

Vegan Cheat Sheet

Your quick reference for plant-based living



VeganPreps

About This Cheat Sheet

Keep this on your fridge or in your wallet. Page 1 covers what is and is not vegan, hidden ingredients to watch for, and protein pairing basics. Page 2 gives you five meal formulas you can use to build hundreds of different meals without following a recipe.

What You Get

- A quick vegan vs. non-vegan reference table
- 8 hidden non-vegan ingredients to check labels for
- Protein pairing combinations for complete nutrition
- 5 meal formulas with recipe examples from veganpreps.com

For the full recipe collection, visit veganpreps.com.

What's Vegan / What's Not

A quick side-by-side reference.

VEGAN	NOT VEGAN
Tofu, tempeh, seitan	Dairy (milk, cheese, butter, yogurt)
Plant milks (oat, soy, almond)	Eggs (including in baked goods)
Nutritional yeast	Honey
Beans, lentils, chickpeas	Gelatin (marshmallows, gummies)
Nuts, seeds, nut butters	Whey/casein protein
All fruits and vegetables	Fish sauce, oyster sauce
Grains, rice, pasta	Some wines/beers (filtered with isinglass)
Olive oil, coconut oil	White sugar (some filtered with bone char)

Hidden Non-Vegan Ingredients

Check labels for these. They show up in products that look plant-based.

INGREDIENT	WHERE IT HIDES
Casein	Milk protein found in cheese, some breads, protein bars
Whey	Dairy byproduct in protein powders, baked goods, candy
Carmine / Cochineal	Red dye made from crushed beetles, used in drinks and cosmetics
L-Cysteine	Amino acid from feathers or hair, used in commercial bread
Isinglass	Fish bladder extract used to filter beer and wine
Shellac	Secretion from lac bugs, used to coat candy and produce
Gelatin	Boiled animal bones/skin, found in gummy candy and marshmallows

INGREDIENT	WHERE IT HIDES
Honey	Often overlooked, check granola bars, cereals, and sauces

Protein Pairing Basics

Grain + legume = complete protein. Here are the simplest combos.

COMBINATION	WHY IT WORKS
Rice + beans	Complete protein, Latin American staple
Bread + peanut butter	Complete protein, quick and cheap
Hummus + pita	Chickpeas (legume) + wheat (grain)
Tofu + rice	Soy is already a complete protein on its own
Lentil soup + bread	Legume + grain, warm and filling
Oats + soy milk	Grain + complete protein, ready in 5 minutes

Quick Meal Formulas

Five patterns that let you build hundreds of meals without a recipe.

BOWL FORMULA

Grain + Protein + Roasted Vegetables + Sauce + Topping

Example: Brown rice + crispy tofu + roasted sweet potato and broccoli + tahini drizzle + sesame seeds

Recipes to try:

Easy Vegan Blueberry Buckle (One-Bowl Recipe)

Easy Tofurkey Fried Rice (Quick Weeknight)

Best Elote Bowl (Vegan Mexican)

Simple Vegan Quinoa Salad (5-Ingredient)

Kale Sushi Salad (Quick Vegan Bowl)

STIR-FRY FORMULA

Oil + Aromatics + Protein + Vegetables + Sauce + Rice or Noodles

Example: Sesame oil + garlic and ginger + tempeh + bell pepper and snap peas + soy sauce + udon noodles

Recipes to try:

Crispy Tofu Stir Fry (30-Minute Dinner)

Quick Tofu & Green Onion Stir-Fry

Thai Pineapple Fried Rice in Shell (Easy)

Quick Vegan Teriyaki Tofu Stir Fry (Easy)

Best Orange-Ginger Tofu Stir-Fry (Quick)

SOUP FORMULA

Saute Onion/Garlic + Liquid + Beans or Lentils + Vegetables + Spices + Simmer

Example: Saute onion and garlic + vegetable broth + red lentils + diced carrots + cumin and turmeric + simmer 25 min

Recipes to try:

Best Raw Cucumber Soup (Dairy-Free, 10 Min)

Authentic Vegan African Stew (Easy)

Easy Vegan Chickpea Tortilla Soup

Best Lemon-Rice Soup With Silken Tofu

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Creamy Vegan Broccoli Soup (One-Pot)

SANDWICH/WRAP FORMULA

Bread or Tortilla + Spread + Protein + Crunch + Greens

Example: Whole wheat wrap + hummus + marinated tofu + shredded carrot + spinach

Recipes to try:

Best Oat-Tofu Burgers (Quick Plant-Based)

Best Vegan Lentil Burgers (Homemade)

Mushroom Beet Black Bean Burgers (Best)

Easy Oat Burgers With Mushrooms (Vegan)

Funtastic Seitan Fajitas (Quick & Easy)

SMOOTHIE FORMULA

Liquid + Frozen Fruit + Protein + Green + Thickener

Example: Oat milk + frozen berries + peanut butter + handful of spinach + banana

Recipes to try:

Best Raw Superfood Oat Smoothie (Vegan)

Best Vegan Parmesan: Olive-Miso Shake

Tropical Smoothie Bowl With Mango (Easy)

Acai Berry Smoothie Bowl for 2 (Quick & Easy)

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