

# SAFELY THAWING A TURKEY



THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS OF THAWING A TURKEY FOR YOUR THANKSGIVING MEAL. **IN TERMS OF FOOD SAFETY AND PROPER THAWING HABITS, IT IS BEST TO THAW TURKEY IN THE REFRIGERATOR TO PREVENT BACTERIAL GROWTH.** THE SLOW THAWING OF FROZEN FOODS ALLOWS FOR MINIMUM GROWTH OF BACTERIA, WHICH CAN CAUSE FOODBORNE ILLNESS.



## REFRIGERATOR

The USDA recommends thawing in a **refrigerator** with a temperature set at 40°F or lower. Store it in the refrigerator in its original sealed packaging until thawing is complete. Once thawed, it can be left in the refrigerator for 1-2 days before cooking.

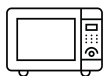
Size of Turkey	Thawing Time in Refrigerator
4-12 pounds	1-3 days
12-16 pounds	3-4 days
16-20 pounds	4-5 days
20-24 pounds	5-6 days



## COLD WATER

Fill the kitchen sink with **cold water** and submerge the turkey (in its original packaging and in a leak-proof plastic bag) in the water. The water should be changed every 30 minutes until the turkey is thawed. Once the turkey is defrosted in water, it must be cooked immediately.

Size of Turkey	Thawing Time in Cold Water
4-12 pounds	2-6 hours
12-16 pounds	6-8 hours
16-20 pounds	8-10 hours
20-24 pounds	10-12 hours



## MICROWAVE



This thawing method requires a turkey that is small enough to fit in a **microwave**. Remove all packaging from the turkey and place in a microwave-safe container to catch juices that may leak. Using the defrost setting, follow the instruction manual for the minutes per pound it needs to be thawed. Once thawed, it must be cooked immediately.