

Basic Roasted Turkey

Preparation time: 5 hours or less.

1 turkey, approx. 15 lbs.

juice of a lemon

salt and pepper

olive oil or melted butter

1/2 yellow onion, peeled and quartered

the tops and bottoms of a bunch of celery

2 carrots

To start, if the turkey has been refrigerated, bring it to room temperature before cooking. If you get a frozen turkey, you will need to defrost it in the refrigerator for 3 or 4 days first. Remove the giblets and use for making stuffing.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Wash out the turkey with water. Lather the inside with the juice of half a lemon. Take a small handful of salt and rub all over the inside of the turkey. For flavor, put in inside the turkey a half a yellow onion, peeled and quartered, a bunch of parsley, a couple of carrots, and some tops and bottoms of celery. Rub salt all over the outside of the turkey (or have had it soaking in salt-water brine before starting this process). Rub either melted butter or olive oil all over the outside of the turkey. Sprinkle pepper over the turkey. Place turkey **BREAST DOWN** on the bottom of a rack over a stainless steel roasting pan. Add several sprigs of fresh (if possible) thyme and rosemary to the outside of the turkey. Close up the turkey cavity with either string (not nylon string!) or metal skewers.

Chop up the turkey giblets (gizzard, heart, liver). Put into a small saucepan, cover with water, add salt. Bring to simmer for an hour or so to help make stock for the stuffing.

Put the turkey in the oven. The recommendation is cooking time of about 15 minutes for every pound. For the 15 lb turkey, start the cooking at 400 F for the first 1/2 hour. Then reduce the heat to 350 F for the next 2 hours. Then reduce the heat further to 225 F for the next hour to hour and a half.

To test for doneness, remove the turkey from the oven. Use a meat thermometer to measure the temperature of the turkey. The dark meat in the thigh should be about 185 F. The white meat in the breast should be 165 F to 170 F. If you don't have a meat thermometer, spear the breast with a knife. The fluid should be clear, not pink.