

Turkey

Cooking Instructions and Tips

Below are tips and some helpful hints on Turkey cooking from our resident Turkey expert, Paul Gingerich.

- Remove the outer wrapper from the turkey.
- Remove the inner wrappings (giblets) and neck from the neck and chest cavities. Set aside for making broth or stuffing if desired.
- If the parts in the chest cavity seem to be stuck together or frozen run cold water through the cavity until the neck comes out freely. A little frost on the inside of the bird is an indication the turkey has been delivered to you as cold as possible to keep it as fresh as possible.
- Pat the inside of the turkey dry with a paper towel. Lightly salt the inside of the bird and rub the bird inside and out with a cut lemon. This helps to ensure a crisp skin.
- Place the turkey breast side up (see below under tips for breast side down options) in the appropriate sized roasting pan and add about two cups water or chicken or turkey broth, two cups white wine*, the juice of two lemons, a couple of bay leaves and fresh Rosemary. Throw the lemon used for the juice inside the bird. The oil and resin from the skin adds more flavor. For additional flavor use a poultry seasoning or rub. I like Nantucket Off Shore Turkey Seasoning. **(always pick a wine you'd like to drink, my favorite is Chardonnay)*



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- Place a tinfoil tent over the turkey leaving the ends open. The foil tent creates a self basting environment. The juice will spatter up on the tent and then back down on the bird – and keeps your oven clean! Important - do not close the ends of the tent as this will add steam causing you to stew, not roast, your turkey.
- Set your oven to 325 degrees and place your turkey on the lowest rack in your oven. Cook about 15 minutes per pound or until the turkey reaches 170 degrees internal temperature.

Estimated Cooking times:

14-16 lbs 3.5-3.75 hours

16-18 lbs 3.75-4 hours

18-20 lbs 4-4.5 hours

20-22 lbs 4.5-5 hours

22-24 lbs 5-5.5 hours

26-28 lbs 5.25-5.5 hours

- If the turkey has not reached a golden brown when it reaches 170 degrees remove the tent and turn the oven to 450 degrees and roast to golden brown. Watch closely this will not take long.

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- **Making Stock** - If you want to make your own turkey stock, buy some extra parts of turkeys (legs, wings etc) and simmer while you are roasting the turkey. Little known fact---necks make the best broth.

- **Shhhhhh!!!!...** Here is my secret to a moist turkey: I carve the turkey into a deep sided platter and pour the broth from the roasting pan over the turkey for flavor and moisture. You will never regret this move. You can reserve some of the stock for gravy or use the extra stock you get from cooking a few extra pieces.

- **To stuff or not to stuff?** - Stuffing a turkey will gain you a great tasting stuffing, but the bread can dry the turkey just a bit, so it's your call. I love the taste of the traditional bread stuffing that comes out of the turkey but I'm not sure it's worth chancing a dry turkey for it.

- **Cook it my way – Upside down** – My favorite way to roast a turkey is with the breast side down. You flip the turkey over for the final browning (about 30 minutes before it is done). This makes for the moistest turkey but it can be a bit tricky to flip a turkey over, especially the larger ones. You risk tearing the skin so if a perfect presentation is important to you, you might not find it worth it.

- **Wine recommendations** – I serve my turkey with a very nice dry Chardonnay. If you prefer reds, I'd suggest a pinot noir that has some berries in the background. This is a fantastic match for a turkey.

- **Sanitize** - ALWAYS WASH HANDS, UTENSILS, SINK AND EVERYTHING THAT HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH RAW TURKEY. Sanitize the counter, sinks and any containers or trays that have been used. Use a solution of 1 teaspoon of unscented chlorine bleach in 1 quart of water, and let dry completely).