

TURKEY CHEAT SHEET

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BUYING

Plan on 1 to 1-1/2 pounds of turkey per person. Buy a fresh or frozen bird: Choose from self-basting, natural, free-range, kosher or organic.

THAWING

Set an unwrapped frozen turkey on a rimmed baking sheet and thaw in the fridge; allow twenty-four hours per five pounds. To thaw the same day, submerge the wrapped bird in a cooler of cold water for 30 minutes per pound, changing the water every 30 minutes.

BRINING

Use ¾ cup of Kosher salt for every gallon of water needed to cover the bird. Refrigerate the turkey in the brine for at least eight hours. Flavor the brine with one to two cups of juice, beer or spirits, if desired. You can also add herbs and spices. Don't brine kosher or self-basting turkeys.

PREPPING

If you brined your turkey, rinse it inside and out with cold water. Remove the giblets and neck. Set the bird breast-side up on a rack in a roasting pan and pat the skin dry with paper towels. For extra-crisp skin, refrigerate the turkey, uncovered, overnight. Tie the legs together with twine, tuck in the wings and let the turkey stand for 30 minutes at room temperature before roasting.

ROASTING

Plan on about 20 minutes per pound. Tent with foil if the skin gets too brown. Check for doneness with a meat thermometer. The thigh meat and stuffing (if used) should register 165 degrees. Let the turkey rest for 30 minutes before carving.

CARVING

1. Slice through the skin between the leg and body on one side. Pull the leg away from the body, then cut through the joint to remove the leg.
2. Separate the drumstick from the thigh. Locate the joint in the middle of the leg and cut through it.
3. Working on the same side, pull the wing away from the body and cut through the joint to remove. Remove the leg and wing on the other side.
4. Remove each side of breast meat by slicing downward along the breastbone, following the curve of the ribs.
5. Place each breast on the cutting board skin-side up and slice against the grain.