

## *Fold and Go Meals*

Preparing a meal after a long day can sometimes seem like a daunting task. Choose your own ingredients, place them on foil, and “fold and go” by placing the packet in the oven or on the grill. You’ll have a quick meal in minutes.



### *Choose Your Fat*

Olive oil  
Avocado oil  
Canola oil  
Vegetable oil  
Pesto



### *Add Protein*

Skinless, boneless chicken chunks  
Sliced sausage  
Shrimp  
Fish  
Sliced steak  
Pork  
Lentils or beans (kidney, black, navy, pinto, chickpeas, or soybeans)  
Tofu



### *Veg Out*

Broccoli	Garlic
Bell peppers	Beans
Carrots	Lentils
Squash	Corn
Zucchini	Spinach
Potatoes	Mushrooms
Green beans	Cabbage
Onion	Greens



### *Spice It Up*

Pepper	Lemon pepper
Garlic powder	Cayenne
Onion powder	Barbecue sauce
Chili powder	Taco seasoning
Paprika	Italian seasoning
Cumin	
Turmeric	



### *Top It Off*

<b>Splash of:</b>	<b>Dry or fresh herbs:</b>
• Worcestershire	• Cilantro
• Balsamic vinegar	• Parsley
• Wine	• Italian seasoning
• Lemon/lime juice	• Oregano
• Lemon/lime slices	• Basil
• Soy sauce	• Rosemary
• Sriracha	• Thyme
• Ketchup	• Dill
• Barbecue sauce	• Sage
• Stock (veggie, chicken, or beef)	Salsa
• Teriyaki	Cheese
• Jerk sauce	

## Fold and Go!

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Tear off 12–14 inches of aluminum foil.
3. **Choose your fat** to prevent sticking. Use any oil you have at home. Brush or drizzle it onto the foil. Remember, you only need a little bit to avoid sticking.
4. **Add protein.** Layer lean protein that is ground or cut into small chunks so that it will cook evenly. Fish and shrimp are great options, too. If you do not eat meat, try tofu or use vegetables. Wash your hands after touching raw meats.
5. **Veg out.** Next, wash and layer your favorite vegetables. Don't limit yourself—fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables work great. **Tip:** *If you use firm vegetables like carrots and potatoes, cut them into small pieces. For vegetables like squash and tomatoes, cut into larger chunks. For leafy greens like kale or collards, slice thinly. Gently rub tender produce under cold, running water. Scrub firm produce with a clean vegetable brush under running water.*
6. **Spice it up.** Don't stop at salt and pepper. Check your cabinet or pantry and add more layers of flavor. If you use a spice, go for salt-free spices like garlic powder or a salt-free seasoning.
7. **Top it off.** Add more flavor with even more toppings.
8. **Fold and go!** Now that everything is layered in the center of the foil, it's time to create a packet. Fold the two long edges toward one another and crease tightly. Fold and crease each short end to seal tightly.
9. **Cook.** If you're using an oven, place the foil packets on a cookie or baking sheet. Place in the oven at 350°F for about 30–40 minutes. If you're using a grill, cook on medium-high for about 10–15 minutes, turning halfway through.
10. Check the temperature of the protein.
11. Packets will be hot. Allow them to sit for a few minutes before opening. Transfer your “fold and go” meal to a plate or bowl and enjoy.

### Don't know where to start? Try these combinations!

Each recipe makes about four foil packets.



### Cheesy Chicken and Greens

4 skinless, boneless chicken thighs, cubed  
2 cups greens (spinach is a great choice)  
½ onion, sliced

1 teaspoon garlic powder (or to taste)  
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning (or to taste)  
1 cup mozzarella cheese



### Bacon Ranch Potatoes

4 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled  
7–9 small red potatoes, quartered  
½ onion, sliced  
1 tablespoon dry ranch seasoning  
½ teaspoon pepper  
½ teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons parsley, chopped or dried  
1 cup cheese  
Drizzle of olive oil

*For more protein, add 4 skinless, boneless chicken thighs or breasts (cubed), tofu, or your favorite beans.*



## Philly Cheese Steak

1 pound lean ground beef  
2 large potatoes  
1 bell pepper (choose your favorite color),  
chopped into bite-sized pieces  
½ onion, diced  
1 cup mushrooms, sliced  
½ teaspoon each paprika, onion powder,  
garlic powder, cayenne pepper, Italian  
seasoning, salt, and pepper (or to taste)

Splash of Worcestershire sauce  
Drizzle of ketchup  
Drizzle of olive oil

*After cooking, place 1 slice of provolone  
cheese on top and let it melt. If needed, place  
the pack back in the oven or on the grill for  
2–3 minutes until melted.*



## Barbecue Hamburger and Veggie Delight

1 pound lean ground beef or sausage  
5 baby red potatoes OR 2 small/medium  
sweet potatoes, quartered  
½ onion, sliced  
1 can green beans, drained  
½ cup corn, fresh, frozen, or canned (drained)

1 teaspoon garlic powder (or to taste)  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon black pepper  
Drizzle of barbecue sauce



## Sweet Potato Tacos

2–3 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cut  
into small cubes  
1 can beans (black, pinto, or your favorite  
beans), drained and rinsed  
2 cups leafy greens  
1 jalapeño, seeded and finely chopped  
½ onion, finely chopped  
1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon black pepper  
½ tablespoon chili powder  
1 teaspoon cumin  
2 teaspoons ground coriander  
Splash of tomato sauce

*After cooking, top with your favorite taco  
toppings like sour cream, cheese, salsa,  
avocado, guacamole, olives, and cilantro.*

### Tips

- Try a veggie packet with a store-bought rotisserie chicken.
- Enjoy any packet with cooked whole grains like brown rice, quinoa, or barley.
- Try a DIY seasoning blend in your packet.

## Safe Cooking

Remember, the only way to know your meal is ready is by checking the temperature!

Food	Safe Minimum Internal Temperature	Notes
Beef, pork, veal, and lamb (roast, steak, and chops)	145°F	Allow the meat to sit for 3 minutes after removing it from heat
Beef, pork, veal, and lamb (ground)	160°F	
Poultry (whole, parts, or ground)	165°F	
Eggs and egg dishes	160°F	Cook eggs until both the yolk and egg whites are firm; scrambled eggs should not be runny.
Finfish	145°F	
Shrimp, lobster, and crab	Flesh pearly and opaque	
Scallops	Milky white, opaque, and firm	
Clams, oysters, and mussels	Shells open during cooking	
Reheated leftovers	165°F	

For more food safety information, check out [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov).

## References

<https://www.foodsafety.gov>

<https://www.fightbac.org>

### Publication 3567 (POD-02-24)

By **Qula Madkin**, Extension Instructor, Food Science, Nutrition, and Health Promotion; **Jennifer Russell**, Extension Agent, Washington County; and Sara Cagle and Sara Talley, Dietetic Interns, Food Science, Nutrition, and Health Promotion.

Copyright 2024 by Mississippi State University. All rights reserved. This publication may be copied and distributed without alteration for nonprofit educational purposes provided that credit is given to the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

Produced by Agricultural Communications.

Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution. Discrimination in university employment, programs, or activities based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status protected by applicable law is prohibited. Questions about equal opportunity programs or compliance should be directed to the Office of Compliance and Integrity, 56 Morgan Avenue, P.O. 6044, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (662) 325-5839.

Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. ANGUS L. CATCHOT JR., Director