked, optional)
- Broth/stock (chicken, beef, vegetable)
- Chopped onions / peppers (pre-prepped)
- Minced garlic/grated ginger (small portions)
- Butter (freezes well)
- Shredded cheese (freezes well)
- Bread for toast (freezes well)

Sauces That Freeze Well

- Tomato sauce / marinara
- Cooked-down tomato base (tomato paste-style portions)
- Chili / stew base
- Gravy (meat-based or onion-based)
- Curry base sauce (cooked)
- Marinade/base (freeze in small portions)
- Sofrito-style blend
(onion/pepper/garlic/herb mix)
- Homemade soup bases (vegetable, chicken)

Scratch **FREEZER READY**

Your freezer is the “backup bank” of a scratch ca. It lets you buy smart—stock up when items are on sale, save leftovers before they go bad, and keep ingredients ready even when you didn’t make it to the store. The freezer doesn’t replace scratch cooking—it supports it, so you’re never starting from zero on a busy day.

Frozen Meals and Convenience

- Frozen dinners (family-size or single-serve)
- Frozen breakfast sandwiches
- Frozen burritos / wraps
- Frozen pizza / flatbreads
- Frozen dumplings / potstickers
- Frozen meal kits (stir-fry kits, skillet meals)
- Frozen soups (store-bought or homemade)

Ready-to-Eat Treats

- Ice cream
- Frozen yogurt bars
- Popsicles / fruit bars

Frozen Fruit for Smoothies

- Mixed berries
- Strawberries
- Blueberries
- Mango chunks
- Pineapple chunks
- Peaches
- Cherries
- Banana slices (freeze your own)
- Avocado chunks (optional)

Freeze-Ahead “Scratch” Breakfasts (homemade, then frozen)

- Egg muffins (breakfast egg cups)
- Breakfast burritos (homemade, wrapped and frozen)
- Pancake or waffle batches (freeze flat, then bag)
- Breakfast casserole squares
- Biscuits (baked or unbaked)
- Sausage gravy (portion and freeze)
- Cooked breakfast potatoes (portion and freeze)

Store-Bought Grab-and-Heat

- Frozen breakfast sandwiches
- Frozen breakfast burritos / wraps
- Frozen waffles
- Frozen pancakes
- Frozen French toast sticks
- Frozen hash browns / breakfast potatoes
- Frozen sausage patties or links
- Frozen turkey sausage (optional)
- Frozen biscuit sandwiches (if you buy them)

CHAPTER



NUMBER 7

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

3 PAGES

Prepare today for tomorrow

Your freezer isn't just for emergencies; it's for your future self. In this chapter, we'll focus on freezing ingredients, leftovers, and scratch-made bases—so you always have something ready to build on. When you plan ahead, thawing out a soup base or prepped protein means you're just minutes from a scratch meal, without last-minute grocery trips.

Scratch

COOKING STEPS

01

ORGANIZE YOUR PANTRY

Pick one day to clean out your pantry, toss expired items, and wipe everything down. Measure your shelves before buying containers so what you order actually fits. Group items by category (grains, baking, beans, spices), then label and double-stack where it makes sense to save space.

02

SET UP YOUR CONTAINERS + TOOLS

Choose a few basic tools that make scratch cooking easier—storage containers, a good knife, cutting board, sheet pan, and a pot you trust. Transfer the staples you use most into containers, label clearly, and keep the “everyday items” at eye level so cooking feels effortless.

03

DOWNLOAD YOUR CUSTOM SCRATCH CAPSULE LIST

Use the Scratch Capsule checklist to personalize what you need based on your household, your culture, your budget, and your schedule. This becomes your home base—so you’re not guessing at the store or buying random ingredients that don’t turn into meals.

04

BUILD YOUR FIRST GROCERY ORDER

Shop from your capsule list and start simple: pantry staples first, then fresh refrigerator items, then freezer backups. Focus on versatile ingredients you can use multiple ways, and don’t try to buy everything at once—build your capsule in layers.

05

PLAN YOUR FIRST WEEK OF MEALS

Choose 5–7 simple meals using the “Add Three” formula: 1 grain + 1 protein + 1 vegetable. Repeat ingredients on purpose (like rice, chicken, onions) so you cook more and waste less. Keep one night for leftovers so you don’t burn out.

Scratch

EASY 1+1+1 MEALS

Here's your scratch cooking shortcut: 1 protein + 1 starch + 1 vegetable = a meal. This is the fastest way to turn your pantry, fridge, and freezer staples into breakfast, lunch, or dinner—without needing a long recipe or a perfect plan.

These “1+1+1” combinations help you cook with confidence, use what you already have, and rely less on takeout. For more step-by-step recipes and variations, grab the Scratch Capsule Cookbook—and if you're ready to upgrade your setup, shop our recommended Scratch Capsule tools and staples list to build your kitchen faster.



Thank you
FOR READING

Congratulations on starting your scratch cooking journey. You are one step closer towards getting off of fast food



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