



# Planning a Christmas dinner



## The run up to Christmas

Step	Things to do	Details	Done?
1	Make sure you have the right kitchenware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Roasting dish    ★ Steamer    ★ Potato masher    ★ Vegetable peeler</li> <li>★ Sharp knives    ★ Carving knife    ★ Gravy boat    ★ Serving spoons</li> </ul> <p>Make sure you have enough cutlery, crockery, and glassware for all your guests, you may also want to buy festive napkins and Christmas crackers</p>	
2	Clear out the fridge	You need enough space for your turkey and any vegetables, sauces and / or side dishes that you're going to prepare in advance!	
3	Make your shopping list	<p>How many people are you cooking for? What are their dietary requirements? What do you want to serve, and which ingredients have you already got?</p> <p><b>Remember to think about:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ <b>Nibbles:</b> ready-made canapés, or the ingredients to make your own (e.g. rye bread with salmon and cream cheese, stuffed dates, sausage rolls, or anything you fancy!)</li> <li>★ <b>Meat:</b> turkey, ham, beef, lamb, or vegetarian and vegan options (e.g. parsnip soup, nut roast, mushroom stuffing)</li> <li>★ <b>Vegetables:</b> you'll probably need to 3-4 different vegetables, and per person that amounts to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5-6 sprouts</li> <li>• 1/4 small red cabbage</li> <li>• 2 florets of broccoli</li> <li>• 1 small-medium parsnip</li> <li>• 2 medium potatoes for roasting (King Edward, Maris Piper, Desiree or similar)</li> <li>• 1 carrot</li> <li>• 1/2 swede</li> </ul> </li> <li>★ <b>Sides, sauces, and cooking oil:</b> Will you be making your own, or buying them pre-made? Find some recipe ideas for the following at the end of this checklist. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gravy</li> <li>• Stuffing</li> <li>• Pigs in blankets</li> <li>• Chestnuts</li> <li>• Cranberry sauce</li> <li>• Bread sauce</li> <li>• For alternative meats, horseradish sauce (for beef), mustard (for ham or beef) or mint sauce (for lamb)</li> <li>• Honey and mustard glaze to roast vegetables in</li> <li>• Red cabbage dish</li> <li>• Goose fat to cook your potatoes in, or your preferred cooking oil</li> </ul> </li> <li>★ <b>Dessert:</b> Christmas pudding, yule log, trifle, mince pies, a cheese board, or all of the above!</li> <li>★ <b>Drinks:</b> Prosecco, Champagne, Bucks Fizz, wine, beer, sherry, mixers, soft drinks, or anything else</li> </ul>	
4	Start shopping	You might want to start shopping early to see if you can spot any bargains.	

## Simple sides and sauces

Making sides and sauces yourself? Add these ingredients to your shopping list

Gravy	If you're making your own, you could use giblets and turkey juice, or a white onion, a sprig of thyme, a bay leaf, 2 chicken stock cubes, and 250ml dry white wine
Stuffing	You'll need an onion, 80g white breadcrumbs, dried sage, and 1 egg to make your own
Cranberry Sauce	You'll need 250g fresh cranberries, 200g caster sugar, 100ml water, and greaseproof paper to make it yourself
Bread Sauce	You'll need a large onion, 115g of white breadcrumbs, 15 cloves of garlic, a bay leaf, 8 peppercorns, 1 pint of milk, 50g butter, 2 tablespoons of double cream and salt and pepper to make your own
Red Cabbage Side Dish	You may want 1 red onion, 1 cinnamon stick, ¼ teaspoon ground cloves, ¼ teaspoon nutmeg, 1 apple, 3 tablespoons of sugar, 150ml balsamic vinegar and orange juice.

## A few days left

Step	Things to do	Details	Done?
1	Defrost the turkey	If your turkey is frozen, it will need around 10-12 hours per kg in the fridge to defrost thoroughly.	
2	Make your sauce(s)	If you've decided to make your own sauces and gravy, you could make them now and freeze them until the day.	

## Christmas eve

Step	Things to do	Details	Done?
1	Prepare your vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make your red cabbage dish and store it in an airtight container in the fridge.</li> <li>• Peel and chop your carrots and sprouts, and prep your broccoli.</li> <li>• Store sprouts uncooked in a cool bag in the fridge.</li> <li>• Either store chopped carrots in cold water in the fridge, or roast them in advance to then reheat on the day.</li> <li>• Parboil your parsnips, roast them, let them cool and wrap them in clingfilm to be stored in the fridge overnight.</li> </ul>	
2	Prepare sides and potatoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make your stuffing balls and store in a container in the fridge.</li> <li>• Prepare pigs in blankets and cover in tin foil in the fridge.</li> <li>• Chop potatoes into your preferred even-sized pieces, parboil them, then roast them in goose fat or oil. When they're done, let them cool down, pour off any extra fat, cover them with tin foil, and store them in the fridge.</li> </ul>	
3	Prepare dessert	If you're making your own desserts, now is a good time to do it!	

## Christmas day

Time	Things to do	Details	Done?
9:00AM	Take the turkey out of the fridge	Add the stuffing and rub herbs and butter into the turkey.	
9:50AM	Put the turkey in the oven	<p>The British Turkey information service recommends that, if the bird is over 4kg, it will need 20 minutes per kilogramme, plus 90 minutes, at around 180°C. If it is under 4kg, it will need 20 minutes per kilogramme, plus 70 mins, at the same temperature.</p> <p>For an average-sized 5kg turkey, this works out to 3 hours and 10 minutes in the oven. If you're putting stuffing inside it, you will need to cook it for slightly longer.</p> <p><b>Remember:</b> cook it breast-side up!</p>	
11:45AM	Prepare any vegetables and potatoes that you haven't done already	You have some spare time to do any prep that still needs to be done - if you've done everything, you can relax for a while instead!	
1:15PM	Take the turkey out, check it is fully cooked, and leave it to rest covered with tin foil and towels. If you haven't already roasted your potatoes, put them in the oven now	The turkey will need at least 30-45 minutes to rest so that it won't be dry to eat.	
1:25PM	Put the stuffing balls, pigs in blankets, and any vegetables that you haven't already roasted in the oven	For example, your carrots could be roasted in their honey glaze now, along with the parsnips if you haven't done them.	
1:45PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put your pre-cooked roast potatoes in the oven</li> <li>• Reheat any pre-roasted vegetables in the oven, microwave, or frying pan, depending on preference</li> <li>• Boil or steam your sprouts and broccoli</li> </ul>	For example, reheat your frozen roasted carrots and your parsnips.	
1:50PM	Reheat your sauce and gravy	Do this in the microwave or a saucepan, depending on preference.	
1:55PM	Put your Christmas pudding on to steam, so it's ready a couple of hours after you've finished eating your main meal	Check the packet to see how long an individual prebought Christmas pudding will take.	
2:00PM	Carve the turkey, serve everything, and enjoy!	You've made it - the perfect Christmas dinner!	