# Portion guidance for mixed meals

When cooking mixed meals from scratch, such as curries or stews, it can sometimes be difficult to appreciate how that fits into the portion plate guidance. One way to ensure you are cooking balanced meals is to replicate the portion plate using your hands, as shown in the photo below.

Use the fingers from both your hands to estimate a portion of vegetables and salad, and use your palms to estimate a portion of lean protein and a portion of starchy carbohydrates. You can find more in-depth information about this in our 'Practical Guide to Portion Sizes'. After you have your measurements, you can then multiply these based on how many meals you would like to serve.

Knowing how much to have on your plate can sometimes be confusing when it comes to mixed meals. Depending on how many portions you decided to cook, you can then divide the food into the same number of portions. This is a great way to meal prep, and at the same time it takes the stress away from trying to figure out how much to have on your plate!

If you already added carbohydrates to your mixed meal, such as potatoes, it would be advised that you do not add carbohydrates to your plate as well, such as rice or naan. However, if you are aware that one of your meals will contain more carbohydrates, for example your dinner, you can balance this out by having a lower carb breakfast or lunch.

Why not take a look in the app at some of our mixed meal recipes? Some good recipes to start with could be 'Butterbean and Quinoa Stew' or 'Chickpea and Spinach Curry'!

**Practical example on how to follow this guidance:**

If you are serving chilli with rice:

- Rice should cover less than ¼ of your plate, since the chilli contains beans which are a source of carbohydrates
- When cooking the chilli, ensure the amount of vegetables is double the amount of meat
- The chilli should then cover about ¾ of your plate (or you can divide the chilli into portions as explained above, and then serve 1 portion)