



Holiday Turkey Safety Tips



Choosing a Turkey

Fresh Turkeys

- Purchase your turkey no earlier than 1 to 2 days prior to cooking.
- Once home, keep your turkey stored in a refrigerator until you're ready to cook. Keep it on a tray, or in a pan to prevent leakage.

Frozen Turkeys

- Keep frozen until ready to thaw – Don't thaw at room temperature!
- Thaw a frozen turkey by one of two methods:
 - Under refrigeration – Allow approximately one day of thawing for every five pounds of turkey. Keep it in a pan to prevent leakage.
 - Cold water – Allow approximately 30 minutes per pound of turkey, changing the water every 30 minutes.

Preparation

- Don't forget to remove the giblet packages and cook them separately!
- For optimum safety, stuffing a turkey is not recommended. For more even cooking it is recommended that the stuffing be cooked separately. If you do choose to stuff your turkey the following procedures are recommended:
 - Fill the cavity loosely.
 - The stuffing should be moist as heat destroys bacteria more effectively in moist environments.
 - Cook the turkey immediately after stuffing.
 - Use a food thermometer to ensure the center of the stuffing reaches an internal temperature of at least 165°F.
- Wash hands, utensils, cutting boards, countertops, the sink, and anything else that contacts raw turkey and its juices with soap and water.

Roasting Your Turkey

The following two tables show approximate cooking times for unstuffed and stuffed turkeys. These tables are based on a minimum oven temperature of 325°F. Your turkey is safe when cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165°F as measured with a food thermometer in the innermost part of the thigh, and the thickest part of the breast.

Use the timetables below to determine how long to cook your turkey:

Unstuffed

12 to 14 pounds	3 to 3 ¾ hours
14 to 18 pounds	3 ¾ to 4 ¼ hours
18 to 20 pounds	4 ¼ to 4 ½ hours
20 to 24 pounds	4 ½ to 5 hours

Stuffed

8 to 12 pounds	3 to 3 ½ hours
12 to 14 pounds	3 ½ to 4 hours
14 to 18 pounds	4 to 4 ¼ hours
18 to 20 pounds	4 ¼ to 4 ¾ hours
20 to 24 pounds	4 ¾ to 5 ¼ hours

Leftovers

- Refrigerate leftovers in shallow containers within two hours of serving meal.
- Use refrigerated turkey and stuffing within 3 to 4 days, gravy within 1 to 2 days.
- If freezing leftovers, use within 2 to 6 months for best quality.