

## Organized Kitchen for the Sunday Cook

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When you're too busy on most nights to cook, one weekend session — making dinners in bulk and freezing portions for weekdays — reduces daily stress. Your kitchen setup should facilitate that.

### *The Strategies*

Keep essentials front and center. In this case, “essentials” means stackable storage containers, large plastic mixing bowls, and other tools of the bulk cook’s trade. Items left on the counter won’t be in the way during your non-cooking weekdays and will be ready to go when Sunday comes. And when you’re spending hours in the kitchen, an apron with pockets is especially useful to keep things handy (and you tidy).

Invest in equipment. Where others might station the toaster, the Sunday cook has a food sealer — just the thing for turning blanched green beans, fish fillets, and muffins into future instant meals. A scale is useful for weighing ingredients, which some cooks consider a faster and more reliable way to measure for bulk recipes. A calculator speeds the doubling and tripling of recipes. (Tip: Keep it spatter-free with a little plastic wrap.)

Organize the freezer. Doing this once will repay you in time and money: no more scrounging for lima beans and coming up with freezer-burned chicken. With items crammed willy-nilly into the case, “many people don’t even know what they have, or they can’t find it,” says Laura Leist, owner of Eliminate Chaos, an organizing company in Seattle. She suggests making designated sections (prepared meals, vegetables, desserts). Use dividers, baskets, or multilayer ice caddies to keep containers neat and accessible. Same-size holders take up less space overall. And be sure to label everything. How else to tell the tomato sauce from the chutney, or know when it’s time to say good-bye to whatever that was?

### *The Tools and Tactics*

- Williams-Sonoma Melamine Bowls (\$30 for three, [www.williams-sonoma.com](http://www.williams-sonoma.com)). Those big ceramic bowls are great to look at but tough on arms busy with big jobs. Go for plastic instead.
- KitchenAid Ultra Power 5-Speed Blender (\$130, [www.kitchenaid.com](http://www.kitchenaid.com) for store locations). Sunday cooks need a blender big enough to prepare tomato soup for the whole week or pesto for the winter.
- Typhoon scale (\$40, Bloomingdale's, [www.bloomingdales.com](http://www.bloomingdales.com)) and Ela desktop calculator (\$20, The Conran Shop, 866-755-9079). These two tools help tackle bulk cooking for weekdays or a bake sale.
- Tupperware FlatOut! three-cup containers (\$17.50 for three, [www.tupperware.com](http://www.tupperware.com)). Collapsible freezer- and microwave-friendly containers take up little space when not in use.
- Clover Specialties classic kitchen print apron (\$7, [www.allheartchefs.com](http://www.allheartchefs.com)). With a pocket for the timer, the calculator, or your cell phone.
- Erasable labels (\$10 for 70 labels and a pen, [www.containerstore.com](http://www.containerstore.com)). Won't come off in the freezer, microwave, or dishwasher.
- Freezer storage baskets (two sizes, \$5 and \$6: [www.containerstore.com](http://www.containerstore.com)). Plastic-coated metal bins, one deep, one shallow.
- Tilia FoodSaver Advance Design (two sizes, \$5 and \$6: [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)). Attractive enough to keep on the counter. Bagging material can be cut to size.

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Laura Leist is president and founder of locally based Eliminate Chaos LLC. Her latest book is "Eliminate Chaos: The 10-Step Process to Organize Your Home & Life" (Sasquatch, 212 pages, \$19.95), available at bookstores or on her Web site, [www.eliminatechaos.com](http://www.eliminatechaos.com) She can be reached by e-mail: [laura@eliminatechaos.com](mailto:laura@eliminatechaos.com) or phone 425-670-2551.