

# Talking Turkey

*This free tip sheet was produced by the Cheapskates Club –  
[www.cheapskatesclub.net](http://www.cheapskatesclub.net)*

Roasting the Christmas turkey isn't difficult, but there are a few simple steps you can take to ensure you end up with a perfectly cooked bird for Christmas dinner.

## Fresh or frozen?

The advantages of frozen turkeys are obvious: you can buy ahead. With a fresh bird, you'll be ordering now, and picking it up on Christmas Eve.

## To thaw a frozen turkey

Your turkey needs to be completely and thoroughly thawed before cooking. This is important. If it's not properly thawed, it won't cook properly, and no one wants Christmas 2018 to go down in memory as the year everyone went home with food poisoning.

To thaw, remove the wrappings and put the bird in a deep sided dish (to catch the juices as it thaws). Cover loosely with foil and allow 8 - 12 hours per kilogram thawing time.

Don't be tempted to speed up thawing by sitting the bird on the bench to thaw, it's a sure-fire way to end up sick. Thawing in the fridge is the safest way, even if the bird is thawed a couple of days before you're ready to cook. Keep it covered in the fridge and it will be good for at least two days.

Once thawed, remove any giblets from inside the bird. Drain by tipping up, then dry inside and out with clean paper towel.

## To cook a turkey

Bring the turkey to room temperature by taking it out of the fridge about 1 hour before cooking.

Pre-heat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius (160 degrees C for fan forced).

Dry the skin with paper towel. Dry skin crisps and browns beautifully. Take a knob of butter and rub it all over the skin of the turkey.

Place breast side up in a baking dish.

Roast for 40 minutes per kilo for the first four kilos, then 45 minutes per kilo for every kilogram over four. Some turkeys have a timer inserted that will pop up when the bird is cooked. If your bird doesn't have this, use a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest portion of meat to determine the bird is cooked. If you don't have a thermometer, check that there is no pink meat on the bird and that the juices from the thickest part are running clear.

If you place stuffing in the bird, weight it after stuffing to determine cooking time. I prefer to make the stuffing and cook it in a loaf tin. It's easier to cook and slice to serve and cuts down on turkey cooking time.

Let the bird rest for 30 minutes before carving (it will stay hot).

## After cooking

After carving, cool the bird quickly and refrigerate immediately. If you're not going to eat it within a day or two, pull the meat off and freeze it in meal sized portions.

