

# CREATE A SALAD

Create a delicious salad from simple foods. Just choose an item from each category and follow the directions. Use your imagination! Each salad serves four adults.

1	<b>Choose one base</b>		
	• <b>Lettuce or salad greens:</b> Romaine, spring greens, arugula, etc.		
	• <b>Whole wheat pasta or noodles:</b> 2 cups pasta or 3 cups noodles, 6 cups water: Heat water until it boils. Stir in pasta or noodles. Cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain.		
	• <b>Brown rice: 1 cup rice, 2 cups water:</b> Combine rice and water. Bring to boil. Turn heat to low and cover pan with lid. Simmer until water is absorbed, about 45 minutes.		
	• <b>Potatoes:</b> 3 cups diced red, yellow, or gold potatoes, 6 cups water. Heat water until it boils. Add potatoes and cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain.		
2	• <b>Whole grain:</b> Cooked wheat berries, quinoa, barley, etc., or dense whole grain bread torn in bite size pieces and toasted.		
	<b>Choose one protein</b>		
	• 1 (15 oz.) can or 2 cups cooked dried beans (pinto, black, white, kidney, lentils, etc.)		
	• ½ pound cooked ground beef		
	• 1 ½ cups cooked and diced chicken, turkey, ham, beef, fish, or pork		
	• 2 cups chopped hard-boiled eggs		
	• 1-2 (6-8 oz.) canned beef, chicken, tuna, salmon, or other fish		
3	• 1 (12-16 oz.) package extra firm tofu, drained and marinated in soy sauce and fruit juice		
	Tomato, cucumber, broccoli, carrots, corn, green beans, peas, squash, etc.		
	• 2 cups fresh vegetables	• 2 cups frozen vegetables, thawed and cooked	• 1-2 (15 oz.) canned vegetables
4	<b>Choose one or more fruits (optional)</b>		
	• Apple, orange, raisins, dried cranberries, etc.		
5	<b>Choose one or more flavors</b>		
	• ½ – 1 cup diced onion, celery, green pepper		
	• ¼ cup sliced black olives		
	• ½ cup salsa		
	• 2–4 tablespoons fresh herbs or 1–2 teaspoons dried herbs (oregano, basil, cumin, chili powder, thyme, rosemary, sage, etc.)		
6	• Salt and pepper to taste		
	<b>Choose one dressing (optional)</b>		
• If desired and/or as necessary, use a fat-free or low-fat dressing to help hold the salad ingredients together, add flavor, and keep salad from being too dry.			
7	<b>Choose one or more toppings (optional)</b>		
	• ¼ cup slivered almonds, chopped walnuts or pecans	• 2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese	• ¼ cup grated cheddar or mozzarella cheese

Select a food from each category or use your own favorites. Combine all ingredients except dressing and toppings in a large salad bowl. Either dress salad before serving or allow family members to add dressing and toppings as desired.

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A pantry that is stocked with whole foods will help you create great tasting salads like these!

## Taco Salad

- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cups frozen corn
- 3 large tomatoes, diced
- 1 (15 oz.) can kidney or pinto beans, drained
- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- 1–2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, divided
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- ½ cup salsa
- 1 head romaine lettuce, chopped
- Crumbled tortilla chips
- Shredded cheese
- Lime wedges
- Sour cream or Greek yogurt (optional)

Heat small amount of water or vegetable broth in large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add onion and corn and cook until the onion begins to brown, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and add diced tomatoes, beans, rice, chili powder, and oregano. Stir to combine. Mix cilantro into salsa. Toss lettuce in a large bowl with the bean/rice mixture. Serve sprinkled with tortilla chips and cheese, with lime wedges and salsa at table.

*Yield: 4 servings*

## Thai Noodle Salad

- 10 ounces spaghetti noodles, cooked and cooled
- ¼ cup rice vinegar or red wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- ¼ teaspoon red chili flakes (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon sesame oil (optional)
- 1 (15 oz.) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- ¾ cup shredded carrots
- 2 green onions, finely diced
- 1 cup bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- ½ cup chopped peanuts
- ½ cup chopped cilantro

Place noodles in large bowl. In small bowl, combine vinegar, soy sauce, lime juice, sugar, garlic, red chili flakes, and sesame oil. Stir to combine and dissolve sugar. Pour over noodles. Add chickpeas, carrots, green onions, bell pepper, and peas. Stir to coat veggies with dressing. Add peanuts and cilantro just before serving. Toss to mix.

*Yield: 4 servings*

**Simple Salad Dressing:** Mix together 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar, 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard, 1 tablespoon maple syrup or honey. Especially good on green, grain, and pasta salads!

**You can change the taste of basic ingredients in your dish simply by changing the herbs and spices you use. For instance, use these herbs and spices to get these flavors:**

**Mexican**-use cumin, oregano, chili powder, cilantro, and garlic

**Italian**-use basil, oregano, parsley, and garlic

**Asian**-use soy sauce, ginger, garlic, chiles, and turmeric

**Savory/Thanksgiving**-use rosemary, sage, thyme, and parsley

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