

Crunch-Crunch: A Week of (Make Ahead) Spring Salads In Jars

Layered salad-in-a-jar is another one of my favorite strategies for [warm weather batch cooking](#) (click links to view articles). The salad dressing can be added right in the jar and when the ingredients are packed correctly everything stays very crisp and fresh.

All you need is a quick shake, a fork and you can crunch away to your hearts' content.



Practical uses for make-ahead mason jar salads

Salads-to-go have plenty of practical uses and are a healthier option than most portable foods. Here are some of our favorite ways to enjoy pre-made salads in a jar.



What goes into a mason jar salad?

Pretty much anything you have on hand: a dressing, greens, vegetables, fruits and nuts. Think about what you love to heap on your plate at a [salad bar](#) and go with that. Don't forget about beans, grains and legumes, as well as cooked chicken or ham.

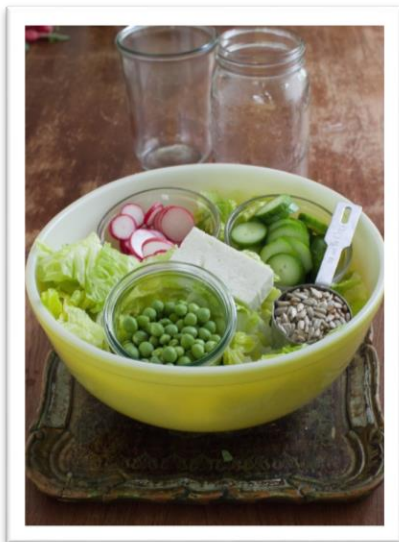
Of course, **I have some opinions on what works well, and what you may want to avoid, but they are just suggestions.** I avoid ingredients that emit a particular odor that gets stronger with time such as eggs, blue cheese, tinned fish, and raw onion. Now I love all of those ingredients in my salad bowl, but I try to enjoy them in a regular tossed salad, as an accompaniment to dinner, instead of packed into a jar. I've also found that strawberries and diced tomatoes tend to 'weep' after a few days and get goopy in the bottom of the jar, so I avoid those. I suppose whole cherry tomatoes would be much better.



Tips for the best make-ahead mason jar salads. For a lasting, portable salad:

- Start with **clean wide-mouth jar that is completely dry**. Moisture is not the friend of a crisp salad.
- **Tear, don't cut lettuce**, as the cut edges will turn brown.
- Always start with the **vinaigrette at the bottom**, and keep the greens from coming in contact with it or they will wilt.
- Place a **folded paper towel at the top of the salad**, just before the lid goes on and it will absorb some of the excess moisture and keep the greens crisper.
- **Avoid strong odors** (egg, blue cheese, fish, raw onion, etc), as mentioned above. Bring them in a separate baggie if needed.

Spring Pea and Romaine with Feta, Cucumber, and Radishes with Creamy Buttermilk Dressing



All ingredients are divided between two quart jars.

Ingredients

- 3 Tbsp Creamy Buttermilk Dressing (see below)
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 3/4 cup washed and sliced cucumbers (two mini)
- 1/2 cup sliced radishes
- 3/4 cup fresh spring peas
- 1/4 cup toasted sunflower seeds
- 2 hearts Romaine lettuce, torn

Instructions

1. In the bottom of a clean, dry quart jar, spread 1 1/2 Tablespoons of salad dressing. Repeat with second jar.
2. Crumble 2 Tablespoons of feta into each jar on top of the dressing.
3. Add the cucumbers, radishes and peas, dividing them between two jars, and layering them.
4. Top with sunflower seeds and lettuce, again dividing the portion between the two jars.
5. Top with a clean dry lid and refrigerate for up to 5 days.

Creamy Buttermilk Dressing

Ingredients

- 1 clove garlic (a large one)
- 1^{1/4} tsp salt - I like to use lemon salt
- 4 Tbsp buttermilk
- 2 tsp mayonnaise
- 2 Tbsp fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground pepper
- 1/2 cup olive oil

Instructions

1. Peel and chop garlic, then mush it on the cutting board with the blade of your knife until it is a paste.
2. Combine all ingredients, including the garlic paste in a half-pint jar
3. Cover the jar with a lid and shake well.
4. Taste salad dressing and adjust seasoning if required. Store in the refrigeration for up to 5 days.

Arugula, Blueberry and Bacon Salad with Almonds, Balsamic Vinaigrette

Peppery arugula, sweet blueberries and crispy bacon make this salad the highlight of the day – any day! Almonds add the necessary crunch and a tangy, dead easy, [balsamic dressing](#) brings everything together.



Recipe type: Salad Author: Aimee Prep time: 15 mins Total time: 15 mins Serves/Yield: 2 quarts

Recipe requires two clean quart jars with lids.

Ingredients

- 3 Tbsp Balsamic vinaigrette (see below)
- 1 cup diced yellow bell pepper
- 1 cup blueberries, washed and dried
- 1/4 cup cooked and crumbled bacon
- 1/4 cup chopped toasted almonds
- arugula or spinach

Instructions

1. In the bottom of a clean, dry quart jar, spread 1 1/2 Tablespoons of salad dressing. Repeat with second jar.
2. Scatter yellow bell pepper and blueberries into the jars, dividing equally between the two.
3. Add 2 Tablespoons both bacon and toasted almonds to the jars.
4. Pack remainder of jar with well-dried arugula or spinach and cover with a lid.
5. Place in the refrigerator and keep for up to 5 days.

Balsamic Dressing

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar (no need for the really expensive stuff)
- 1 Tbsp dijon mustard
- 1/2 tsp dried marjoram (or oregano)
- 1/2 tsp dried basil
- 3/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients except olive oil in a jar. Stir well with a fork.
2. Add olive oil, cover tightly, and shake well until combined. You can also use a blender and drizzle the oil in slowly while it is running.
3. Serve over a basic green salad or toss with grated carrots, minced red onion, and sunflower seeds.