

The Fall Salad Planner

A printable companion to the Fall Apple Salad with Cheddar and Candied Pecans

Print this two-page planner and keep it in your recipe binder. It gives you the shopping list, the make-ahead timeline and a blank builder so you can invent your own autumn salads all season — without scrolling back through the article.

Shopping List

Section	Item	On hand?
Produce	Arugula or mixed baby greens (7 oz)	
Produce	2 crisp apples — 1 sweet, 1 tart	
Produce	Lemon (for juice)	
Dairy	Sharp white cheddar, block (not pre-shredded)	
Pantry	Pecan halves (1 cup)	
Pantry	Dried cranberries	
Pantry	Pure maple syrup	
Pantry	Balsamic vinegar	
Pantry	Dijon mustard	
Pantry	Olive oil, extra virgin	
Pantry	Brown sugar and ground cinnamon	
Optional	Flaky sea salt, black pepper	

Do-Ahead Timeline

Up to 3 days ahead

Make the candied pecans. Cool completely, then store in an airtight jar at room temperature. They keep their crunch for a full week.

Up to 3 days ahead

Whisk the maple balsamic vinaigrette in a jar. Refrigerate; it thickens when cold, so let it sit out 15 minutes before serving and shake well.

Morning of

Wash and dry the greens thoroughly. Damp leaves are the number-one reason a dressed salad goes limp.

Day of

Slice the apples — and only slice them. Toss the slices in a teaspoon of lemon juice so they stay pale and crisp.

Just before serving

Toss greens with a third of the dressing, add the rest of the toppings, then drizzle and finish with flaky salt.

Ratio Card: Maple Balsamic Vinaigrette

Ingredient	Amount	Scales up as
Balsamic vinegar	3 tbsp	1/2 cup
Pure maple syrup	1 tbsp	2 tbsp + 2 tsp
Dijon mustard	1 tsp	2 tsp
Garlic, finely grated	1 small clove	2 cloves
Olive oil	1/3 cup	3/4 cup + 1 tbsp
Salt and black pepper	to taste	to taste

Shake hard in a lidded jar for 20 seconds. If it separates while it sits, that is normal — just shake again.

Build Your Own Fall Salad

Fill in your own combinations. The formula holds: one base, one fruit, one crunchy thing, one cheese, one dressing.

Base (greens or grains)

Fruit (fresh or dried)

Crunch (nuts, seeds, croutons)

Cheese

Dressing

Quick Reference

- Candy the pecans on the stovetop — about 5 minutes, no candy thermometer.
- Cool the pecans fully before they touch the greens, or they will wilt them.
- Dress the greens first, then pile the toppings on top so they stay crisp.

- Keep dressing on the side if you plan on leftovers.
- For a main dish, add shredded roast chicken or white beans.

Notes for Next Time

What worked

What I would change

Who I served it to

From a savory autumn side to a sturdy lunch in four decisions. savorydiscovery.com — By Elowen Thorn.