



## FESTIVE-READY TIPS

# HOLIDAY TIPS

## PREPARING FOR THANKSGIVING

- Don't forget to clean out the refrigerator before the holidays—a great time to eat what you have and clear out for the turkey.
- Set the table in advance so you can tackle it in the kitchen.
- Make seating arrangements for guests.
- Have containers ready for leftovers. Get disposable containers, container bags, aluminum foil, and disposable pans.
- Please don't do the planning by yourself; ask for friends and family to help.



## 3 WAYS TO THAW A TURKEY

### Refrigerator:

Safe to store the turkey for another 1 – 2 days in the refrigerator.

This is the USDA recommended thawing method.

**How to thaw:**  
Allow approximately 24 hrs. for every 4-5lbs of bird.



### Cold water:

Cook immediately after thawing.

**How to thaw:**  
Submerge the bird in cold water & change every 30 mins.



### Microwave:

Cook immediately after thawing.



**How to thaw:**  
Use defrost function based on weight

### DID YOU KNOW?

It's safe to cook a frozen turkey though cooking time will be 50% longer!

For more information on safe thawing methods, visit [fsis.usda.gov](https://fsis.usda.gov)



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## WHAT TO DO WITH LEFTOVER THANKSGIVING TURKEY

Don't let that delicious Thanksgiving turkey go to waste! Leftovers can be transformed into tasty meals that keep the holiday spirit going. Try making a comforting turkey soup or a hearty turkey pot pie. Shred the meat for turkey tacos, sandwiches, or wraps. You can also toss it into salads, pasta, or casseroles for quick and easy meals during the week. With a little creativity, your Thanksgiving leftovers can become new family favorites!

**TURKEY  
CRANBERRY  
SANDWICH  
RECIPE**



## LEFTOVER SAFETY

*Thanksgiving meals can leave you with a lot of leftovers, which we all want to take home. Make sure you have plenty of containers to store and enjoy for a couple of days. To ensure that every serving remains safe, follow these four guidelines:*

**TWO-HOUR RULE:** All perishable items should be refrigerated within two hours of coming out of the oven or refrigerator. After two hours, perishable food enters the Danger Zone (between 40°F to 140°F (4°C to 60°C)) where bacteria can multiply quickly and cause the food to become unsafe. If foods have been left out for more than two hours, discard them to prevent foodborne illness. Exception to the two-hour rule, if the food is exposed to temperatures above 90°F (32°C) (like a hot car or summer picnic), refrigerate it within 1 hour.

### USE SMALL AND SHALLOW

**CONTAINERS:** Store leftover food in small, shallow containers in the refrigerator until the Monday after Thanksgiving Day or in the freezer for later use. Shallow containers help cool leftovers more quickly than storing them in large containers.

### FREEZE OR CONSUME WITHIN FOUR DAYS:

Use the Monday after Thanksgiving as a reminder that it is the last day you can safely eat leftovers. If you want to keep leftovers longer, freeze them within that four-day period to enjoy later. Frozen food stays safe indefinitely, though the quality may decrease over time. If you store leftovers in the freezer, they will be of best quality within two to six months. Reheat leftovers to an internal temperature of 165°F (74°C).

**MICROWAVE FOOD SAFELY:** When reheating in the microwave, cover and rotate the food for even heating. Arrange food items evenly in a covered microwave safe glass or ceramic dish and add some liquid if needed. Because microwaves have cold spots, check the internal temperature of the food in several places with a food thermometer after allowing a resting time. Cooking continues for a longer time in dense foods such as a whole turkey or beef roast than in less dense foods like breads, small vegetables and fruits.



# COOKIE SWAP

1. Invite your friends and family.
2. Set a date
3. Decide on how many cookies for one to bring. Typically it is a dozen., but your choice.
4. Coordinate the types of cookies. Encourage your guest to decide the type of cookies they will make before event to avoid duplication and to have a variety.
5. Have them bring cookies packaged for individual servings or make an easy way to distribute. Cookie bags, boxes or tins work great.
6. The cookies should be labeled with their names and ingredients in case of allergies or dietary restrictions.
7. Share the recipe
8. Swap and enjoy the event. Everyone should be able to take equal number of cookies.

Don't forget to provide refreshments such as hot cocoa, or snack to complement the cookies.



## HOT COCOA BAR

- Make from scratch hot cocoa or hot cocoa packets from your Commissary.
- Pull out your festive cups
- Consider offering warm milk or alternative milk options like almond, soy, or oat milk for those with dietary preferences or restrictions.
- Offer a selection of cookies or biscotti
- Set out a small assortment of holiday-themed candies like truffles, chocolate-covered pretzels, or gingerbread cookies.
- Include fun stirrers like mini candy canes, cinnamon sticks, or colorful swizzle sticks.

### TOPPINGS

Marshmallows  
Chocolate shavings or cocoa powder  
Chocolate syrup  
Crushed peppermint candies  
Caramel or chocolate syrup  
Cinnamon sticks  
Sprinkles  
Whipped Cream

### FLAVORS

Peppermint extract  
Vanilla extract  
Cinnamon  
Chilli powder (for a spicy twist)  
Cinnamon sticks  
Bailey's Irish Cream or other liqueurs (for adults)

