



# Sheet Pan Dinners 101 (with Recipes)

By Mary Margaret Chappell  
November 19 2020

Looking for warm, hearty meals that require minimal effort and cleanup? Sheet pan dinners, aka tray bakes, have you covered. Think of them as the 21st century's answer to casseroles. The savory, satisfying, one-pan meals have a major advantage over casseroles, too: The high-heat roasting method used to cook them yields luscious contrasts in taste, texture, and flavor.

## Sheet Pan Recipes

While it's easy to turn any roasted vegetable recipe into a sheet pan dinner—our [Roasted Vegetable Breakfast Hash](#) and [Roasted Red Potatoes and Cabbage](#) are excellent candidates—we've come up with a master recipe for a meal that's packed with produce. (For more inspiration, check out the “[5 Healthy Sheet Pan Dinner Combos](#)” options that follow.)

### The Flexible Sheet Pan Dinner Recipe

Use this foundational recipe, which is ready in 40 minutes and yields 8 cups, as a template for veggie-centric sheet pan dinners.

#### INGREDIENTS

1¼ cups quick-cooking whole grains (such as quinoa or instant brown rice)  
8 cups fresh vegetables, cut into 1- to 2-inch pieces  
1 15-oz. can of beans or lentils, rinsed and drained (or 1½ cups cooked frozen peas, edamame, or lima beans)  
1 tablespoon desired ground spices (or 3 tablespoons chopped fresh herbs)  
3½ cups vegetable broth or water  
Citrus juice, salad dressing, or your favorite sauce, for drizzling  
Chopped nuts, seeds, or nutritional yeast, for garnish

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Sprinkle the grains over the bottom of a 15x10-inch rimmed baking sheet.
2. Toss together the vegetables, beans, and spices in a large bowl. Spread the mixture in a single layer over the grains. Carefully pour the vegetable broth or water into the pan. Cover the

sheet pan tightly with foil or invert another baking sheet on top. Bake 20 minutes.

3. Remove foil covering. Roast the uncovered sheet pan dinner 15 to 20 minutes more, or until the grains are tender and the vegetables are beginning to brown.
4. To serve, drizzle with citrus juice or preferred sauce and sprinkle with your chosen garnish.

### Inspiration: 5 Healthy Sheet Pan Dinner Combos

Need some sheet pan inspiration to get started? Try one of these ingredient combinations. Follow the instructions from the [Flexible Sheet Pan Dinner Recipe \(above\)](#).

#### Sheet Pan Squash and Sprouts

1¼ cups kasha  
3 cups butternut squash cubes  
3 cups halved Brussels sprouts  
2 cup sliced leeks  
1 can black beans, rinsed and drained  
1 tablespoon cumin  
2 tablespoons chopped parsley  
2 tablespoons chopped walnuts or pecans

#### Roasted Ratatouille

1¼ cups bulgur  
3 cups zucchini chunks  
3 cups cherry tomatoes  
2 cups onions  
1 can black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained  
1 tablespoon herbes de Provence  
2 tablespoons sunflower seeds

#### Spring Fling

1¼ cups quinoa  
1 lb. fat asparagus, cut into 2-inch pieces  
2 cups baby carrots  
2 cups halved baby potatoes  
1 large red onion, sliced  
1½ cups frozen, thawed lima beans  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon  
2 teaspoons minced garlic

(continued)

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3 tablespoons lemon juice  
2 tablespoons nutritional yeast

## Fajita Tray Bake

1¼ cups millet  
3 cups diced bell peppers  
4 cups halved mushrooms  
1 cup sliced green onions  
1 can pinto beans, rinsed and drained  
1 tablespoon chili powder  
1–2 tablespoons lime juice  
2 tablespoons pepitas (pumpkin seeds)

## Sheet Pan Curry and Rice

1¼ cups instant brown rice  
2 cups cauliflower florets  
2 cups green beans  
2 cups diced sweet potatoes  
2 cups sliced onions  
1½ cups cooked lentils  
1 tablespoon curry powder  
3 tablespoons lemon juice  
2 tablespoons raisins or dried currants

## 8 Tips for Making Sheet Pan Dinners

Here are our top tips for sheet pan supper success.

### 1. Use a Half Sheet Pan

A 15x10-inch rimmed, heavy-duty or commercial-grade baking sheet, also called a half sheet pan, is large enough for a 4-serving meal and sturdy enough for easy maneuvering in and out of the oven. Nonstick versions make for easy cleanup, though they aren't necessary.

### 2. Get the Oven Good and Hot

Be sure to preheat the oven to 400–425°F. The high oven heat serves two purposes: It gets things going during the first “covered” stage of the cooking, then adds rich, roasted flavor to the final dish.

### 3. Choose a Quick-Cooking Whole Grain

When adding [whole grains](#) to a sheet pan dinner, opt for those that cook in 15 minutes or under. Quinoa, bulgur, kasha, freekeh, millet, and instant brown rice all have

similar cooking times and liquid requirements and can be used interchangeably.

### 4. Pick and Prep Vegetables Right

Anything goes when it comes to choosing vegetables for a sheet pan dinner—even a medley of whatever's left in your fridge—but we recommend including onions in the mix for flavor. Cut all vegetables the same size (1 to 2 inches is good) so that they cook evenly.

### 5. Cover Tightly with Foil

This seals in heat and moisture for the first stage of cooking. A more eco-friendly option is to cover everything with a second, upside-down half-sheet pan.

### 6. Taste-Test and Adjust Cooking

If grains aren't cooked all the way through and the pan seems dry, add ¼ to ½ cup more liquid and roast 10 minutes more. You can also give everything a quick blast under the broiler for extra browning.

### 7. Add a Sauce for Extra Flavor

A simple drizzle of citrus juice or a salad dressing will wake up the flavors of sheet pan dinner components. You can also dollop the finished dish with pesto or another homemade [sauce](#).

### 8. Sprinkle on Texture

A scattering of nuts, seeds, nutritional yeast, and/or fresh herbs adds a finishing touch to sheet pan dinner medleys.