



*Two-Hour  
Turkey*



# Two-Hour Turkey

Start to finish: 3¼ hours (20 minutes active), plus resting

Servings: 8 to 10

The trickiest part of roasting a turkey often is the pileup at the oven. Casseroles, dinner rolls and dressing all vie for oven space that's dominated by the bird. But by spatchcocking the turkey (that is, cutting out the backbone and flattening the bird so all of the meat is on the same plane), allowing it to stand at room temperature for an hour before roasting and roasting in a moderately hot oven, the centerpiece of the meal can be in and out of the oven in two hours or less. We also dry-brine the turkey, which results in plump, juicy, well-seasoned meat and crisp, golden-brown skin.

Don't cover the turkey during refrigeration after salting it. This allows moisture on the surface to evaporate for better browning and crisping of the skin in the oven.

- 2- to 14-pound turkey, neck and giblets discarded
- Kosher salt and ground black pepper
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 3 medium celery stalks, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 large yellow onion, halved and sliced ¼ inch thick
- 2 large rosemary sprigs
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

Place the turkey breast side down on a cutting board. Using sturdy kitchen shears, cut along one side of the backbone top to bottom. Repeat on the other side of the backbone, then remove and discard, or reserve for making stock. Open up the sides of the bird, flattening it as much as possible. Sprinkle with 2 teaspoons salt, then flip the turkey breast up, making sure the sides are splayed out, not folded under.



Using the heel of your hand, press down firmly on the thickest part of the breast until the wishbone snaps. If desired, remove and discard the wing tips or reserve for making stock; alternatively, tuck the wings to the back. Sprinkle  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons salt evenly over the skin side of the turkey, then transfer skin side up to a rimmed baking sheet. Refrigerate, uncovered, for at least 2 hours or up to 18 hours.

One hour before roasting, remove the turkey from the refrigerator and let stand at room temperature. Heat the oven to  $425^{\circ}\text{F}$  with a rack in the lowest position. In a large roasting pan, toss the carrots, celery, onion and rosemary. Transfer the turkey to the pan, placing it breast up on top of the vegetables. Drizzle the oil over the turkey, and, using your hands or a brush, spread the oil so it fully coats the skin. Sprinkle lightly with pepper.

When the turkey has stood at room temperature for 1 hour, add 1 cup water to the pan (do not pour the water over the bird) and transfer to the oven. Roast until an instant thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the breast reaches  $165^{\circ}\text{F}$ , about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  hours for a 12-pound bird or about 2 hours for a 14-pounder. Remove from the oven and let the turkey rest in the roasting pan for at least 20 minutes. When ready to carve, transfer to a cutting board. If desired, strain the contents of the roasting pan and use the drippings to make gravy.