

## How should I cook my turkey?

I have around 15 relatives and friends coming for Thanksgiving. I can't decide how to cook my turkey. The pressure is on. It will have to be delicious, easy, and good looking.

1. Do you remember a special Thanksgiving turkey preparation, recipe, side dish or meal that was a favorite? Please describe what you remember.

I found that to have enough for everyone and also have some leftovers I should think of 1.5 pounds of turkey per guest at my dinner.

A couple of my guests could bring a friend that I didn't count on and a few people I've invited might not show up at the last minute. I think 15 is a good number to use for my figuring. I'll make sure to add a little more than this amount to cover any extra guests.

2. How many pounds of turkey do I need to prepare?
3. I found that turkey will cost about \$1.30 per pound at my local grocery store. About how much will just my Thanksgiving turkey cost?

I have three possible methods for cooking the turkey and they each have their requirements, advantages, and disadvantages.

### In my oven ...

I would need to make stuffing for the turkey. Stuff the bird and then put it in the oven for the correct amount of time.

The Butterball turkey site says that I should cook the turkey for the amount of time listed below. After the turkey is baked it will need to rest for 15 minutes before I can begin carving it. I'm going to allow 15 minutes to carve the bird and 30 minutes before roasting it to stuff and season it.

Weight	Cook time (stuffed)
4½-7 lbs.	2¼-2¾ hrs.
7-9 lbs.	2¾-4½ hrs.
9-18 lbs.	3¾-4½ hrs.
18-22 lbs.	4½-5 hrs.
22-24 lbs.	5-5½ hrs.

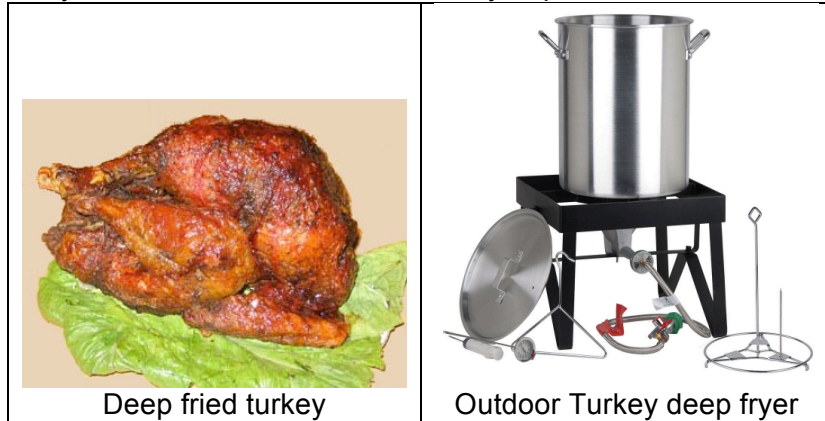
At 325 degrees Fahrenheit



4. If I plan to serve dinner at 3:00pm on November 23rd at what time should I begin preparing the turkey?

### Or I could deep-fry the turkey in my back yard ...

People are talking about how deep-frying their turkey for Thanksgiving is incredibly delicious, has a nice crispy crust and always stays moist. Sounds like a sure way to please the crowd!



Deep fried turkey

Outdoor Turkey deep fryer

Besides the turkey, I would need to buy the deep-frying set-up and enough oil to use in the cooking. Buying the cooking set up would be a multi-year expense because I could use it again and again if everything works out well.

The cheapest fryer set up that I could find costs about \$65 and includes a cast iron stand and a burner. I guess I could try to borrow one instead of buying one. But maybe if you own a deep fryer, it is always what you use for Thanksgiving. So, I might not be able to borrow one.

The recipe that I found suggests not deep-frying a turkey larger than 10 to 15 pounds.

5. Uh oh. Given the quantity of turkey that you calculated in problem # 1, will this one deep-frying turkey set-up be enough for my crowd. Please explain.

The recipe says that I will need to cook the bird at 3.5 minutes per pound.

6. Show your work of figuring out how long I will have to allow for deep-frying the amount of turkey that you have decided that I will need.

I'll also need 3 gallons of peanut oil. At a discount store I found peanut oil that costs about \$12 for a 16-ounce container of oil.

7. Ach! How much will the oil cost me?

There are a lot of warnings about fires started from turkey fryers. I'm going to need to be very cautious if I cook our Thanksgiving dinner this way.

**Or I could cook and smoke the turkey slowly on my barbecue grill ...**

The instructions from the Weber Grill site says to allow 15 to 18 minutes per pound for this turkey.

8. How much time would this turkey take to cook?



To help me figure out what I have the energy and money to create please compare all of the numbers that you have calculated for me in one place. Then please finish by advising me of your preference. Thanks.

Method	Oven baked	Deep-fried	Barbecued and smoked
Time to allow for cooking and preparing			
At what time (and day) should I begin cooking			
Approximate cost			
Your opinion about which method to use and why.			

Okay, now I'd better start figuring out the side dishes ... You know there are never enough mashed potatoes at Thanksgiving!

Source: <http://www.eatturkey.com/consumer/cookinfo/fryturk>  
<http://www.butterball.com/how-tos/roast-a-turkey>  
<http://allrecipes.com/recipe/13824/deep-fried-turkey/>

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