

ROBB WOLF'S THE FOOD MATRIX



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One of the challenges that people most frequently voice when first adopting a whole foods diet is “I don’t know how to cook”. Early on in my coaching career we had a client who along with “I don’t know how to cook” would constantly complain that she was “bored.” Bored with eating real, wholesome, unprocessed food.

Translation: she was “bored” because bread was now off limits.

This woman was a challenging client in many ways, but I’m thankful that we crossed paths. She inspired me to create this Food Matrix template – to both show how easy it can be (even for non cooks!) to cook wholesome meals, and to dispel the notion that eating real food is “boring”.

For those of you that don’t consider yourselves cooks...I get it. The struggle is real. It’s easy to get intimidated by cookbook recipes with long lists of ingredients. And with terms like braise, julienne, and parboil – cooking can seem like a foreign language to the non-initiated! It’s my hope that this Food Matrix template eases some of your apprehension around cooking. Heck, you might even find you enjoy spending time in the kitchen and uncover a new passion – cooking!

For those in the “I’m easily bored with what I eat” category – if you master the Food Matrix template you’ll discover that with a simple list of foods you’ll be able to create enough unique

meals to never see the same meal twice in over 200 years! It sounds outlandish, but I’ll show you how in a bit.

4 REASONS TO MASTER THE FOOD MATRIX FORMULA

Don’t know how to cook? No problem! Anyone can master this template and feed themselves delicious, and wonderfully healthy meals.

You only need 4 ingredients (1 Protein, 1 Vegetable, 1 Fat, 1 Spice).

You can create thousands of different meals following this template (literally thousands – I’ll explain how in a bit).

You don’t need to dirty lots of pots and pans. These are one pot/pan meals – which means cleanup is quick and easy!

Did I mention that it’s simple?

Are you ready for the template?

It’s really more like a formula.

Here it is:

1 Fat + 1 Protein + 1 Veggie + 1 Spice =
Delicious and healthy meal!

To dispel the notion that you are bored (and to show you how easy it is to make fantastic

meals quickly AND with few ingredients) we will consider a few items we can get from virtually any supermarket. Perhaps a few items are exotic,

DO NOT split hairs. If your local supermarket is missing a few of these items it does not invalidate the concept.

PROTEINS (27)	VEGETABLES (24)	FATS (5)	HERBS & SPICES (25)
Chicken breast	Asparagus	Coconut oil	Allspice
Chicken thigh	Avocado	Olive oil	Basil
Flounder	Artichoke hearts	Macadamia oil	Cardamom
Snapper	Brussels sprouts	Avocado oil	Cinnamon
Trout	Beets*	Lard	Celery seed
Halibut	Carrots		Dill
Mackerel	Celery		Fenugreek
Bass	Daikon		Garlic
Salmon steak	Zucchini		Ginger
Salmon fillet	Fennel Root		Curry-Red
Shrimp	Kale		Curry-Green
New York steak	Chard		Curry-Yellow
Rib eye steak	Dandelion greens		Oregano
Round steak	Spinach		Cillantro
Ground beef	Acorn Squash*		Nutmeg
Beef ribs	Butternut Squash*		Rosemary
Rump roast	Yam*		Thyme
Beef stew meat	Sweet Potato*		Garam Masala
Pork loin	Red pepper		Bay Leaf
Pork chop	Yellow pepper		Salt
Pork ribs	Green pepper		Herbs de Provance
Baby back ribs	Red cabbage		Chili powder
Bacon	Green cabbage		Paprika
Pork roast	Napa cabbage		Cumin
Lamb chops			Black pepper
Lamb rack			
Venison steaks	<i>*dense carbohydrate - eat in moderation until leanness goals are reached</i>		

In the chart above we have 27 proteins, 24 veggies, 5 fats and 25 herbs & spices. If we take one item from each column we get $27 \times 24 \times 5 \times 25 = 81,000$ DIFFERENT meals. Divide that by 365 (1 different meal per day) and you will not see the same meal for 221 YEARS.

That folks, is boredom debunked.

Here's that formula again:

1 Fat + 1 Protein + 1 Veggie + 1 Spice = 1 Delicious and healthy meal! (Well, maybe 2 if you're cooking for yourself – leftovers are a grand thing!)

Of course, adding more than one from each of those categories is totally OK – this is a template, not a hard and fast rule! I'm keeping it simple so you get the idea, but creativity (and using what you have in the fridge) is encouraged!

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Most of these meals can be prepared in the following manner:

1. Put some fat in a pan.
2. Brown some meat in that fat for a minute
3. If you are using a hearty herb/spice like ginger, add it before the meat, if it's delicate like basil, add it when the dish is almost done.
4. Add veggies.
5. Stir it a time or two, cover and set a timer for 5-10 min.
6. If it's done, eat! If not, set a timer again.

Of course, if you're not afraid of washing dishes, you can absolutely cook your veggies separately from your meat. Again, this is a template meant to guide you in your culinary exploratory efforts.

Here's a quick video for the visual learners out there:



The combination we used in the video:

Pork Top Sirloin + Butternut squash (frozen) + Bacon fat + Rosemary (fresh)

QUANTITIES? HOW MUCH DO I USE?

Part of the process of adopting the Food Matrix template is going to involve experimentation, especially if you're a novice in the kitchen. Don't fret! After making a few meals like this you'll have a much better feel for the process!

Here are some quick guidelines:

1. Use enough fat to coat the pan so that your protein of choice doesn't stick.

2. Use enough protein and veggies to feed yourself and anyone else in your household (or for you to have leftovers the next day)
3. Add spices to taste. If you're new to cooking and using spices, start sparingly and adjust as you go.
4. If you are using a hearty herb/spice like ginger, add it before the meat, if it's delicate like basil, add it when the dish is almost done.

Check out more Food Matrix videos at our [Food Matrix playlist](#).

YES, YES, YES, YES, AND YES!

Yes! You can add salt and pepper in addition to your chosen spice.

Yes! You can add more than one spice or a spice blend if you wish.

Yes! You can add more than one vegetable.

Yes! Frozen veggies are ok.

Yes! You can have fun cooking this way!

Robb Wolf is a former research biochemist and New York Times bestselling author of **The Paleo**

Solution: the Original Human Diet. Robb has transformed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people around the world via his top ranked iTunes podcast, book, and seminars. He lives in Reno, Nevada with his wife Nicki, and daughters Zoe and Sagan.



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Use this blank matrix to create a personalized food matrix with ingredients you and your family most enjoy from each category.

PROTEINS	VEGETABLES	FATS	HERBS & SPICES