

HOW TO ROAST

# THE perfect turkey



## what you need

- a turkey
- garlic salt, onion salt, and celery salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter

## what you do

### DAY BEFORE

1. **Remove the turkey from any wrapping or trussing** (trussing is string or wire).
2. **Pull out the giblets and neck**; if desired, reserve these for turkey stock to use for the gravy.
3. **Cut/break/yank the wings off at the first joint.** Toss with the reserved giblets and neck for stock. I learned that this part of the wing is removed because it has hardly any meat on it and it tends to often burn before the rest of the bird has cooked.
4. **Rinse the bird within and without and pat as dry as possible with a clean wash cloth or hand towel.**
5. **Generously salt the bird all over the entire exterior with garlic salt, onion salt, and celery salt.** You can use any kind of garlic or onion salt, but to keep it healthful and just as delicious, I recommend using the Real Salt brand.
6. **Place the turkey breast-side up in a large roasting pan with a roasting rack on the bottom.**
7. **Pop, uncovered, into the refrigerator and leave overnight.** You're purposely drying out the skin because this will help the skin to crisp. Make sure there isn't anything in your fridge that might emit weird odors or flavors into the turkey.
8. **If desired, prepare [turkey stock](#) to use for the gravy using the reserved giblets, neck, and wing tips.**
9. **Set out 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter to soften overnight.** I recommend the Kerrygold brand.

You'll need  
approximately  
1 pound of turkey  
per adult guest and  
1/2 pound per child  
age 12 or younger.

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## DAY OF

1. **About 2 hours (give or take, depends on the turkey's size) prior to roasting the turkey, pull the turkey from the refrigerator and set on the counter top to warm to room temperature.**
2. **Heat the oven to 375° F.**
3. **Carefully lift up the skin starting at the neck.**
4. **Rub 1/2 cup (1 stick) of the unsalted butter all over the meat under the skin. This is also a good time to fill the cavity with any flavoring food.** I just like to cut a whole bulb of garlic in half and stuff it in the cavity. Other good options include a halved onion, quartered lemons, sliced oranges, or fresh herbs. Because of sanitation issues, I recommend you do NOT cook the turkey with any stuffing in it. You'll also want to avoid over stuffing it with too many add-ins; make sure there is enough room for the heat to get around those added in flavoring foods.
5. **Flip the bird over so that it is breast-side down.** This will ensure that the juices in the turkey flow into the breast during cooking, making them nice and juicy.
6. **Pull up the skin on this side, too, and spread the other 1/2 cup (1 stick) of butter between the skin and the meat.**
7. **Pop the turkey in the oven and allow to roast at 375° F for 30 minutes** (this kick starts the crispy skin).
8. **Reduce the heat to 325° F and cook the turkey for approximately the recommended time as determined utilizing the formula below** (I say approximately because ovens, altitude, humidity, etc. cause this timing to vary; also keep in mind that you may have to rotate the pan halfway through if your oven heats unevenly).



**IMPORTANT:** If you insist on cooking the turkey with stuffing in the cavity--in spite my strongly recommending not to--then add 30 minutes per pound to the cooking time. This means the formula would be 52 minutes per pound cooking time at 325° F...and may also result in a less juicy turkey.

9. **About 2/3 of the way while the turkey is roasting, remove it from the oven** (for example, say you're roasting it for 4 hours; remove it from the oven about 2-1/2 hours in). Then, **using thick, clean washcloths or hand towels, CAREFULLY (it will be very HOT!) flip the turkey over so that it is breast-side up.** This is a good time to sprinkle on any additional herbs or spices. I usually sprinkle a little dried oregano over the top.
10. **Return to the oven for the remaining time.**

11. **During the last hour or so, check the turkey several times for doneness.** To do this, carefully poke it with a fork and press some of the juices out. If the juices run clear or yellow (as opposed to pink or red), the turkey is probably done. Another method is to wiggle one of the legs. If it pulls away easily, it is most likely done. But the best method is to check with a thermometer. Insert the thermometer in the thickest part of the thigh, being careful not to touch the bone. If the thermometer reads between 165° and 180° F, turkey's done.

**TIP: Freeze the carcasses (bones and excess meat) from a chicken or two to toss in your stock to make it more flavorful.**

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