

Thanksgiving Dinner Checklist

Plan ahead. The rest is gravy.

Turkey Day approaches. And this year, you're going to be ready, right? Right. After all, you've got a checklist now.

This list may look daunting at first, but it's broken down into a convenient timeline that spreads the work out over weeks. So when the big day comes, you'll be relaxed and ready to go. Enjoy.

3-4 Weeks To Go

- Do a little winter cleaning in the refrigerator and the freezer. You'll need the extra space.
- Think about the meal. Write down what you're planning to serve.
- Take the recipes you'll need and put them in a Thanksgiving folder with the menu taped to the inside cover.
- Order your turkey if you want a fresh one. If frozen, you can wait until the week before to buy it.
- Plan ahead. Order your flowers for general décor and/or the table centerpiece.
- Check your knives. Sharpen them if needed.



2 Weeks To Go

- Call everyone to get a firm head count. Ask your guests if they'd like to bring something. Side dishes or desserts that you don't absolutely need are best.
- Make two shopping lists. One for the items you can buy now (such as canned goods), and another for perishables that you'll buy later.
- Think about everything you'll need for food prep, setting the table and serving. Add anything you don't have to your shopping list.
- Go shopping and get everything that's non-perishable.
- Practice. Consider testing any new recipes so there are no surprises on the big day.



7 Days To Go

- Buy the turkey (frozen) or pick it up if you've ordered a fresh bird. Store it in the freezer for a few days until it's time to defrost.
- Prepare and freeze anything you can. For example: breads, pie crusts and appetizers. The more you do now, the better off you'll be later.
- Select the music for the evening, set aside DVDs to watch, and pick out board games to play. If you're entertaining younger guests, think about activities they'll enjoy.



4 Days To Go (Sunday)

- ❑ Start defrosting the turkey in the refrigerator. A good rule of thumb is to allow one day of defrost time for every five pounds of turkey.
- ❑ Review your “perishables” shopping list. Check your refrigerator and add anything else you might need to the list.



3 Days To Go (Monday)

- ❑ Polish silver and clean large serving platters. Too busy to polish silver? Contemporary flatware is lower maintenance, dishwasher safe and elegant.
- ❑ Iron linens so your napkins and tablecloth are ready.

2 Days To Go (Tuesday)

- ❑ Make a shopping run for the perishable items.
- ❑ Chop, slice and dice the vegetables for any recipes that require them. Seal in bags or containers and refrigerate.
- ❑ Prepare anything that can handle two days in the fridge, such as cranberry sauce and soups.



1 Day To Go (Wednesday)

- ❑ Defrost pie crusts, breads and appetizers. Refrigerate.
- ❑ Prepare salads and stuffing. Refrigerate.
- ❑ Bake pies.
- ❑ Place beverages/white wine in the refrigerator to get them chilled.
- ❑ Clean and truss the bird and return it to the refrigerator.
- ❑ Set the table.

Thanksgiving Day (Thursday)

- ❑ Prepare and stuff the turkey.
- ❑ Considering your “sit-down” time, begin roasting the turkey, leaving enough time to let the turkey sit for 20-30 minutes prior to carving.
- ❑ Baste the bird every ½ hour.
- ❑ In the early afternoon, start making any side dishes you haven’t prepared, gravy, etc.
- ❑ Give yourself an hour to relax and ready yourself for company.
- ❑ Relax and enjoy the evening.



Suggested Products



Chef's Choice Knife Sharpener

Stay sharp.



Elite Platinum Stainless Steel Buffet Server

Keeps food warm electronically. Simple to clean. It's a life saver.



Bialetti Pie Dish

It makes pies even easier than pie.



Taylor TruTemp Instant Read Digital Thermometer

Digital is the way to go.



Hampton Forge Stephanie Satin 45-pc. Flatware Set

Impress the guests with complete contemporary place settings.



Cylinder Salad Serving Bowl

Let them see the salad in all its glory.



KitchenAid Food Chopper

Way easier than the old way.