

Cooking Fresh and Frozen Vegetables

Timing is important when cooking vegetables. To protect quality and nutritional value, you'll want to serve vegetables soon after they are cooked. This may require careful scheduling, but the results will be worth it.

A good way to protect quality is to cook vegetables in small batches. Batch cooking helps prevent vegetables from becoming broken or overcooked. It also helps ensure that vegetables will retain their color and have little loss of nutrients.

Be sure to cook vegetables only until tender-crisp. They may continue to cook when held. Vegetables will become overcooked if held too long, so batch cooking throughout the meal is recommended.

The following fresh vegetables are typically cooked before serving:

Asparagus
Brussels sprouts
Beans in pods (blackeye, lima, etc.)
(need to be cooked to deactivate toxins)
Corn
Eggplant
Peas
Potatoes
Sweet potatoes
Winter squash



To boil in water:

Cook in a covered stockpot as follows. However, leave off lid for items like broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and cabbage, to help retain their bright green color.

1. Add fresh or frozen vegetables to boiling water.
2. After water boils again, reduce heat and simmer until tender-crisp.
3. Drain cooked vegetables and place in serving dishes.
4. Season with herbs and spices, and garnish as desired. (See "Seasoning Vegetables with Herbs and Spices" and "Garnishing Techniques" on pages 28 and 30.)

Cooking Tips

continued

To microwave:

Place fresh or frozen vegetables in a covered microwaveable dish. Then:

1. Microwave, following manufacturer's directions, stirring halfway through the cooking time.
2. Don't overcook.
3. Season with herbs and spices, and garnish as desired. (See "Seasoning Vegetables with Herbs and Spices" and "Garnishing Techniques" on pages 28 and 30.)

To steam:

Place fresh or frozen vegetables in a single layer in a steamer pan (12" x 20" x 2 1/2"). Then:

1. Steam uncovered, following steamer manufacturer's directions. Don't overcook.

2. Drain cooked vegetables.
3. Season with herbs and spices, and garnish as desired. (See "Seasoning Vegetables with Herbs and Spices" and "Garnishing Techniques" on pages 28 and 30.)

To stir-fry:

Cut or dice vegetables into uniform pieces, selecting them for color, texture, and flavor. Then:

1. Heat a small amount of oil in a frying pan.
2. Add vegetables that take longest to cook, such as carrots.
3. Add remaining vegetables, such as onions and broccoli florets.
4. Cover and cook until vegetables are tender but crisp and brightly colored.



5. Season with herbs and spices, and garnish as desired. (See "Seasoning Vegetables with Herbs and Spices" and "Garnishing Techniques" on pages 28 and 30.)

Chill cooked, hot food from 135 °F to 70 °F within 2 hours and from 70 °F to 41 °F or below within the next 4 hours. The total cooling process from 135 °F to 41 °F may not exceed 6 hours.

Braising or Pot Roasting Meats (Moist Heat)

Less tender cuts of meat may be braised or pot roasted. Meat is cooked slowly with a small amount of liquid in a covered pan.

ALWAYS wash hands BEFORE and AFTER handling raw meat.



For proper storage and thawing techniques see “Freezer Storage Chart,” “Refrigerator Storage Chart,” and “Thawing Frozen Meat, Poultry, and Fish” in this document.

Directions for Braising or Pot Roasting

1. **Prepare rub, if desired.** Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt and 3 tablespoons flour per pound of meat and sprinkle on or rub into the meat, if desired, to increase browning.
2. **Brown meat.** Brown meat in oil, as needed, in a heavy pot or a Dutch oven to develop aroma, flavor, and color.
3. **Add small amount of water.** Add more water if needed during cooking.

4. **Cook.** Cover pan; simmer (do not boil) on top of range or bake at 325 °F (slow oven).

5. **Monitor temperature.** Cook until meat is tender with an internal temperature of at least 145 °F.

6. **Allow meat to rest for 10 to 20 minutes.** Drain fat and juices, slice, and serve. Gravy may be made from remaining drippings by thickening with flour or cornstarch.

Chill cooked, hot food from 135 °F to 70 °F within 2 hours and from 70 °F to 41 °F or below within the next 4 hours. The total cooling process from 135 °F to 41 °F may not exceed 6 hours.

For more information on meat and poultry, visit the Food Safety and Inspection Service Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/index.asp.

Cooking Tips

continued

Cooking Meats in Liquid (Stewing)

Some less tender and highly flavored cuts of meat (such as brisket) are commonly cooked (simmered) with enough water to cover. See below for cooking directions.

ALWAYS wash hands BEFORE and AFTER handling raw meat.

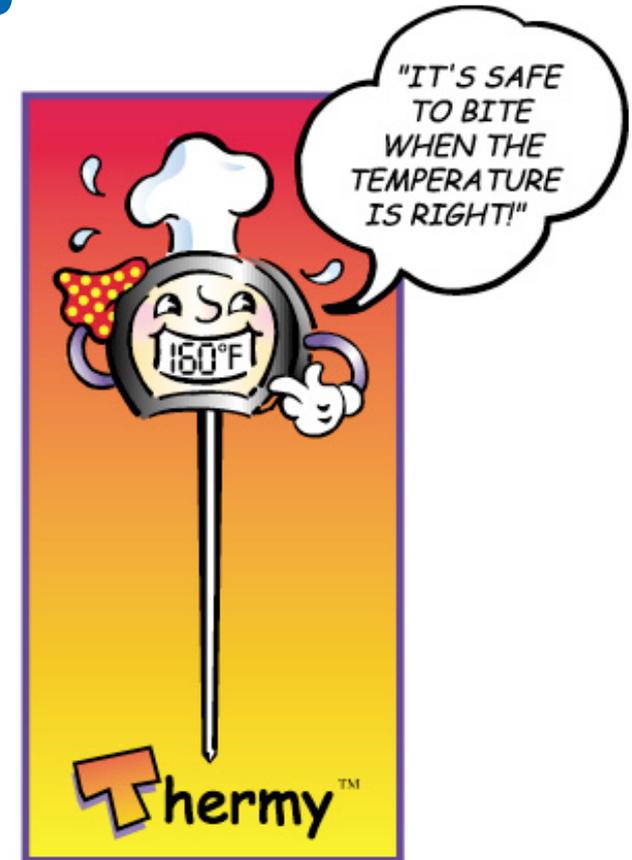
For proper storage and thawing techniques see “Freezer Storage Chart,” “Refrigerator Storage Chart,” and “Thawing Frozen Meat, Poultry, and Fish” in this document.

Directions for Stewing

1. **Place meat in a pot.**
2. **Cover meat with water.** Seasonings may be added to the liquid as desired.
3. **Cook.** Cover pan and simmer (do not boil) until tender.
4. **Monitor temperature.** Cook until meat is tender with an internal temperature of at least 145 °F.

Chill cooked, hot food from 135 °F to 70 °F within 2 hours and from 70 °F to 41 °F or below within the next 4 hours. The total cooling process from 135 °F to 41 °F may not exceed 6 hours.

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Roasting Meats and Chicken (Dry Heat)

Tender cuts of meat and poultry may be roasted. Roast in an open pan without added liquid, as explained below.

ALWAYS wash hands BEFORE and AFTER handling raw meat.

For proper storage and thawing techniques see “Freezer Storage Chart,” “Refrigerator Storage Chart,” “Pre-preparation of Ready-To-Cook (Fresh or Thawed) Poultry,” and “Thawing Frozen Meat, Poultry, and Fish” in this document.

Directions for Roasting

- Place meat in roasting pan, fat side up.** Allow space in pan between roasts. Do NOT cover pan or add water.
- Insert meat thermometer.** Insert thermometer into the center of the thickest part of the meat, AWAY from bone, fat, or gristle. *If roasting from a frozen state:* Insert thermometer when roast is nearly completed cooking. Insert thermometer with tip touching the center of the roast. Do NOT touch bone, fat or gristle with the thermometer tip.

Minimum Internal Temperatures for Safety

(Based on the 2005 FDA Food Code)

165 °F for 15 seconds	Poultry, stuffing, stuffed fish, pork, or beef; pasta stuffed with eggs, pork, casseroles, reheating leftovers.
155 °F for 15 seconds	Ground meats, beef, lamb, veal, pork, pasteurized eggs held on steam table, cubed or Salisbury steaks, fish nuggets or sticks.
145 °F for 15 seconds	Seafood, beef, pork, veal steaks, and roasts (medium rare), eggs cooked to order and served immediately.
135 °F for 15 seconds	Fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables that are going to be held on a steam table or in a hot box.

- Roast at 325 °F (slow oven).** Roast until meat is tender and thermometer registers the correct temperature for the proper time according to the chart above.

If roasting from a frozen state: Additional cooking time will be required. The extra time needed varies according to the size and cut. Start by determining the amount of time recommended for cooking a similar cut from the chilled state. Then, add one-third to one-half the amount of time recommended. The oven temperature should not change. Here is an example: The recommended cooking time is 3 hours for a particular cut of meat from the chilled state. To cook a similar cut from the frozen state, the recommended time would be 4 to 4 ½ hours.

- Allow meat to rest for 10 to 20 minutes.** Drain fat and juices. Slice and serve. Gravy may be made from remaining drippings by thickening with flour or cornstarch.

Chill cooked, hot food from 135 °F to 70 °F within 2 hours and from 70 °F to 41 °F or below within the next 4 hours. The total cooling process from 135 °F to 41 °F may not exceed 6 hours.

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Roasting Whole Turkey, Turkey Parts, and Boneless Turkey Roasts

Keep in mind the following important safety tips when cooking raw turkey.

- ALWAYS wash hands BEFORE and AFTER handling raw turkey.
- Do NOT stuff whole, raw turkey — prepare and heat stuffing separately.
- Do NOT partially cook one day and finish cooking the next.
- Use within 2 days after roasting.

NOTE: Giblets from whole poultry may be simmered with neck and wing tips for making broth or gravy stock.

Direction for Roasting

1. **Thaw and prepare frozen turkey for cooking.** See “Thawing Frozen Meat, Poultry, and Fish” and “Pre-preparation of Ready-To-Cook (Fresh or Thawed) Poultry” on pages 7 and 8 or follow label instructions.

Whole turkey frozen without giblets and other frozen forms of turkey may be roasted without thawing. However, extra cooking time will be needed.

2. **Place prepared whole turkeys, boneless roasts, and turkey parts in shallow roasting pans.** Use separate pans for breast pieces and for legs (drumstick and thigh) due to differences in cooking times.

3. **Insert a meat thermometer.** Be sure the thermometer does NOT touch bone.

For a whole turkey: Insert the thermometer into the center of the meaty part of the inner side of the thigh (toward the body).

For a boneless turkey roast: Insert into the center.

For a breast or thigh piece: Insert into the center of the thickest part of the breast or thigh.

(If roasting frozen turkeys, insert the thermometer part way through cooking.)

4. **Roast at 325 °F (slow oven).** When whole turkey is half done, release legs to speed cooking. For boneless turkey roasts, the diameter of the roast will affect cooking time more than the weight. The greater the diameter of the roast, the longer the cooking time will be.

5. **Turkey is done when the thermometer registers 165 °F in the inner thigh of whole turkeys or in the center of turkey roasts.** If your turkey has a “pop-up” temperature indicator, it is recommended that you also check the internal temperature of the turkey in the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast with a food thermometer. The minimum internal temperature should reach 165 °F for safety.
6. **Allow roasted turkey to rest** (set juices) for 15 to 20 minutes before carving. Slice and serve.

OR

Cool cooked turkey on wire rack until cool enough to handle (within 2 hours). Remove meat from bones. Spread pieces of meat in one layer for more rapid cooling. Wrap meat and store in the refrigerator at 40 °F.

Chill cooked, hot food from 135 °F to 70 °F within 2 hours and from 70 °F to 41 °F or below within the next 4 hours. The total cooling process from 135 °F to 41 °F may not exceed 6 hours.

For more information on cooking turkey, visit the Food Safety and Inspection Service Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Lets_Talk_Turkey/index.asp.

For more information on meat and poultry, visit the Food Safety and Inspection Service Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/index.asp.

Stewing Chicken or Turkey

Remember the following important safety tips when cooking raw poultry:

- ALWAYS wash hands BEFORE and AFTER handling raw poultry.
- Do NOT cook partially one day and finish cooking the next.
- Use broth and poultry meat within 2 days after cooking.

Directions for Stewing

1. **Thaw and prepare chicken or turkey for cooking.** (See “Thawing Frozen Meat, Poultry, and Fish” and “Pre-preparation of Ready-To-Cook (Fresh or Thawed) Poultry” on pages 7 and 8.)
2. **Put poultry in large kettle or stockpot.** Add enough water to half-cover chicken or turkey. Season as desired.

3. **Cook.** Cover and simmer until tender.
4. **Monitor internal temperature.** Check the internal temperature of the poultry in the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast with a food thermometer. The minimum internal temperature should reach 165 °F for safety.

Directions for Cooling Stewed Chicken or Turkey

1. **Remove chicken or turkey from broth and place on sheet pans.**
2. **Place container of broth in ice water**
Do NOT allow the cooling water/ice to get into the container of cooked broth. Stir frequently to hasten cooling. Cover container and store in refrigerator at 40 °F.
3. **Remove meat from bones.** When poultry is cool enough to handle (within 2 hours), remove meat from bones.

4. **Wrap meat loosely in waxed paper, plastic wrap, or foil.**
5. **Store in refrigerator at 40 °F.** Use within 2 days.

Chill cooked, hot food from 135 °F to 70 °F within 2 hours and from 70 °F to 41 °F or below within the next 4 hours. The total cooling process from 135 °F to 41 °F may not exceed 6 hours.

For more information on cooking turkey, visit the Food Safety and Inspection Service Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Lets_Talk_Turkey/index.asp.

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Cooking Fish

Fish must be *handled properly* during storage, thawing, preparation, cooking, and serving to avoid spoilage or serious food-borne illness.

For proper storage and thawing techniques see “Freezer Storage Chart,” “Refrigerator Storage Chart,” and “Thawing Frozen Meat, Poultry, and Fish” in this document.

ALWAYS wash hands BEFORE and AFTER handling raw fish.

Directions for Cooking

1. **Cook frozen fish portions and fish sticks while still frozen.** Fish portions and fish sticks *should not be thawed* before cooking. Remove from the freezer only the amount of portions or sticks needed for 1 day’s use.
2. **Allow additional cooking time for frozen fish.** Or, cook according to manufacturer’s directions.
3. **Monitor internal temperature.** Cook only until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork and thermometer registers the correct temperature.
 - Cook fish fillets or fish steaks to 145 °F.
 - Cook fish portions or fish sticks to 155 °F.
 - Do NOT overcook.
4. **Serve fish immediately after it is cooked.**



Cooking Pasta

Pasta comes in many different forms. The illustration shows the names and shapes of a variety of popular pastas.

Cooking times and the amount of water needed may vary. Below are general directions for macaroni, noodles, or spaghetti.

Directions for Cooking

1. Boil water.
2. Slowly stir in pasta while allowing water to continue to boil.
3. Cook, uncovered, at a fast boil until pasta is tender. DO NOT overcook.
4. Drain pasta quickly. $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cooked enriched or whole-grain pasta is equivalent to $\frac{1}{2}$ slice of bread.

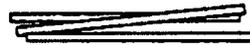
Types of Pasta

Macaroni, noodles, and spaghetti are just a few of the many pastas you can buy. Here are some others.

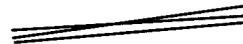
Pasta Shapes and Names



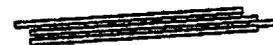
Fettuccine



Linguine



Angel hair



Spaghetti



Gemelli



Manicotti



Bow ties, farfalle



Medium egg noodles



Elbow macaroni



Wide Egg Noodles



Ziti



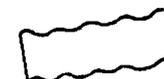
Rotini, twists, spirals



Radiatore



Orzo



Lasagne



Jumbo shells



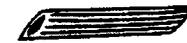
Alphabets



Wagon Wheels



Rigatoni



Mostaccioli, penne



Medium shells



Ditalini



Fusilli



Small shells