



# Thanksgiving COUNTDOWN

Using a checklist and a timeline is key when planning any event, and Thanksgiving dinner is no different. The following timeline is a good starting point; feel free to modify it for your particular plans.

## Monday

- Confirm the number of people coming to dinner.
- Review the menu and shopping list for any remaining items.
- Spend ten or 15 minutes tonight, tomorrow and Wednesday to tidy one room each night, focusing on rooms that will be used on Thursday.
- Make a to-do list for the remainder of the week.

## Tuesday

- Finish shopping for staples, produce and fresh food.
- If you bought a frozen turkey, put it in the refrigerator to begin thawing.
- Make any food that can be made in advance such as cranberry and pumpkin pie and refrigerate.

## Wednesday

- Shop for any last-minute items. While at the store, make a mental note if your store is open tomorrow, just in case.
- Chop the ingredients for the dressing, such as celery and onions and keep in the fridge in

covered bowls or zipper bags. Chop or tear the bread for the dressing and store in a zipper bag.

- Remove any prepared and frozen items from the freezer and allow to defrost in the refrigerator.
- Make appetizers and refrigerate until ready to use. Set up the bar area for tomorrow.
- Set the table. Select a serving

dish and a serving utensil for each dish on the menu and set aside. (Hint: Place a sticky note on each dish for what's supposed to be served in it.)

- Calculate the cooking time for your turkey, and set a schedule for tomorrow, using the guidelines below.
- Get a good night's sleep!

## Thanksgiving Day

### In the morning ...

- Eat breakfast and review the schedule for the day.
- Remove the turkey up to one hour before it needs to go in the oven. Make sure it is cleaned out and ready to go.
- Peel the potatoes, cube and keep in cold water.
- Prepare the dressing.
- At the appropriate time, stuff and truss the bird.

### 1 to 2 hours before dinner

- Cook the potatoes.
- Serve drinks and appetizers to guests.

### 30 to 45 minutes before dinner

- Mash the potatoes.
- Finish any other side dishes.
- Remove the turkey from the oven.
- Make the gravy.
- Carve the turkey and serve dinner.



## TURKEY TIMES

10 to 12 lbs.	2 ½ to 3 hours
12 to 14 lbs.	2 ¾ to 3 ¼ hours
14 to 16 lbs.	3 to 3 ¾ hours
16 to 18 lbs.	3 ¼ to 4 hours
18 to 20 lbs.	3 ½ to 4 ¼ hours
20+ lbs.	3 ¾ to 4 ½ hours

*Note: These times are based on roasting the bird at 400 degrees for the first 45 minutes, and then 325 degrees until done. The times equate to 13 to 15 minutes per pound.*

The turkey is done when an instant read thermometer inserted between the leg and thigh registers 165 degrees. Since the turkey will continue to cook once it's removed from the oven (known as "carry over cooking"), it can be a few degrees shy of the mark. When removed from the oven, cover the turkey loosely with aluminum foil and let it rest at least 30 minutes before carving. This allows the natural juices to redistribute around the bird.