

Turkey Time

A few simple steps can help keep foodborne illness off the menu this Thanksgiving.

Fresh or Frozen

When buying a frozen turkey, be sure to have enough storage space in your freezer. If you buy a fresh turkey, be sure you purchase it only 1-2 days before cooking.

Use the following chart as a helpful guide:



Food Safety
303-271-5700



Cook to Safe Temperature

Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of the turkey. A whole turkey is safe cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165°F throughout the bird. Check the internal temperature in the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast. All turkey meat, including any that remains pink, is safe to eat as soon as all parts reach at least 165°F. The stuffing should reach 165°F, whether cooked inside the bird or in a separate dish. When turkey is removed from the oven, let it stand 20 minutes. Remove stuffing and carve turkey.

Timetables for Turkey Roasting (325 °F oven temperature)

Size of Turkey	Unstuffed Hours to Cook	Stuffed Hours to Cook
8 to 12 pounds	2 3/4 to 3 hours	3 to 3 1/2 hours
12 to 14 pounds	3 to 3 3/4 hours	3 1/2 to 4 hours
14 to 18 pounds	3 3/4 to 4 1/4 hours	4 to 4 1/4 hours
18 to 20 pounds	4 1/4 to 4 1/2 hours	4 1/4 to 4 3/4 hours
20 to 24 pounds	4 1/2 to 5 hours	4 3/4 to 5 1/4 hours

Thawing In the Refrigerator

Place frozen bird in original wrapper in the refrigerator (40°F or below). Allow approximately 24 hours per 4 to 5 pounds of turkey. A thawed turkey can remain in the refrigerator for 1-2 days.

Thawing in Cold Water

If you forget to thaw the turkey or don't have room in the refrigerator for thawing, you can submerge the turkey in cold water and change the water every 30 minutes. Allow about 30 minutes defrosting time per pound of turkey. Cook immediately after it is thawed.

Storing Leftovers

Cut the turkey into small pieces; refrigerate stuffing and turkey separately in shallow containers within 2 hours of cooking. Use leftover turkey and stuffing within 3-4 days or freeze these foods. Reheat thoroughly to a temperature of 165°F or until hot and steaming.



Clean.



Separate.



Cook.



Chill.

