

Step by Step How to Cook a Turkey

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Before Cooking:

Estimate 1 lb. per person for no leftovers, 1 ½ lbs. for leftovers.

Thaw 24 hours in refrigerator per 5 lbs. of turkey.

Remove turkey from wrapper. Remove neck and giblet bag from cavity of turkey. They can be boiled and added to gravy as giblets or discarded.

Rinse cavity with cool water, especially if there is ice left. Pat dry with paper towels (don't let any get left in there).

Put turkey, breast side up, in sprayed roasting pan, on rack. If you don't have a rack, you can crumple up foil to put the bird on top of that.

Stuff with stuffing. Extra stuffing, if you have any, can be put in a greased dish to bake later in the last few minutes with the turkey.

Add pats of butter, about 1 stick, on top of turkey and sprinkle with Adobo.

Add a couple of inches of filtered water to bottom of roasting pan to increase drippings and make broth as it cooks. I added 6 cups to my pan and 15.8 lb. turkey.

Cook uncovered at 325*. I don't baste; the melting butter kind of does that. You certainly can baste if you want to but I don't find it necessary.

Check it after about 2 hours, then after 1 hour, then every 30 minutes as it gets closer to being finished. When it gets nicely browned, cover loosely with foil so it doesn't get too brown as it continues to cook.

Cook until 180* in thigh, 160* in stuffing. Be sure to be touching center of meat, not bone or through too far. My 15.8 lb. stuffed turkey cooked 4 ½ hours. Be sure to go by the temperature of the meat, not the color of the skin or time cooked.

After Cooking:

Let roasted turkey stand 20-30 minutes before carving (it is the perfect time to bake the casseroles if you are cooking it on serving day). This makes it firmer and easier to carve.

Remove stuffing to serving dish and carve as desired.

If doing this ahead of serving day, put in 9x13 dish; white on one side and dark meat on the other. Cover with broth/drippings (not too much extra, but cover) and cover with plastic wrap or foil for refrigerator. (If you have a very large turkey, you may need more than one dish.) The 9x13 pan with meat covered with broth and covered with foil can be baked at 350* for about 30 minutes to warm through on serving day.

Set aside about 3 cups of drippings for gravy if desired.

Put the bones and skin along with any extra drippings in a pot to make broth or soup or in a container for the freezer to do when you are ready.