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### A week of super fast family meals

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/ Posted by [Victoria von Biel](#)

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**A family meal doesn't need to be an elaborate affair.** And in the harried days of early autumn it's all the more important: a time to regroup and refuel together, albeit only for a half an hour. Though nothing beats a hearty roast, a long simmered bolognese sauce, sometimes there just isn't the time. Hence these 5 fast recipes from [gastrokid](#) (the blog and cookbook from *Bon Appetit* features editor Hugh Garvey and Matthew Yeomans; check out [gastrokid.com](#) and *The Gastrokid Cookbook: Feeding a Foodie Family in a Fast Food World* that are healthy, tasty, and sophisticated enough to be shared by adults and kids alike. **They require just a few modern pantry staples; they take only about 30 minutes to prepare; and they each include a prep step to get the kids involved, plus a superfoodie option to elevate the dish to the next level.** Round out the dish with the menu suggestions below.

#### Easy Thai-style Peanut Noodles

Serves 4

Leftover noodles, kid-fave peanut butter, and rice wine vinegar come together for near-instant Asian comfort food. Serve with sauteed bok choy dressed with sesame oil and soy sauce.

Kid step: mixing up the sauce and noodles.

Adult upgrade: Sprinkle basil and and chopped red chiles over it (remove the seeds to keep it from getting too blazingly hot)

1/3 cup peanut butter  
1 teaspoon sesame oil  
2 tablespoons light soy sauce  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1 teaspoon rice wine vinegar

4 cups cooked noodles (spaghetti, soba, whole wheat, penne, whatever you've got)

Mix first 5 ingredients in medium bowl. Add cooked noodles and mix it all up. If it's too tight, stir in a tablespoon of water to thin out the sauce. Taste and adjust seasoning if need be. Serve cold.

#### Crispy Tofu With Brown Rice

Serves 4

Who says tofu has to be bland? Dredging it in seasoned flour and browning it in a pan makes all the difference. Use leftover brown rice or instant microwavable frozen brown rice from Trader Joe's. Serve with mizuna salad topped with slivered almonds and sliced blood orange.

Kid step: Dredging tofu slices in flour  
Adult upgrade: chopped fresh cilantro

1/4 cup flour  
salt and pepper to taste  
1 large block of firm tofu sliced into 1/2 inch slices  
2 tablespoons canola, safflower, or other neutral cooking oil  
light soy sauce to taste

4 cups of cooked brown rice

Mix flour, salt, and pepper on a dinner plate. Dredge sliced tofu in seasoned flour. Heat a large pan over medium high heat, add cooking oil, and heat until shimmering. Carefully place dusted tofu slices in pan and cook about 5 minutes per side, or until crispy and golden brown. Heat rice in microwave. Put rice in bowls, top with tofu, drizzle with soy sauce and serve.

#### Open Faced Smoked Trout Sandwich

Serves 4

Canned smoked trout is low in mercury and sustainably farmed, not to mention super savory and convenient. If you can't find trout, substitute equally sustainable mild sardines packed in oil. But the smokey trout makes this taste special, as does the addition of fresh herbs. Serve with a simple green salad.

Kid step: spread the condiments on the bread and topping with fish  
Adult upgrade: Chopped fresh dill or parsley and thinly sliced shallots add brightness and crunch

2 cans smoked trout (or sardines)  
4 thick slices of baguette or rustic country white, toasted  
mayo  
dijon mustard

Spread condiments on bread, top with trout, and optional herbs and shallots.

#### Grilled Spanish Pork Loin

Serves 4

Do yourself a favor and buy a can of sweet Spanish smoked paprika (also called [Pimenton De La Vera](#); get the sweet Dulce, not the spicy Picante) to make just about any mild-flavored meat into a nearly bacon-level of smokey deliciousness. Serve with blanched broccolini and boiled fingerling potatoes, both finished on the grill.

Kid step: mixing the quick marinade

Adult upgrade: serve with a glass of cheap and cheerful [Rioja Crianza Spanish red wine](#) (21 and over, obviously)

1/4 cup olive oil  
juice of one lemon  
2 teaspoons smoked paprika  
1 teaspoon fennel seeds, ground up in a pestle or spice grinder  
salt and pepper to taste  
1 boneless pork loin

Combine first 5 ingredients in small bowl and rub on pork loin. Heat grill to medium high, and cook for about 10 minutes a side, or until an instant read thermometer reads 150. Let it rest on the cutting board for 10 minutes. Cut into 1/4 inch slices, plate, and drizzle with a bit of good olive oil and sprinkle with kosher salt.

### **Pancetta and Sage Pizza**

Serves 4

Pancetta is richer and cheaper than prosciutto and crisps up nicely in a hot oven. Sage tastes like fall. Use the hot oven to roast cubed butternut squash tossed with olive oil and thyme at the same time on a separate pan (the squash might take a little longer; if it isn't cooked at the same time the pizza is done, lower the heat to 350 and cook until tender).

Kid step: stretching and topping the dough; chopping the sage

Adult upgrade: sprinkle with chile flakes and [fennel pollen](#)

1 store bought fresh pizza dough from Whole Foods, Trader Joe's or your local pizza parlor  
olive oil  
2 cups grated mozzarella  
1/2 cup roughly chopped pancetta (or prosciutto)  
1/2 cup rough chopped sage

Preheat oven to 425. Stretch the dough into a rough rectangle on an olive-oiled baking sheet. Spread the cheese on the dough, then top with pancetta and sage. Bake until golden and bubbly, about 25 minutes.

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### **Ingredients**

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