

Beginners' Christmas Dinner Checklist

How to Make the perfect Christmas Dinner

Get Ready

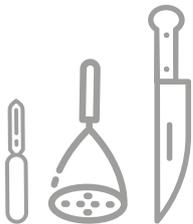
Before Christmas day even arrives, there's a lot of preparation to be done to make sure your kitchen's up to the job.

What Needs Doing?

The Detail

Done

- 1** Get the right kitchenware



First things first – if you're going to be cooking up a feast, it's important to make sure that you've got the right tools for the job.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roasting dish | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable peeler |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Steamer | <input type="checkbox"/> Carving knife |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potato masher | <input type="checkbox"/> Gravy boat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serving spoons | |

- 2** Clear out the fridge



That turkey's going to need to be stored somewhere ahead of the big day. So clear out extra fridge space before you buy your bird.

- 3** Check your cutlery



There's nothing worse than cooking up that feast only to discover you're two plates and three forks short for serving. Make sure you've got more than enough cutlery, crockery and glassware so no one goes without.



4 Plan your shopping list



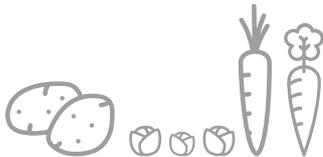
A checklist within a checklist, we know. Start thinking about what you want, what you need, and what you've got already. Remember if you're cooking for specific dietary requirements (or just a fussy eater) that you might need alternatives too.

Turkey

Crown, breast, or full bird? Knowing how many people you're cooking for, how much storage space you've got, and even what your oven can hold are good ways to determine what turkey is best for you. To work out how big a bird you need, divide the amount of people you're cooking for by two and use that number as a guide for how many kilograms it should weigh.

Other meat choices include:

- Ham
- Beef
- Lamb



Veg

Everybody's favourite part of Christmas dinner, right? This one comes down to preference really. A good mix of greens and roots is always a must, along with any of your favourites. As a rough guide, choose **3-4** of the following and aim to provide **per person**:

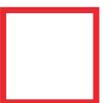
- 5-6 sprouts
- 1/4 small cabbage
- 2 florets of broccoli
- 1/2 large parsnip or 1 small-medium parsnip
- 2 medium potatoes for roasting or 3 medium potatoes for mashing (or both!)
- 1/2 carrot
- 1/2 swede



Sides

Not to be missed, sides can often make or break the plate when it comes to Christmas dinner. Festive favourites include:

- Gravy Stuffing



4 Plan your shopping list (continued)

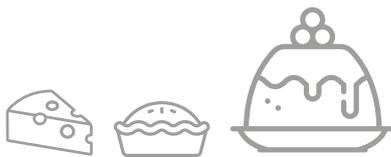
- Stuffing
- Pigs in blankets
- Chestnuts
- Sauce: Turkey – cranberry or bread sauce
- Sauce: Beef – horseradish or mustard
- Sauce: Ham – mustard
- Sauce: Lamb – mint



Drinks

Perfect for washing down the remnants of a successful dinner, there's nothing like a good drink accompaniment for Christmas dinner. Top off your table with:

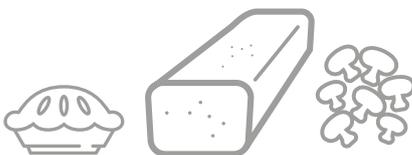
- Prosecco or champagne
- Wine
- Beer



Desserts

Just when you thought you couldn't eat anymore, in comes dessert. Having a selection of festive favourites should leave everyone taken care of. Pick at least two from these treats:

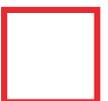
- Christmas pudding
- Yule log
- Trifle
- Mince pies
- Cheese and crackers



Vegetarian, Vegan & Gluten Free Alternatives

If you've got vegetarian or vegan guests, or those with specific dietary requirements including gluten and dairy free options, remember to cater for them too. Common alternatives include:

- Mushroom stuffing
- Parsnip, cranberry and chestnut loaf
- Nut roast
- Gluten-free gravy
- Cranberry, maple and pecan pudding



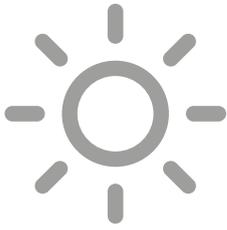
Christmas Eve

What Needs Doing?

The Detail

Done

Morning



If your turkey is frozen, now's the time to take it out to defrost. Make sure that it's covered over, place on a plate and leave out in a cool room for around 10-24 hours, depending on size.

Defrosting it in the fridge? You'll need to start the defrosting process at least a day earlier.

Afternoon



Do as much pre-Christmas Day prep as you can. Things you can make and keep in the fridge:

- **Stuffing:** Make the mixture ready to add to the turkey tomorrow
- Peel and chop the carrots, parsnips, broccoli and cabbage
- Make your cranberry and/or bread sauce
- Making your own pigs in blankets? Prep them now
- Make any homemade desserts, ready for baking or serving



Christmas Day

What Needs Doing?

The Detail

Done

When do I do what?



So the big day has finally arrived, and if you've planned correctly, you should have everything you need to make a successful Christmas dinner. But much like doing the shopping, timing is everything here.

Note: We've based our timings on a 5kg turkey.

To calculate how long your turkey will take:

Calculate 20 mins per kilogramme in weight, then add 90 mins = Total Cooking Time, at around 180°C (Gas Mark 5) in a fan assisted oven.



9:30AM

Prep the turkey – take out the giblets, add the stuffing, place in a roasting dish and sprinkle over any herbs.



9:50AM

Put the turkey in the oven to roast.



10:00AM

Take this opportunity to begin setting the table, before the real cooking begins.



11:45AM

Prep all the remaining vegetables for roasting or boiling.



12:30AM

Put the vegetables in to roast, parboil potatoes for mashing or boiling and put the pigs in blankets in the oven.



12:45AM

Put the potatoes in the oven for roasting; boil or steam the sprouts and broccoli .



1:00PM

Take the turkey out of the oven, cover with tin foil and leave to rest for half an hour.



1:05PM

Make the gravy.



1:30PM

Carve the turkey, dish up the veg, and pour out the bubbly.

Serve and Enjoy!



All ready? Serve up the dinner and scoff it while it's hot.