



Turkey Food Safety

As you gather to enjoy delicious food with friends and family during the holiday season, make sure to keep food safety at the top of your checklist.

Guide to Thawing a Turkey

In the Refrigerator

(Allow approximately 24 hours for every 4 to 5 pounds)

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| 4 to 12 pounds | 1 to 3 days |
| 12 to 16 pounds | 3 to 4 days |
| 16 to 20 pounds | 4 to 5 days |
| 20 to 24 pounds | 5 to 6 days |

Keep the turkey in its original wrapper. Place it on a tray or in a pan to catch any juices that may leak. A thawed turkey can remain in the refrigerator for 1 to 2 days. If necessary, a turkey that has been properly thawed in the refrigerator may be refrozen.

In Cold Water

(Allow approximately 30 minutes per pound)

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 4 to 12 pounds | 2 to 6 hours |
| 12 to 16 pounds | 6 to 8 hours |
| 16 to 20 pounds | 8 to 10 hours |
| 20 to 24 pounds | 10 to 12 hours |

Wrap your turkey securely, making sure the water is not able to leak through the wrapping. Submerge your wrapped turkey in cold tap water. Change the water every 30 minutes. Cook the turkey immediately after it is thawed. Do not refreeze.

Source: USDA

Timetable for Roasting a Turkey

Un-stuffed Turkey (325 F Oven Temperature)

| | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| 4 to 8 pounds (breast) | 1½ to 3¼ hours |
| 8 to 12 pounds | 2¾ to 3 hours |
| 12 to 14 pounds | 3 to 3¾ hours |
| 14 to 18 pounds | 3¾ to 4¼ hours |
| 18 to 20 pounds | 4¼ to 4½ hours |
| 20 to 24 pounds | 4½ to 5 hours |

Stuffed

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 4 to 6 pounds (breast) | Not usually applicable |
| 6 to 8 pounds (breast) | 2½ to 3½ hours |
| 8 to 12 pounds | 3 to 3½ hours |
| 12 to 14 pounds | 3½ to 4 hours |
| 14 to 18 pounds | 4 to 4¼ hours |
| 18 to 20 pounds | 4¼ to 4¾ hours |
| 20 to 24 pounds | 4¾ to 5¼ hours |

Always use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of your turkey and stuffing.

Source: USDA

Roasting a Turkey

- Oven temperature should be no lower than 325 F.
- Stuffing the turkey is not recommended. The bird will roast more evenly and be juicier with a little seasoning and butter or oil rubbed in the cavity and under the skin. Cook the stuffing on the stovetop for great results.
- Even if the turkey you are cooking has a pop-up temperature indicator, you should always use a meat thermometer to ensure that the innermost part of the turkey is cooked to an internal temperature of 165 F.