

# Thanksgiving Planning Guide

Preparing the before week helps alleviate a lot of the stress of cooking a big Thanksgiving meal. So many things can be made ahead and frozen or kept in the fridge ready to bake or serve.  
(Serves 10 to 12 people.)

## THANKSGIVING WEEK

### Friday

- Print out recipes and make shopping list.
- Buy 20-pound frozen turkey and place in the fridge to begin defrosting. (If you're using another size of turkey, you'll need to [adjust your defrost times](#) accordingly.)

### Saturday

- Make [Lion House Rolls](#). Bake until they're slightly underdone, but still light-brown on top. Cool and freeze in zip-top bags.

### Sunday

- Prepare the [Dry-Brined Turkey](#). Place the turkey in a turkey-sized plastic oven bag or brining bag, breast-side up in the refrigerator.

### Monday

- If you'll need extra gravy, make [Turkey Stock](#).
- Turn the Dry-Brined Turkey (leaving it inside the bag) and massage the salt into the skin.

### Tuesday

- Make [Cranberry Jelly](#).
- Start the [Sweet Potato Casserole](#): prepare sweet potatoes and mix with ingredients—DO NOT add topping. Pour potato mixture into greased casserole pan; cover and refrigerate.
- Decide how many pies you will be making and make [Perfect Pie Crusts](#).
- Turn the Dry-Brined Turkey (leaving it inside the bag) and massage the salt into the skin.

### Wednesday

- Prep ingredients for [Dressing/Bread Stuffing](#): cut up bread and toast in oven. Cool. Chop vegetables. Seal in separate zip-top bags. (My crowd loves stuffing, so I generally make a double batch.)
- Make [Green Jell-O Salad](#). Cover and refrigerate.
- Start the [Sweet Potato Casserole](#): prepare sweet potatoes and mix with ingredients—DO NOT add topping. Pour potato mixture into greased casserole pan; cover and refrigerate.
- Prepare [Pumpkin Pie](#), [Pecan Pie](#), and/or [Lemon Chess Pie](#). Cover and refrigerate.
- Turn the Dry-Brined Turkey (leaving it inside the bag) and massage the salt into the skin. Remove from bag, wash salt off Dry-Brined Turkey, and leave uncovered in fridge overnight.

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# THANKSGIVING DAY

## In the Morning

- Remove Lion House Rolls from freezer and leave on a counter to thaw.
- Cook the Dressing/Bread Stuffing with prepared ingredients. Cover and refrigerate.

## Five Hours Before

- Remove the Dry-Brined Turkey from the refrigerator and leave at room temperature at least 1 hour before roasting. (Again, I'm cooking a 20-pound turkey, so I'll need at least 4 hours in the oven. The [roasting time](#) will depend on size of your bird and method of cooking.) Wait 45 minutes, then preheat oven to 450°F.

## Four Hours Before

- Transfer turkey to a roasting rack and place in preheated oven. After 30 minutes, reduce the oven temperature to 325°F. (Don't forget this step!)

## Three Hours Before

- Cook [Creamy Mashed Potatoes](#). Transfer prepared potatoes to a crockpot, pour a little milk on top, and heat on low until ready to serve. Stir the potatoes every so often and add more milk if necessary.
- Prep ingredients for [Roasted Green Beans](#) by snipping off the ends of the beans. Return to the refrigerator. In a zip-top bag, combine lemon juice, oil, and spices. Set aside.

## Two Hours Before

- Set the table. (Don't forget to place salt and pepper shakers on the table, along with any decorations you've created for your meal.)

## One Hour Before

- Place prepared Cranberry Jelly and any pre-purchased sides or appetizers (such as crackers, cheeseballs, or olives) in serving bowls for guests to snack on as they arrive.
- Set out drinks and a pitcher of ice water so people can help themselves.
- Use your senses in the kitchen—if the turkey starts smelling done early, test it!

## About 30 Minutes Before

- Remove the turkey from the oven and test for doneness. Use a meat thermometer inserted in the deepest part of the thigh, but not touching the bone, to see if your turkey is done (165°F). If the turkey is done, let sit 30 minutes before carving.
- Make gravy (directions [here](#)), using the drippings from the Dry-Brined Turkey and Turkey Stock you made earlier. Just before serving, whisk well and place in gravy boat.
- Add topping to Sweet Potato Casserole. Place the Dressing/Stuffing ring(s) on a baking sheet and place both in the oven. Watch carefully to make sure they don't burn.
- Preheat oven to 450°F and cook Roasted Green Beans until beans are crisp-tender.
- Place Lion House Rolls in oven until they're golden brown, hot, and ready to serve.

## Serve Dinner!

# Thanksgiving Recipe List

All of the recipes come from Barbara Bakes and its sister site, Pressure Cooking Today. I hope your family enjoys them as much as mine!

## Almond Joy Pie

<https://www.barbarabakes.com/coconut-cream-pie-with-a-chocolate-crumb-crust/>

## Cranberry Jelly

<https://www.pressurecookingtoday.com/pressure-cooker-cranberry-jelly/>

## Creamy Mashed Potatoes

<https://www.pressurecookingtoday.com/creamy-mashed-potatoes-in-the-pressure-cooker/>

## Dressing/Bread Stuffing

<https://www.barbarabakes.com/2008/12/australian-thanksgiving/>

## Dry-Brined Turkey

<https://www.barbarabakes.com/thanksgiving-menu-and-recipes-dry-brined-turkey-and-broccoli-pancetta-saute/>

## Green Jell-O Salad

<https://www.barbarabakes.com/2008/12/australian-thanksgiving/>

## Lemon Chess Pie

<https://www.barbarabakes.com/lemon-blackberry-chess-pie/>

## Lion House Rolls

<https://www.barbarabakes.com/lion-house-rolls-recipe/>

## Pecan Pie

<https://www.barbarabakes.com/classic-pecan-pie-and-thanksgiving-recipe-roundup/>

## Perfect Pie Crusts

<https://www.barbarabakes.com/perfect-pie-crust-tutorial/>

## Pumpkin Pie

<https://www.pressurecookingtoday.com/pressure-cooker-pumpkin-pie/>

## Roasted Green Beans

<https://www.barbarabakes.com/roasted-green-beans/>

## Sweet Potato Casserole

<https://www.pressurecookingtoday.com/pressure-cooker-sweet-potato-casserole/>

## Turkey Stock

<https://www.pressurecookingtoday.com/pressure-cooker-turkey-stock/>