

Christmas dinner timings



Sitting down at _____ on 25 December Guests: _____ Turkey: _____ kg

	DISH	QUANTITY	OVEN OR HOB	DONE ON CHRISTMAS EVE?
Starter				
The roast				
Potatoes				
Veg				
Trimmings				
Sauces				
Pudding				
Drinks				

WHO EATS DIFFERENTLY (VEGETARIAN, ALLERGIES, NO SPROUTS UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES)

THE 25TH, WORKED BACKWARDS

Fill in from the bottom up. Turkey time (FSA, 180°C / 160°C fan): 45 min per kg + 20 under 4.5 kg; 40 min per kg up to 6.5 kg; 35 min per kg above.

- ☐ Turkey out of the fridge, cavity checked for ice
- ☐ Oven on
- ☐ Turkey in (unstuffed, not rinsed)
- ☐ Potatoes parboiled and steaming dry
- ☐ Turkey out, probed, resting. Oven turned up
- ☐ Potatoes into the hot fat
- ☐ Parsnips in
- ☐ Stuffing and pigs in blankets in. Gravy on
- ☐ Sprouts on, bread sauce reheated
- ☐ Carve, plates in the switched-off oven
- ☐ Sit down
- ☐ Leftovers in the fridge (within 1 to 2 h of cooking)

SHOPPING LIST BY AISLE

- BUTCHER buy on _____
- FRUIT AND VEG buy on _____
- DAIRY AND CHILLED buy on _____
- BAKERY buy on _____
- STORE CUPBOARD buy on _____
- PUDDINGS AND BAKING buy on _____
- FROZEN buy on _____
- DRINKS AND KITCHEN buy on _____

	DISH	QUANTITY	OVEN OR HOB	DONE ON CHRISTMAS EVE?
Starter	Smoked salmon on brown bread	300 g salmon	None	No, assembled at 1.45pm
The roast	Roast turkey, herb butter	5 kg oven-ready	180°C, 9.30am to 12.50pm	Thawed, giblets out, neck into stock
Potatoes	Roast potatoes in goose fat; a tray in oil for Sam	2 kg Maris Piper	220°C, 1.00 to 1.50pm	Peeled, under water in the fridge
Veg	Sprouts with chestnuts; honey parsnips; carrots	750 g, 600 g, 600 g	Hob 1.40pm; oven 1.15pm	Trimmed and peeled
Trimmings	Sausage and sage stuffing; pigs in blankets	500 g; 20	Oven 1.20pm	Stuffing tinned, pigs wrapped
Sauces	Gravy; bread sauce; cranberry sauce	750 ml; 500 ml milk; 1 jar	Gravy hob 1.20pm; bread sauce microwave	Stock and bread sauce made
Pudding	Christmas pudding, brandy butter, custard	900 g pudding	Steamed from 1pm, served after 3pm	Brandy butter made
Drinks	Fizz, red, soft drinks, tea	2 fizz, 3 red, 4 pints milk	Cool box by the back door	Chilled

WHO EATS DIFFERENTLY (VEGETARIAN, ALLERGIES, NO SPROUTS UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES)	
Sam vegetarian: potatoes in oil, onion gravy made on the 24th, nut roast slice from the freezer	Grandad no sprouts, ever: extra carrots

THE 25TH, WORKED BACKWARDS

☐ 8.30am

Turkey out of the fridge, cavity checked for ice

☐ 9.00am

Oven on, 180°C (160°C fan, gas 4). Butter under the skin

☐ 9.30am

Turkey in, foil tent. 40 min x 5 kg = 3 h 20

☐ 12.15pm

Potatoes boiled 8 to 10 min, shaken, steaming dry

☐ 12.50pm

Turkey out, 75°C at the thickest part, resting under foil and towels. Oven to 220°C

☐ 1.00pm

Potatoes in, top shelf. Pudding on to steam

☐ 1.15pm

Parsnips and carrots in

☐ 1.20pm

Stuffing and pigs in blankets in. Gravy in the tin on the hob

☐ 1.40pm

Sprouts on. Bread sauce in the microwave

☐ 1.50pm

Carve. Plates into the switched-off oven

☐ 2.00pm

Sit down, crackers. The King at 3pm, then pudding

☐ 2.45pm

Turkey stripped and chilled; the rest by 3.30pm

SHOPPING LIST BY AISLE

BUTCHER ordered mid Nov, collected Wed 23

Turkey 5 kg; 10 chipolatas; 10 rashers streaky bacon; sausagemeat 500 g

FRUIT AND VEG Wed 23

Potatoes 2 kg; sprouts 750 g; parsnips 600 g; carrots 600 g; 3 onions; lemon; sage, thyme, bay; clementines

DAIRY AND CHILLED Wed 23

Milk 4 pints; double cream 300 ml; butter 500 g; custard 500 g; Stilton, Cheddar; smoked salmon 300 g; cooked chestnuts

BAKERY Mon 21 and Thu 24

White loaf to stale for bread sauce and stuffing; brown bread; bread for Boxing Day

STORE CUPBOARD Sat 12

Goose fat; plain flour; stock cubes; cloves; honey; cranberry sauce; chutney, pickled onions; crackers for cheese

PUDDINGS AND BAKING Sat 12

Christmas pudding 900 g; 12 mince pies; icing sugar; brandy

FROZEN Sat 12

Peas, as a backup; nut roast for Sam; ice

DRINKS AND KITCHEN Sat 12

2 fizz, 3 red, soft drinks; Christmas crackers; extra-wide foil; string; freezer bags, labels; probe battery

TURKEY BY WEIGHT: THAWING AND ROASTING

FSA, whole unstuffed bird: 180°C (160°C fan, gas 4), 45 min per kg + 20 min under 4.5 kg; 40 min per kg from 4.5 to 6.5 kg; 35 min per kg above 6.5 kg. Thaw in the fridge at 10 to 12 h per kg, bottom shelf, in a dish. Out of the oven at 12.50pm, an hour's rest, carving at 1.50pm.

OVEN-READY WEIGHT	FEEDS (500 G EACH)	THAWING IN THE FRIDGE	INTO THE FRIDGE ON*	ROASTING TIME	IN THE OVEN AT, FOR 2PM
3 kg	about 6	30 to 36 h	Mon 21 Dec	2 h 35	10.15am
4 kg	about 8	40 to 48 h	Mon 21 Dec	3 h 20	9.30am
5 kg	about 10	50 to 60 h	Sun 20 Dec	3 h 20	9.30am
6 kg	about 12	60 to 72 h	Sun 20 Dec	4 h 00	8.50am
7 kg	about 14	70 to 84 h	Sat 19 Dec	4 h 05	8.45am
8 kg	about 16	80 to 96 h	Sat 19 Dec	4 h 40	8.10am
Duck, 2 kg 45 min per kg	2	Fresh, or thaw as the pack says		1 h 30 at 200°C (180°C fan, gas 6)	12.15pm, out 1.45pm
Crown or joint	300 to 400 g each (Which?)	Follow the pack: the FSA formula is for whole, unstuffed birds. Work back from the label time plus a 45 minute rest.			

Done when the thickest part, between leg and breast, reads 75°C for 30 seconds or 70°C for 2 minutes, juices clear, no pink. The FSA warns a whole bird can take 3 to 5 days to thaw; no ice left in the cavity before it goes in. *Our margin: the top of the FSA range plus a day, thawed by lunchtime on Christmas Eve.

HOW MUCH TO BUY, BY NUMBER AT THE TABLE

PER PERSON	2	4	6	8	10	12
Whole turkey, oven-ready about 500 g	duck or crown	2 kg	3 kg	4 kg	5 kg	6 kg
For Boxing Day leftovers	add about 2 kg (6 people: 5 kg rather than 3)					
Turkey crown 300 to 400 g (Which?)	1 kg	1.2 to 1.6 kg	1.8 to 2.4 kg	2.4 to 3.2 kg	3 to 4 kg	3.6 to 4.8 kg
Roasties, raw 300 g	600 g	1.2 kg	2 kg	2.4 kg	3 kg	3.6 kg
Pigs in blankets 3	6	12	18 to 20	24	30	36
Sprouts 100 to 125 g	250 g	500 g	750 g	1 kg	1.25 kg	1.5 kg
Parsnips, and carrots about 100 g each	2 of each	400 g each	600 g each	800 g each	1 kg each	1.2 kg each
Sausagemeat stuffing about 80 g	4 balls	350 g	500 g	650 g	800 g	1 kg
Gravy 100 to 125 ml	250 ml	500 ml	750 ml	1 litre	1.25 litres	1.5 litres
Christmas pudding 900 g serves about 8	450 g, or 2 individual	450 g	900 g	900 g	900 g + 450 g	900 g + 450 g
Mince pies 2 across the day	4 to 6	8	12	16	20	24

ONE OVEN, WORKED BACK FROM 2PM

Eating at 3pm or 4pm? Slide every line by an hour or two. Turkey in: see the first table.

In -1 h	Turkey out of the fridge; oven on 30 min later. Nothing in the cavity but onion and lemon
11.50am	Foil off so the skin browns. Baste once
12.15pm	Potatoes boiled 8 to 10 min, shaken, steaming dry
12.50pm	Turkey out, probed, resting under foil and two tea towels. Oven to 220°C (200°C fan, gas 7), fat tin inside
1.00pm	Potatoes in, top shelf. Pudding on to steam
1.15pm	Parsnips and carrots in, middle shelf
1.20pm	Stuffing and pigs in blankets, bottom shelf. Gravy in the tin on the hob
1.30pm	Potatoes turned, honey over the parsnips
1.40pm	Sprouts on, 5 to 6 min. Bread sauce in the microwave
1.50pm	All out. Oven off, door ajar: plate warmer. Carve
2.00pm	Sit down
2.45pm	Turkey stripped and chilled; the rest by 3.30pm

FOOD SAFETY NUMBERS (FSA)

3 to 5 days	what a whole turkey can take to thaw in the fridge; never at room temperature
Bottom shelf	of the fridge for thawing, in a dish that catches the drips
75°C	for 30 seconds in the thickest part (or 70°C for 2 minutes)
0 rinses	washing raw poultry only spreads germs round the sink
1 to 2 h	to get cooked food cooled and into the fridge or freezer
2 days	to eat leftovers: Boxing Day and the 27th. Freeze the rest on the 26th
Once	reheat only once, steaming hot all the way through
24 h	to eat food frozen then thawed; never refreeze it