



# Turkey Times



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## BUYING A TURKEY

When buying a **fresh** or **frozen** turkey, buy 1 lb./person.

- Buy a **frozen** turkey anytime. Thaw according to the chart below. A **frozen pre-stuffed** turkey should be kept frozen until ready to roast.
- Buy a **fresh** turkey 1-2 days before cooking. **DO NOT BUY PRE-STUFFED!**
- If a **pre-cooked turkey** is purchased, refrigerate ASAP! To serve, reheat to 165°F.

## THAWING A TURKEY

(For frozen, un-stuffed turkeys only)

### THAWING TIME IN THE REFRIGERATOR:

(Whole Turkey)	
4-12 lbs.	1-3 days
12-16 lbs.	3-4 days
16-20 lbs.	4-5 days
20-24 lbs.	5-6 days

### THAWING TIME SUBMERGED IN COLD WATER, CHANGING WATER EVERY 30 MINUTES:

(Whole Turkey)	
4-12 lbs.	2-6 hours
12-16 lbs.	6-8 hours
16-20 lbs.	8-10 hours
20-24 lbs.	10-12 hours

## THAWING TIME IN THE MICROWAVE

Check your owner's manual for the size of turkey that will fit in your oven. Use recommended minutes/pound, and the power level suggested. Remove all outside wrapping. Place on a dish to catch juices. Cook your turkey immediately. Do not refreeze or refrigerate your turkey after thawing in the microwave oven. Remove the giblets from the turkey cavities after thawing. Cook separately.



## FROZEN PRE-STUFFED TURKEYS

USDA recommends only buying frozen pre-stuffed turkeys that display the USDA or State mark of inspection on the packaging. These turkeys are safe because they have been processed under controlled conditions. **DO NOT THAW** before cooking. Cook from the frozen state. Follow package directions for proper handling and cooking. Allow 1¼ lbs. of turkey per person.

**\*\*\*\* FOOD SAFETY TIP: WASH HANDS, UTENSILS, SINK AND ANYTHING ELSE THAT HAS COME IN CONTACT WITH RAW TURKEY BEFORE HANDLING OTHER FOODS.**

## ROASTING YOUR TURKEY

Set your oven temperature to no lower than 325° F. For optimum safety, stuffing a turkey is not recommended. **It is recommended that you cook your stuffing outside the bird.** Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of the stuffing, it must reach a minimum internal temperature of 165° F. If you choose to stuff your turkey, the ingredients can be prepared ahead of time; however, keep wet and dry ingredients separate. Mix ingredients just before stuffing. Fill the cavity loosely. Cook the turkey immediately.

A whole turkey is safe when cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165° F. With a thermometer, check the innermost part of the thigh and thickest part of the breast. If your turkey has a “pop-up” temperature indicator, it is recommended that you also check the internal temperature of the turkey in the innermost part of the thigh and thickest part of the breast. For quality, let the turkey stand 20 minutes before carving.

## TIMETABLES ROASTING YOUR TURKEY

### Unstuffed

4 to 8 pounds (breast)	1 ½ to 3 ¼ hours
8 to 12 pounds	2 ¾ to 3 hours
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

6 to 8 pounds (breast)	2 ½ to 3 ½ hours
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

## STORING LEFTOVERS

Discard any turkey, stuffing and gravy left out at room temperature longer than 2 hours; 1 hour in temperatures above 90° F. Divide leftovers into smaller portions. Refrigerate or freeze in covered shallow containers for quicker cooling. Use refrigerated turkey and stuffing within 3 to 4 days. Use gravy within 1 to 2 days. If freezing leftovers, use within 2 to 6 months for best quality.

## OTHER QUESTIONS ON YOUR HOLIDAY TURKEY?

**USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-888-674-6854 (1-888-MPHotline)**

**10:00 AM - 6:00 PM (EST), Monday through Friday; year round**

**The Hotline is open on Thanksgiving Day from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p. m., EST, but closed on other Federal government holidays.**

**E-mail:** [MPHotline@usda.gov](mailto:MPHotline@usda.gov)

**Website:** [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov)

**Butterball Turkey Talk Line 1-800-BUTTERBALL (1-800-288-8372) Weekdays 7:00 AM-7:00 PM (EST) November 1st until Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>.**

**Website:** <http://www.butterball.com>

**E-mail:** [talkline@butterball.com](mailto:talkline@butterball.com)

**Text: No time to talk? You can also text us your questions! Text 844-877-3456**

**Jennie-O Turkey Hotline 1-800-887-5397 (1-800-TURKEYS), 8:00 AM-4:00 PM (CST) Monday – Friday, excluding holidays. Consumer Response Dept. 1-800-621-3505**

**Website:** [www.jennieo.com](http://www.jennieo.com)

**Text the word Turkey to 73876**

**Reynolds Turkey Tips Hotline: 1-800-433-2244, Year-round 24-hour automated hot line; through Dec. 31**

**Website:** [www.reynoldsbrands.com](http://www.reynoldsbrands.com)