



Turkey Roasting Tips

- Remove the giblets from turkey cavities after thawing. Cook separately.
- Set oven temperature no lower than 325° F.
- Place turkey or turkey breast on lower rack in a shallow roasting pan.
- For even cooking, bake stuffing in a separate casserole dish, versus in the bird. Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of the stuffing. The center should reach 165° F.
- If you choose to stuff your turkey, the ingredients can be prepared ahead of time. Separate wet and dry ingredients, and chill wet ingredients (butter/margarine, cooked celery and onions, broth, etc.) until ready to prepare. Mix wet and dry ingredients together just before filling the turkey cavities. Fill the cavities loosely. Cook the turkey immediately. Use a food thermometer to make sure the center of the stuffing reaches 165° F.
- Whole turkeys should be cooked to 180° F. To check for doneness, insert a food thermometer in the thickest part of the inner thigh without touching the bone.
- Turkey breasts should be cooked to 170° F. Insert a food thermometer in the thickest part of the breast to check for doneness.
- Let the turkey stand for 20 minutes before carving to allow juices to set. The turkey will carve more easily.

Turkey Roasting Timetable

(325° F oven temperature)

Unstuffed

4–8 lbs	1.5–3.25 hours
8–12 lbs	2.75–3 hours
12–14 lbs	3–3.75 hours
14–18 lbs	3.75–4.25 hours
18–20 lbs	4.25–4.5 hours
20–24 lbs	4.25–5 hours

Stuffed

6–8 lbs	2.5–3.5 hours
8–12 lbs	3–3.5 hours
12–14 lbs	3.5–4 hours
14–18 lbs	4–4.25 hours
18–20 lbs	4.25–4.75 hours
20–24 lbs	4.75–5.25 hours

It is safe to cook a turkey from the frozen state. The cooking time will take at least 50 percent longer than recommended for a fully thawed turkey. Remember to remove the giblet packages. Remove carefully with tongs or a fork.

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline

1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854)

TTY: 1-800-256-7072

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday

E-mail: mpholine.fsis@usda.gov

Turkey Thawing Instructions

TO THAW TURKEY IN THE REFRIGERATOR:

Keep the turkey wrapped and place it in a pan. Let it stand in the refrigerator roughly 24 hours for each 5 pounds. Large turkeys should stand in refrigerator a maximum of 5 days. The giblets and neck, which are customarily packed in the neck and body cavities of frozen turkeys, may be removed from the bird near the end of the thawing period. If desired, the giblets and neck may be refrigerated and reserved for use in giblet gravy.

TO THAW TURKEY IN COLD WATER:

Make certain that the turkey is in a leak-proof package or a zipper-seal plastic bag. This prevents bacteria in the surrounding environment from being introduced into the food, and prevents the poultry tissues from absorbing water. Change the cold water every 30 minutes. Approximately 30 minutes per pound of turkey are required for thawing. After thawing in cold water, the turkey should be cooked immediately.



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