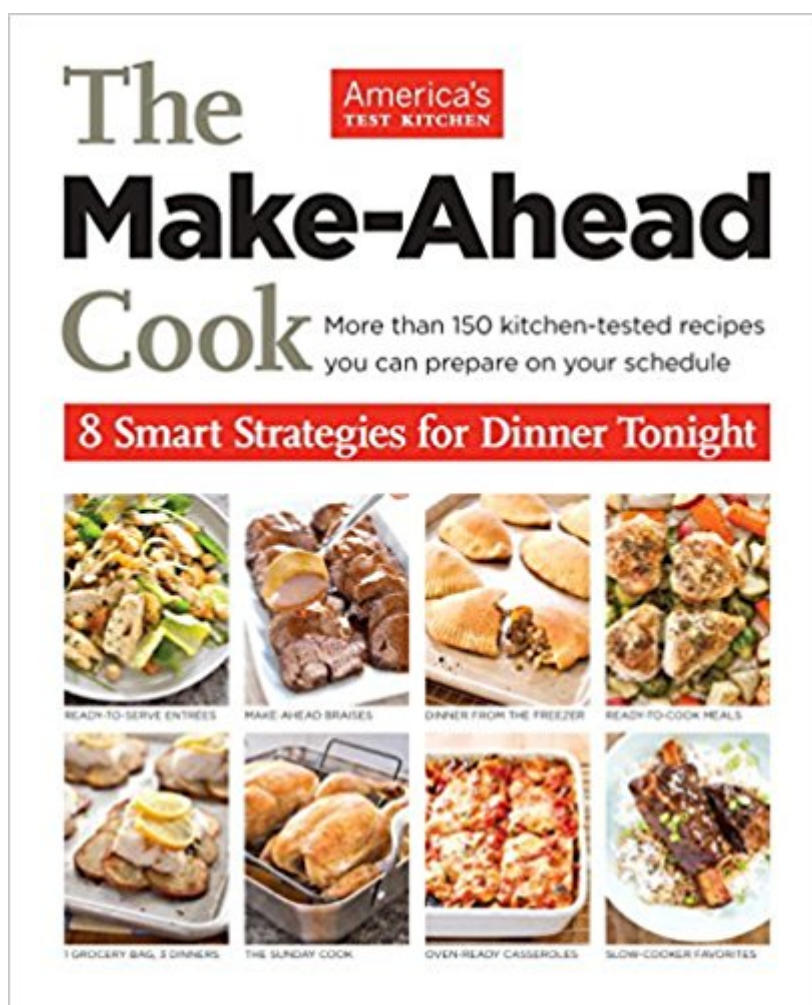


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The Make Ahead Cook



Synopsis

The ultimate plan-ahead cookbook that delivers on flavor Harried home cooks learned the hard way that the best possible way to maintain their mealtime sanity is to make things ahead. This stress-saving America's Test Kitchen cookbook collects 150 reliable recipes for make-ahead meals including everything from ready-to-serve entrees to braises to slow-cooked specialties to oven-ready casseroles and Sunday main meals. Another great addition to a popular cookbook series.

Book Information

Paperback: 336 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (192 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I love America's Test Kitchen / Cooks Illustrated cookbooks because they always delve into the science behind great cooking. However, they also re-organize and re-constitute cookbooks to meet various themes like baking, comfort food, recipes only, etc. They do this to appease difference audiences and make money on their cookbooks. This cookbook is one of those themes. I spent four days trying the two recipes mentioned at the end of this review. Although the recipes I tried were exceptional and tasty, this book barely attains the goal of enabling me to prepare my meals on my schedule and many meals are leftovers starting with the very first one (except for chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8). Here's why. These are 8 Smart Strategies that are defined:

1. Prep Ahead - the intent is to prepare for tomorrow's meal while today's meal cooks and to take advantage of "storage" time. For instance, for the Roasted Pork Loin w/Potatoes and Mustard Sauce, pork is stored with the potatoes overnight to give them flavor. There were just too many meat recipes in this chapter for my taste.
2. Reheat and Eat - the intent is to take advantage of the cooling and reheating to cut back on the active cooking time. For instance, with the classic beef pot roast, chilling the meat overnight helps it

build flavor and makes it easier to cut.3. Bake and Serve - the intent is to mostly to pre-cook and assemble the ingredients (or store pre-cooked ingredients separately) and then assemble and bake the next day.4. From Fridge to Table - the intent is to totally cook or prepare the meal and then just remove from the refrigerator the next day and eat.5.

Everyone in my family is following a different meal plan. Two are vegetarians. One eats meat. We have two grand kids and they have their favorite foods as well. Amazingly, this cookbook works for ALL of us. That in itself is a huge relief because it makes meal planning so easy. And the results- so far - have exceeded my expectations. We haven't had a "clunker" recipe yet (the Miso Salmon is my favorite at this point).But will this one work for YOU? The crucial "make it or break it" factor, of course, is whether the recipes are ones you are likely to make - and which are so tasty you want to make them again and again.I do want to note that a fair number of these recipes do involve some prep time before final cooking. But the pay-off (especially in the section featuring slow-cooker recipes) is being able to get a meal on the table without a lot of last minute work.Listed below is a sampling of the recipe choices, divided into vegetarian and non-vegetarian options. I hope this helps you decide whether this book might be right for you. I've included additional information about this book after the list of recipe names. Although I'm not including a separate list of kid-friendly recipes in this review, many of the ones in The Make-Ahead Cook are likely to please children. They are basics such as macaroni and cheese, pizza, etc. Our kids always loved vegetable soup, making the Slow-Cooker Minestrone soup a contender as well.So here are some sample recipe choices.

This is a beautifully done cookbook. 328 pages. The problem with it, as with all books this thick that are paperback, is that it will not lay flat to read the recipe, especially if you are in the process of trying to make that recipe! Problem solved by using a book holder or as I do, just copy the recipe and use that - helps to keep the cookbook splatter free, too :)When I received this cookbook I sat and went through it page by page. At first, I thought that many of the recipes just weren't something that I would ever try such as the 'Easy Lemon-Goat Cheese Stuffed Chicken Breasts' or the 'Tofu Salad with Vegetables', but as I continued on through the book, I soon realized there are recipes for everyone. For me, I spotted and made 'Salmon Burgers' and 'All-American Meatloaf' - both easy and both tasted excellent!The meatloaf recipe states how many it serves/prep time/store up to 24 hours and finish time. It was a bit time consuming to make because of all the ingredients #not at all like the old, trusted Quaker Oats recipe I have been using for years that takes minutes to throw together#, BUT it was one of the best tasting meatloafs I have ever eaten!The Salmon Burger recipe

was easy to put together and since sockeye salmon is on sale right now in my area and I have a freezer full, I was thrilled to try this recipe. Excellent!Way back in the day, the Betty Crocker Cookbooks were great for beginning cooks because they went into so much detail as to what to buy and what to use, etc. Well, fast forward 50 years to this cookbook and wow - even someone my age who has been cooking and baking a long time, can learn and utilize new tricks to make a recipe tastier and faster. There are no calorie/carb/sodium counts., etc for the recipes.

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