

# Your Essential Turkey Tips

It's the little things you that will keep your family safe this Christmas. Follow these tips to help you to serve up a delicious Christmas meal that has your loved ones rubbing their tummies in contentment rather than discomfort.



- **Keep your turkey** and other raw poultry meat in the fridge until its ready to use. By keeping food cold, the growth of food poisoning germs is slowed down. Leaving it outside the fridge at room temperature could increase your risk of getting ill.
- **Make space in the fridge**, try not to pack food too tightly as the cold air needs to circulate to keep all your food cool.
- **Keep raw foods separate** from other ready-to-eat foods by putting raw meat in a covered container and placing on the bottom of the fridge to avoid cross-contamination.
- **Your fridge temperature** should be running between 0 and 5°C. This can be checked easily with an inexpensive fridge thermometer.
- **Defrosting times vary** check the retailer's instructions on the packaging. For example a large turkey 11kg in size, can take up to two-days to defrost.
- **When defrosting** leave it in the packaging (or cover and put it in a container to hold any thawing juices), then place at the bottom of the fridge to avoid cross-contamination.
- **Defrost thoroughly**, otherwise your turkey may not cook evenly and harmful bacteria could survive the cooking process.
- **Don't wash** your turkey or any other poultry/meat. Cooking thoroughly will kill any bacteria present, including campylobacter, while washing chicken can spread germs by splashing onto cooking utensils, kitchen tops and anything else within reach including you!
- **Cook thoroughly** and always check the retailer's instructions for cooking times as this will vary according to the size of the turkey. Be aware that fan-assisted ovens might cook your turkey more quickly. To check your turkey is ready make sure it's steaming hot all the way through - cut into the thickest part of the turkey, none of the

meat should be pink and any juices should run clear.



- **Cook any stuffing in a separate** roasting dish, rather than inside the bird, as it will cook more easily and the cooking guidelines for the turkey will be more accurate.

- **Leftovers** should be left to cool, covered and placed in the fridge ideally within two hours after being cooked. Use leftovers within two days and if reheating, do so until steaming hot all the way through. You shouldn't reheat leftovers more than once. Leftovers can also be frozen and used within one month. This is useful for any leftovers which you know will not be eaten within 2 days. Frozen leftovers should be defrosted thoroughly in the fridge. For some get great recipes ideas visit [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/recipes](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/recipes)

- **The 'use by date'** is your friend and can be found on the packaging of foods that go off quickly, for example meat products, dairy and ready-prepared salads.

'Use by' doesn't always mean 'eat by'. If a food can be frozen its life can be extended beyond the 'use by' date – always follow the retailer's instructions.

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**Join us for: National Defrost Your Turkey Day, Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2014 –**  
[www.food.gov.uk/DYT2014thunderclap](http://www.food.gov.uk/DYT2014thunderclap)

**For more information visit:** [www.food.gov.uk/christmas2014](http://www.food.gov.uk/christmas2014)

For more information on what's going on in your area over Christmas go to  
**[local authorities to include details]**