

Treasure Barrel

Roast Turkey Recipe: Perfectly Cooked Holiday Meal

25 min Prep time	**3 h 30 min** Cook time	**3 h 55 min** Total time
8 Servings	**Medium** Difficulty	**American** Cuisine

Ingredients

For the Roast Turkey

- [ ] 1 (12-14 pound) whole turkey, completely thawed, neck and giblets removed
- [ ] 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- [ ] 1/4 cup chopped fresh herbs (a mix of sage, thyme, and rosemary)
- [ ] 4 cloves garlic, minced
- [ ] 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- [ ] 1 teaspoon black pepper
- [ ] 1 large yellow onion, quartered
- [ ] 1 lemon, halved
- [ ] A few extra sprigs of fresh thyme and rosemary

For the Pan (Optional)

- [ ] 2 carrots, roughly chopped
- [ ] 2 celery stalks, roughly chopped
- [ ] 1 cup chicken or turkey broth

Instructions

1. First things first, let's get everything ready. You'll want to preheat your oven to 425°F (220°C) and place a rack in the lower third. Take your turkey and remove the neck and giblets from the cavity—save them for gravy if you like! The most important part here is to pat the turkey incredibly dry with paper towels, both inside and out. Seriously, don't skip this; a dry bird means crispy skin. Season the cavity generously with salt and pepper, then place the quartered onion, halved lemon, and extra herb sprigs inside. This will create a beautiful aromatic steam as it cooks.

2. Now for my favorite part, the herb butter. In a small bowl, combine your lovely softened butter, the chopped fresh herbs, minced garlic, salt, and pepper. Mix it all together until it's beautifully combined. The smell is just divine. Now, gently, using your fingers, separate the skin from the turkey breast, creating a little pocket. Take about half of that glorious butter mixture and push it into that pocket, spreading it as evenly as you can over the breast meat. It feels a bit weird, but trust me, this is the secret to a juicy bird. Rub the remaining butter all over the outside of the turkey—the legs, wings, everywhere.

3. Time to get roasting. Place the prepared turkey on a rack inside a large roasting pan. If you're using them, scatter the chopped carrots and celery in the bottom of the pan and pour in the broth. This adds moisture and flavor for your gravy later. Place the pan in the preheated oven and roast for 30 minutes at 425°F. Then, reduce the oven temperature to 350°F (175°C). Continue to roast, basting the turkey with the pan juices every 45 minutes or so. For a 12-14 pound turkey, expect it to take about 3 to 3.5 hours total. This is a great time to relax and maybe explore other recipes for your next gathering.

4 The turkey is done when an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the thigh reads 165°F (74°C). Carefully transfer the turkey from the pan to a large cutting board. Now, this next step is crucial: let it rest. Tent it loosely with foil and let it sit for at least 20-30 minutes before you even think about carving. This allows all the juices to settle back into the meat. Skipping this step is the number one reason for dry turkey! While it's resting, you can use those amazing pan drippings to make your gravy. Once rested, carve and serve it up, knowing you just made the most beautiful holiday meal.

Nutrition per serving

520 kcal	65 g	2 g	28 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- **A Note on Thawing:** Please, plan ahead for thawing your turkey! A frozen turkey needs several days in the refrigerator to thaw safely. Never thaw it on the counter. A safe, slow thaw ensures the turkey cooks evenly and is safe to eat.
- **No Roasting Rack? No Problem:** If you don't have a rack for your roasting pan, you can create a 'vegetable rack' on the bottom of the pan with thickly sliced onions, carrots, and celery. This elevates the bird, allowing air to circulate, and it also beautifully flavors the pan drippings for your gravy. It’s an old-school trick that works perfectly.
- **The Importance of Room Temp:** Letting the turkey sit on the counter for about an hour before it goes into the oven helps it cook more evenly. A freezing cold bird will take longer to cook, and the breast meat might dry out before the thighs are done. This little bit of patience pays off.