

# Balance Your Plate with Nestlé



# Presenting Balance Your Plate

These materials provide you with everything you need to give a food demo or presentation on Balance Your Plate.



## Presenting Balance Your Plate: Planning

Suggestions for how to plan your own Balance Your Plate presentation.

## Presenting Balance Your Plate: Key Messages

Key points to focus on during your Balance Your Plate presentation.

## Prepping for Your Demo

A suggested timeline for getting ready for your event to ensure you are ready and have everything you need.

## Making the Most of Food Demos

Important points to remember when conducting a food demo.

## Sharing Your Demo Expertise with Others

Guide for teaching your colleagues or students to conduct their own Balance Your Plate demo or presentation.



# Presenting Balance Your Plate: **Planning**

## Planning is an essential part of your Balance Your Plate presentation.

Here are 10 simple guidelines to help you get started.



### Define Your Audience

#### Who are you trying to reach?

- This toolkit contains materials designed for three different population groups (single adults, working parents/families, and older adults). If your audience doesn't fit one of these categories, review the included materials and determine if some of them are appropriate for your particular audience.

#### How many attendees will you have?

- Consider cost, location/facilities, the time you have in which to complete the demo, and attendees' schedules/time constraints.

#### Will you be partnering with a group?

- Keep in mind that your audience may be defined by your partnering organization (club, professional association, charity group, workplace, community group, residential facility, etc.).

#### Determine how audience members will register for the event.

### Choose a Date and Time That's Convenient for Your Audience

- Consider the schedules of your attendees, and how much time they will have to watch your demonstration.
- Consult with any partnering organization to decide upon a mutually convenient date and time for your demo.

### Choose an Appropriate Site

- Visit potential sites to check their suitability and convenience for the audience.
- The location of your Balance Your Plate demo should have enough space for you (and your assistant, if needed) to move about and work. The space should allow the anticipated number of attendees to be comfortable and to clearly see and hear your demonstration and messages.
- Check for basic kitchen/foodservice facilities including sinks, electrical outlets, counters for food preparation, product display and serving, and a microwave.
- Consider available parking and public transportation, the presence of elevators, stairs and ramps for accessibility, and outdoor lighting and safety if your demo will be at night.



# Presenting Balance Your Plate: **Planning**

## Choose Your Messages

- We've helped you define key messages for three different types of audiences in this toolkit, but feel free to tailor them as needed.
- Limit key messages to no more than three. Simpler is better – for you as the demonstrator and for your audience. Reiterating a few messages repeatedly will help the audience retain the information, and will make the demonstration easier to do and more effective.
- Polling the audience ahead of time, or discussing the audience needs with a partnering organization can help you determine appropriate messages.

## Schedule an Assistant to Help You, if Necessary

- Depending on the size of your audience and your location's facilities, you may need some help. Plan ahead so you're not caught short-handed on demonstration day.
- An assistant could help you with prepping ingredients, heating food, serving samples, or cleaning up after your demonstration.
- Consider whether you need someone to check-in attendees.
- Having an extra person around to simply act as a host while you are preparing for your demo is pleasant for attendees and frees you up to get adequately prepared for your demo.

## Identify/Pursue Sources of Food, Products and Materials for Your Demo

- Who will be funding your demonstration? Sometimes partnering organizations will foot the bill for ingredients and supplies.
- If you need to find sponsors or apply for a grant for funding, be sure to allow adequate time to do so prior to demonstration day.

## Make a List of What You Will Need for the Demo

Make a check-list of items you will need to prepare the food, serve the food (if applicable) and clean-up afterward. Use the meal plan cards included in this toolkit as a guide for planning the meal you want to demo.

### Here is a general list to get you started:

- Frozen entrées
- Ingredients for side dishes/beverage, such as fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables
- Preparation utensils (measuring spoons/ measuring cups, wooden spoons, peeler, knives, cutting board, tongs etc.)
- Containers for ingredients (clear bowls work best for visibility)
- Paper goods and plastic cutlery if serving food
- Kitchen towels/cloths/sponges, garbage bags and an apron
- Serving items (if applicable, bowls, platters, serving utensils)
- Your notes/outline/recipes and key messages
- Items to decorate the demo table or serving table (tablecloth, product boxes, colorful basket of vegetables, etc.)
- Evaluation forms (if using)
- Clean-up gear (dish soap, paper towels, etc.)
- Containers for leftover food



## Presenting Balance Your Plate: **Planning**

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### If Desired, Create an Evaluation Method or Form for Your Demo

- Consider whether you or your partnering organization wishes to have a written evaluation of your demonstration. Do you need to submit an evaluation for funding purposes?
  - Use open ended questions as often as possible.
- You may wish to get answers on the following topics:**
- Did your audience enjoy the demo?
  - Did they hear and understand the key messages?
  - Are they likely to adopt any of your techniques or ideas when preparing their own meals?

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### Publicize Your Demo

- Consider whether you will pursue any advertising or outside publicity for your demonstration.
- If you are partnering with an organization, find out if they will handle publicity.
- If desired, seek out free publicity. Look into community bulletin boards, community electronic mailing lists, Facebook, Twitter, or other social media, public access television channels, event listings in local newspapers, and on local radio stations/TV stations and their websites. (Find out how much notice they need in order to include your announcement in their lists – sometimes the information is needed weeks before the event.)

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### Do a Practice-Demo (with your assistant, if applicable) Well in Advance

- A “dry run” will reveal any bumps in your presentation, and may show you whether you need an assistant.
- Put together everything you need for your demo in a tote bag and work from that during your practice (consider practicing at the facility where you’ll be doing the demo, if possible, or at a friend’s house – you’ll quickly find out if you’ve forgotten anything essential).
- Time your practice session and make any adjustments necessary in order to communicate your key messages in the allotted amount of time.
- Practice in front of a friend or colleague to gain feedback on the delivery of your presentation. Or record yourself and view the playback to see where you can make improvements.



# Presenting Balance Your Plate: Key Messages

## Knowing the key points to focus on while presenting your demo, is crucial for communicating concisely and effectively.

Here are some key messages to use when preparing your Balance Your Plate presentation. For best results, choose no more than three of the following messages for your presentation.



### Any Audience

#### **Make it easy to make nutritious, convenient meals.**

- Stock your freezer with frozen entrées so you can fix a meal in minutes.
- Clean and chop fruits and veggies ahead of time (or purchase them that way) for simple sides to supplement and round out your meal.
- Having frozen entrées at-the-ready means more options – for delicious meals with greater variety at affordable prices – especially when compared to eating out.

#### **Use a convenient, frozen entrée as the base of your balanced meal.**

- Frozen entrées have nutrition and flavor “locked in.”
  - Freezing is a natural method of preservation that upholds quality, prolongs shelf life and helps retain nutritional value by quickly locking in goodness.
- A frozen entrée can be comparable to a homemade one, and help to control portion size, calories and fat.
- Add whole grains, fruits/veggies and fat-free or low-fat dairy products to round out your plate.

- Frozen entrées can be lower in cost per serving than homemade recipes, and can help reduce food waste since you’re not preparing more than you need.

#### **Eating at home means you’re in charge of the nutritional quality and content of your meal.**

- You can control the nutritional quality (you can opt for low sodium, lower fat, vegetarian, etc.).
- You choose how to balance your plate and tailor it to your taste.
- You know what’s on your plate (frozen entrées feature both nutritional information and ingredient labels that most restaurant foods do not).
- Using frozen prepared meals as the “center of the plate” can help with portion control.

#### **Use MyPlate to build your plate.**

- Visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov) for tools and tips for building a balanced plate.
- Pair a frozen meal with whole grains, fruits/veggies and fat-free or low-fat dairy to make a balanced meal.



# Presenting Balance Your Plate: Key Messages

## Audience of Parents

Time-crunched families need quick, convenient and healthy meals – a selection of frozen entrées on hand can fill those needs. A wide variety of entrée options mean that there’s something for every taste preference, and the budget-conscious family cook can appreciate the price-point and convenience of frozen entrées. Time saved preparing meals means more time to spend with the family.

### **Family meals promote healthy eating habits and bring benefits beyond the dinner table.**

- Eating together fosters a closer family unit.
- Frozen entrées mean less time in the kitchen, so more time with family.
- Research shows kids who eat with parents perform better in school.
- Children who eat with their family 3+ times per week are more likely to eat healthy foods and less likely to be overweight.<sup>1</sup>

## Audience of (Older) Adults

Whether retired, single again, or living on their own adults can benefit from using frozen entrées because they are convenient and readily available, can be stored easily (so fewer trips to the market are necessary) and budget friendly. For the person who doesn’t have a desire to cook from scratch for only one person, frozen prepared meals are a perfect option for an enjoyable, easy meal at home.

### **Frozen entrées make it easy for anyone to make a nutritious and delicious meal.**

- Easy to prepare (no cooking knowledge needed!)
- Quick, nourishing meal for when you can’t cook (busy, do not have time to shop, adding variety to the diet).

### **Balanced meals are nutrient-dense meals.**

- Build a balanced plate – add whole grains, fruits/veggies and fat-free or low-fat dairy products.
- A colorful plate is more appealing and nutritious.

### **Using single-portion entrées stretches your dollar.**

- Frozen entrées are economical. They are frequently less expensive than homemade recipes per serving.
- Using frozen entrées means not cooking more food than you need.

1. Hammons AJ, Fiese BH. Is frequency of shared meals related to the nutritional health of children and adolescents? *Pediatrics*. 2011;127(6): e1565-74.



# Presenting Balance Your Plate: **Key Messages**

## Audience of Younger Adults

Whether busy in college or at their first jobs, frozen entrées are a convenient option for those who don't have the time or interest to cook from scratch. Quick and easy preparation, along with the convenience of being able to tote them to work, makes frozen meals a practical choice.

### **Frozen entrées and single-serving foods help keep you on track with your nutrition and weight goals.**

- Many entrées offer built-in portion control.
- You can control the nutritional quality (you can opt for lower sodium, lower fat, vegetarian, seafood and whole grains).

### **Frozen entrées make it easy for anyone to make a nutritious meal.**

- They are easy to prepare; no cooking knowledge needed and you don't have to spend hours in the kitchen.
- Provide a quick, nourishing meal for busy days.
- Most require only a microwave, making them easy to prepare with minimal clean-up.



# Prepping for Your Demo

**Once you have made your plans to present Balance Your Plate, you can spend some time getting organized for your event.**

The following tips will help you get organized and ready to deliver your presentation with maximum efficiency and minimum stress.



## Week Before Your Presentation

### **Confirm arrangements with demo facility and/or partnering organization (if applicable).**

- Obtain the name and contact information of an on-site point person with whom you will “check in” when you arrive.
- Review the planned set-up of the demo area with the facility. Be sure the facility has a microwave, adequate counter space and space for the audience to see you. Be sure to establish who will be in charge of making sure the demo area is ready.
- Review the demo schedule with the facility. (Will you need them to assist with seating arrangements, lighting, AV needs or anything else during the demo itself?)

### **Review the planned flow of your presentation.**

- Make an outline, note cards or list of talking points to remind you of the order of your presentation and the key messages for your audience.
- Plan how you’ll make your demo table attractive for the audience (see Making the Most of Food Demos tip sheet), and make a note of items you need to obtain (i.e. tablecloth, fresh produce, attractive plates).
- Make a list of supplies, materials, ingredients and equipment you will need to present your demo. Don’t forget utensils, a tablecloth and props. (This is easier to do if you take notes as you review the flow of the presentation; you can list items needed for each section of your demo.)

### **Confirm arrangements with assistant (if applicable).**

- Review the demo schedule and expectations for assistant’s role for the demo.





# Prepping for Your Demo

## Week of Your Presentation

### **Purchase/obtain your materials, equipment and supplies.**

- Check on number of registered attendees/ expected audience so you can purchase the appropriate amount of supplies and ingredients.
- Use your supply lists to help you shop.
- Do not purchase perishable items until just prior to your event (a day or two prior at most) so they remain fresh. Be sure you have refrigerator space to store perishables.
- When purchasing frozen entrées, be sure you have access to enough freezer space to accommodate them until the day of your demo.

### **Practice your presentation.**

- Do several run-throughs of your demo, revising your notes if necessary so the presentation flows smoothly and you deliver your messages most effectively.
- Adjust your supply list, if necessary.
- Decide how to arrange your food-prep items and supplies for maximum efficiency and to prevent becoming distracted by having to search for things during the demonstration.
- Consider practicing the entire demo at least once with your assistant (if using one) so you'll both feel more comfortable on demo day. If this is your first demo, you may want to practice more than one time.

## Day Before Your Presentation

### **Pack up all nonperishable materials, equipment, ingredients and supplies.**

- Use tote bags and/or boxes for all supplies, and pack them in a way that makes sense for you (i.e. all paper goods together, all utensils and equipment together, etc; or pack everything you need to demonstrate your first concept/item in one bag, and then everything for your second concept in another bag and so on).
- Check in with your assistant (if using one) to go over any last-minute arrangements, and to review arrival times, directions to facility, etc.
- Decide what clothes, shoes (such as sneakers) and clothing and jewelry to wear. If you're wearing comfortable shoes during set-up, remember to pack more appropriate clothing/shoes for the demo.



# Prepping for Your Demo

## Day of Your Presentation

### **Pack up perishable ingredients.**

- If you're traveling more than 15 minutes to the demo, pack frozen entrées and any other frozen items in coolers.
- Fresh produce should be fine at room temperature provided it's not extremely hot out or you're not driving for hours to your destination. In those cases, consider coolers to keep delicate produce and perishables cool on the journey.

### **Leave plenty of time to get to your destination, and plenty of time to set-up for your demo.**

- Being late or feeling rushed can leave you feeling frazzled during your demo.

### **Once on-site, set up your demo area.**

- Check in with your on-site facility contact person and do a walk-through of the demo area together so that any of your needs or concerns can be dealt with quickly.

- Make sure your food-prep area is clean. Unpack the items you will need and arrange them in the way that you determined was best during your practice session.
- Arrange your presentation table or area for maximum eye-appeal in the way that you planned.
- If you're serving food, arrange your serving area for efficiency for you and the person serving the audience.
- Check the audience seating area arrangement to make sure chairs are accessible and attendees can see the demo area.
- Arrange printed materials for the audience in an organized fashion, in an area where they can help themselves.



# Making the Most of Food Demos

## You've planned and prepped for your demonstration, so all the basics are covered.

However, the finer points of conducting a food demo are often overlooked. Follow these Dos and Don'ts to help you feel more confident and prepared on demo day.



### DO Create a visually-appealing setting

#### Display

- Make an attractive display on your presentation table (where you'll set your finished plate) or on the corner or edge of your food-prep surface (but make sure you have room to work unencumbered).
- Use fresh ingredients as part of your display. For example, if you're fixing pineapple coleslaw as a side-dish, use a fresh pineapple and/or a variety of types of cabbage as props in your display.
- Use the boxes from the frozen entrées in your demonstration as part of the display – they are colorful and the audience can see exactly what to look for when shopping.

#### Height

- Vary the height of the objects in your display to enhance visual appeal. Use attractive cake plates and other display pieces for some items in your display, but don't go so high that it's distracting.
- Place overturned bowls, blocks of wood, or Lucite blocks underneath the tablecloth to create height. In a pinch, use folded paper towels under display items, but make sure the audience cannot see the paper towels.

### DO Consider color, texture, and seasonality when plating food

- When plating food, use a solid-colored plate in a color that contrasts with the food. A white or black 8-inch plate works best.
- Create a color combination of foods – seasonal salads, vegetable dishes and fruits, and grain side dishes add color.
- Garnish entrées and side dishes when appropriate with fresh herbs, citrus zest or other colorful and interesting ingredients.



# Making the Most of Food Demos

## DO Use the right equipment

- Use clear bowls, mixing and liquid measuring cups for ingredients, so the audience can better see the ingredients and how you're preparing the food.
- Use wooden spoons and rubber spatulas; they are not as noisy as metal utensils, and therefore less distracting.
- Choose containers that are appropriate for the food – fruits and vegetables look great displayed in baskets, and beverages in interesting, clear pitchers have eye appeal.

## DO Have a system

- Prepare ingredients ahead of time (chopping, slicing, shredding, etc.) so you don't waste time on these tasks during your demo.
- Arrange all of your ingredients on one side of your bowl or plate (consider putting them on a tray) and after you've used them, move them to the other side – you'll be less likely to forget an ingredient.
- Tell the audience what the ingredients are. When you do a TV demo, show some of the ingredients and finished product to the camera (tilt the plate or bowl toward the camera slightly). Before the segment starts, tell the host and camera man how you will move around ingredients and dishes, so they can plan where to stand, which cameras to use, which angles to feature, etc.

## DO Talk and interact with the audience in a casual, friendly, yet professional manner

- Involve the audience/host by asking them questions about how to balance their plate and/or what their challenges are when it comes to eating healthfully.
- If you're doing a TV demo, act as if you are having a conversation with the host about balancing the plate, rather than "giving a presentation."
- Have fun!



# Making the Most of Food Demos

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## DON'T Forget to consider your own appearance

- Choose a simple shirt that won't get in your way when cooking, and wear comfortable, appropriate shoes.
- For TV, choose a comfortable, simple top or dress in a solid color that best suits you (men should choose a solid color shirt). Do not wear white, black, or red. Keep jewelry simple and stylish.
- An apron is always appropriate, but not necessary. Keep a clean towel nearby to wipe your hands.
- Hair should be neat, hands clean, and nails trimmed.

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## DON'T Forget to practice, practice, practice

- Memorize your recipe(s).
- Practice your demo using your note cards or outline.
- You want the audience to see how easy this can really be so you'll want to be as organized and relaxed as possible.

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## DON'T Forget to use good sanitation/food safety practices

- Wash your hands just prior to beginning your demo and always after handling raw animal products (if applicable).
- Don't use your fingers to remove ingredients from spoons or wipe drips off plates.
- Keep a kitchen towel and a clean, damp kitchen cloth in reach.
- Don't touch your face and hair during your demo.
- Use separate cutting boards and utensils for raw animal foods and cooked foods.
- If using a knife, remember your safety and be careful. If chopping, look at what you are doing and stop when you want to look up and address the audience or camera (all the more reason to prep most of the ingredients beforehand). Also, if you "talk with your hands" be sure to put the knife down so it isn't waving in the air.
- Follow all package heating instructions to ensure food reaches proper temperature.



# Sharing Your Demo Expertise with Others

**Teaching other professionals how to plan and conduct a Balance Your Plate food demo is an effective way to broaden your educational reach and provide “students” with new skills.**

If you are in a position to train others, consider these suggestions for making the process more efficient and effective.



## Help Identify Appropriate Audiences

Suggest that your trainees investigate groups, clubs and meetings in their communities and pursue opportunities with those that would be receptive to a nutrition and health-focused presentation. They might consider the following groups as audience sources:

- Senior center
- College/community college clubs
- Moms group
- Monthly community group meetings
- Corporate “lunch-and-learn” session
- Fitness centers, tennis clubs, gyms
- New-parent support groups/clubs

## Do a Demo Demonstration

Your trainees will get a better sense of what an effective Balance Your Plate demonstration looks like if you conduct one for them (they are the audience).

Conduct your food demo in the manner that you would like your “students” to conduct theirs – be engaging, informative, professional and entertaining. Have fun with your demo and your audience will have fun, too.



# Sharing Your Demo Expertise with Others

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## Communicate the Importance of the Key Messages

The goal of the Balance Your Plate food demonstration program is to show consumers how easy it is to utilize frozen entrées as part of an eating plan that follows the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Using the easily understood concepts outlined in the MyPlate recommendations at "[ChooseMyPlate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov)" healthy eating campaign, your "students" will be able to effectively

communicate specific, targeted messages that support the Balance Your Plate goals. Review the Key Messages sheet in this toolkit, taking time to explain each key message and the secondary messages associated with them. Also, explore the idea of tailoring the Balance Your Plate demonstrations for different audiences, using key messages that are appropriate for various groups.

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## Emphasize Planning, Prepping and Practicing

A well-planned demonstration, along with sufficient preparation and adequate rehearsals make all the difference in the presenter's confidence level and overall quality of the demonstration. People who have never cooked in front of an audience (or television camera) before are usually surprised at the amount of work required to plan an effective, successful demo.

Use the Balance Your Plate Planning and Prepping guidelines as well as the Making the Most of Food Demos fact sheets as the basis for your discussion of these topics, and be prepared for questions as you review the material.