



Gobble Gobble - From Beak to Cheek Meal Planning and Reducing Food Waste

- Plan ahead at least a week in advance
- Make room in the fridge if buying a frozen turkey
- Thaw correctly - not on the counter
- Clean surfaces
- Separate turkey breasts and legs
- Roll and tie the legs
- Use bones to make a rich stock
- Brine the meat - wet or dry, up to you
- Roast and use a thermometer to check doneness - 165F
- Rest before slicing

Stock = bone broth

Stock + veggies + leftover turkey = turkey soup

Turkey soup + grains (quinoa, bulgur, barley, steel cut oats)

Turkey soup + rice + congee (Asian porridge)

Turkey soup + butter and flour (roux) = cream of turkey

Cream of turkey + more roux + puff pastry lid = turkey "pot pie"

Cream of turkey + dumplings = turkey and dumplings

Cream of turkey + cooked pasta = turkey casserole

On Brining

<https://www.serious-eats.com/2014/11/print/quick-and-dirty-guide-to-brining-turkey-chicken-thanksgiving.html>

Brining or dry-brining your bird can mean the difference between dry turkey and supremely moist and plump turkey. Over the years, I've written many articles on brining (or not brining) turkeys. Much of this info can already be found in our

[Definitive Guide to Buying, Prepping, Cooking, and Carving Turkey](#), or in my article on [The Truth About Brining](#), but I get enough inquiries on basic brining guidelines that it seemed worth it to pull this out into its own quick guide. So here you go!

Why Brine?

Brining, whether you're using a traditional water-based brine or a dry brine, improves a turkey's ability to retain moisture. Certain muscle proteins are naturally dissolved by the salt in the brine solution. Once these proteins are dissolved, muscle fibers lose some of their ability to contract when cooking. Less contraction leads to less internal moisture being squeezed out, which in turn leads to juicier meat in the cooked bird.

Brining also seasons a bird more deeply than simply salting just before cooking.

Traditional Versus Dry Brine—Which Is Better?

I vastly prefer dry brining. A traditional brine will plump up your turkey with moisture, but that moisture is mainly water, leading to a turkey that tastes watered down. A dry brine, on the other hand, helps a turkey retain its natural moisture without adding any excess liquid, which leads to more intensely flavored results.

Adding baking powder to a dry brine can also improve your turkey skin. Not only does the baking powder work to break down some skin proteins, causing them to crisp and brown more efficiently, it also combines with turkey juices, forming microscopic bubbles that add surface area and crunch to the skin as it roasts.

How to Dry-Brine

Combine half a cup of Diamond Crystal kosher salt (or six tablespoons Morton's kosher salt) with two tablespoons of baking powder in a bowl. Carefully pat your turkey dry with paper towels. Generously sprinkle the salt mixture on all surfaces by picking up the mixture between your thumb and fingers, holding it six to 10 inches above the bird, and letting the mixture shower down over the surface of the turkey for even coverage. The turkey should be well coated with salt, though not completely encrusted.

Warning: You will most likely not need all of the salt. In some cases, less than half will be okay; it depends on the size of your bird and your salt preferences.

Transfer the turkey to a rack set in a rimmed baking sheet, and refrigerate, uncovered, for 12 to 24 hours. Without rinsing, roast using one of our recipes, omitting any additional salting steps called for in those recipes.

Dry-brining for more than 24 hours will produce even juicier and better-seasoned meat. To brine longer than 24 hours, loosely cover turkey with plastic wrap or cheesecloth before refrigerating, to prevent excess moisture loss through evaporation. Let rest for up to three days.

How to Make a Traditional Brine

Not convinced by the dry-brining argument? No problem. Here's how to do a traditional brine.

To brine a turkey using the standard method, start by clearing out a space in the fridge big enough to fit a container that's large enough to hold your turkey. Alternatively, fill a few empty two-liter soda bottles three-quarters of the way with water, and freeze them with the lid off. Once they're completely frozen, seal the bottles with their lids. Next, fill a large cooler or plastic basin with the prescribed amount of tap water. Add the salt, and stir until dissolved. Submerge your fully defrosted turkey in the brine solution, and refrigerate for 12 to 18 hours. Alternatively, place the brining basin in a cool spot in your home and add the frozen soda bottles, replacing them every few hours to keep the water below 40°F (4°C).

After 12 to 18 hours, remove the turkey, dry carefully with paper towels, and roast using one of our recipes.

For crisper skin, brine a couple days in advance, and let your turkey air-dry at least overnight and up to two nights, uncovered, in the refrigerator on a rack set in a rimmed baking sheet.

When you're constructing a brine, what really matters is the amount of salt compared to the amount of water, *not* the amount of salt compared to the size of the turkey. So long as your brine solution is around 6% salt by weight (that's about one and a quarter cups of kosher salt per gallon) and your turkey is submerged, you'll do just fine.

Here are some approximate measures for the minimum amount of water and salt you'll need for a range of turkey sizes:

Standard Turkey Brine Formulas

Turkey Size	Water	Salt (Kosher)
8 to 12 pounds (3.6 to 5.4 kilograms)	2 gallons (7.6 liters)	2 1/2 cups (450 grams)
13 to 17 pounds (5.9 to 7.7 kilograms)	2 1/2 gallons (9.5 liters)	3 1/4 cups (570 grams)
18 to 22 pounds (8.2 to 10 kilograms)	3 gallons (11.4 liters)	3 3/4 cups (675 grams)

Should I Brine a Kosher, Enhanced, or Self-Basting Turkey?

All of these types of turkeys have already been treated with salt and do not need to be brined again.

Should I Use Aromatics in My Brine?

There's no need.

Many brining recipes call for bringing a number of aromatics—carrots, celery, onions, spices, herbs, et cetera—to a boil in your brine before letting it cool completely. While this does a great job of making your brine smell good, it doesn't affect the flavor of the turkey or chicken much beyond the skin. The problem is that, because a brine is packed with salt, and because salt is much more likely to enter your turkey's cells (due to both its size and its magnetic charge), most of those larger flavorful compounds don't actually make it into the meat.

For the time and effort it takes to make a flavored brine, heat it up, and let it cool completely, you're much better off making a [flavorful rub](#) or [herb butter](#). You'll get just as much (if not more) flavor into the bird, use fewer ingredients, and save yourself some time in the process.

Read more [details on the science of flavored brines here](#).

Dumplings for Turkey Soup

[https://www.completelydelicious.com/turkey-dumplings/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+completelydelicious/feed+\(Completely+Delicious\)](https://www.completelydelicious.com/turkey-dumplings/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+completelydelicious/feed+(Completely+Delicious))

1 1/2 cups (180 grams) all-purpose flour
1/2 cup (70 grams) cornmeal
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon coarse salt
1 1/4 cup (310 ml) buttermilk

TO MAKE THE DUMPLINGS:

1. While the soup is simmering, prepare the dumplings. Mix the flour, cornmeal, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a medium bowl. Add the buttermilk and stir just until no streaks of dry ingredients remain, do not over mix.
2. Drop the dumpling batter by 1/4 cupfuls on top of the soup. Try to evenly space them, but it doesn't need to be perfect. Cover the pot with the lid so that there's a 1-inch opening and simmer for 15 minutes until dumplings appear dry on top and are cooked all the way through.
3. Serve soup immediately, store leftover in the fridge for up to 1 week.

Turkey Stock

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchen/turkey-broth-3361702>

Ingredients

1 turkey carcass (from a roasted bird)
2 onions, cut into chunks
2 carrots, cut into chunks
3 stalks celery, cut into chunks
1 bunch fresh parsley

4 cloves garlic, smashed (unpeeled)
1 teaspoon black peppercorns
2 bay leaves

Directions

1. Insert kitchen shears into the carcass and make a few cuts to get you started. Then, use your hands to carefully pull the carcass into 4 or 5 pieces.
 2. Combine the carcass, onions, carrots, celery, parsley, garlic, peppercorns and bay leaves in a stockpot. Cover with cold water (about 7 quarts).
 3. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium low. Simmer about 2 hours, occasionally skimming any foam or fat from the surface with a large spoon or ladle.
 4. Pour through a large mesh strainer into a pot; discard the solids. Cool slightly, then refrigerate in covered containers for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 2 months.
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