

Budget & Guests

Thanksgiving _____

Count everyone at the table, kids included. Multiply by what you can spend per person, and that's your budget for the whole meal.

GUESTS		PER PERSON		MY BUDGET
_____	×	\$ _____	=	\$ _____

Who brings what

Ask each family to bring one dish and name it, so nothing doubles up. Ask 4 weeks out, confirm the week before.

NAME	DISH	ASKED	CONFIRMED
_____	_____	☐	☐
_____	_____	☐	☐
_____	_____	☐	☐
_____	_____	☐	☐
_____	_____	☐	☐
_____	_____	☐	☐
_____	_____	☐	☐

Who's coming

NAME	ADULTS	KIDS

Total		

Budget check

My budget	\$ _____
Menu estimate (page 2)	\$ _____
Spent so far	\$ _____
Left to spend	\$ _____

Allergies and food needs

Guests _____

Total (Actual)	\$
÷ Guests	
= Per person	\$
Over or under my budget	\$

Check the pantry before you shop and cross these off.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Sugar, butter, eggs | ☐ |
| Pumpkin pie spice | ☐ |
| Salt, pepper, oil | ☐ |
| Foil, roasting pan, thermometer | ☐ |

Our Example Menu for 10

Guests 10

How we filled in page 2. Prices from one walmart.com store (Sacramento, CA) on Oct 22, 2026, before tax, with salt, pepper, oil and drinks left out. Prices change by store and week, so price your own list.

DISH	WHAT TO BUY	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL
Roast turkey and gravy	16 lb frozen turkey, 2 gravy packets	\$15.08	
Stuffing	2 boxes stuffing mix, onions, celery, chicken broth	\$7.23	
Mashed potatoes	5 lb russets, 1 lb butter	\$5.53	
Roasted sweet potatoes	3 lb sweet potatoes	\$3.88	
Green bean casserole	2 bags frozen green beans, mushroom soup, fried onions	\$3.88	
Cranberry sauce	12 oz fresh cranberries, sugar	\$3.26	
Rolls	12 brown and serve rolls	\$1.05	
2 pumpkin pies	2 cans pumpkin, 2 cans evaporated milk, eggs, 2 crusts, spice, cream	\$12.43	
Total (21 items)		\$52.34	

Cost per person

Total (estimate)	\$52.34
÷ Guests	10
= Per person	about \$5.23

With the pantry check

Sugar, butter, eggs and pumpkin pie spice already at home take \$9.67 off: the menu for 10 comes to **\$42.67**.

The turkey and gravy line covers 16 lb on purpose: the extra is planned leftovers (page 6).

Notes for next year

Shopping List

Store _____

Our menu for 10, by store section. Tick "have it" for anything already at home. Buy the rest by the week shown: shelf-stable things first, so the last trip is small.

ITEM	QTY	HAVE IT	NEED IT	PRICE	BUY BY
MEAT					
Frozen whole turkey	16 lb	☐	☐		3 weeks out
PRODUCE					
Fresh cranberries	12 oz	☐	☐		4 weeks out (freeze)
Russet potatoes	5 lb	☐	☐		Sat to Mon before
Sweet potatoes	3 lb	☐	☐		Sat to Mon before
Yellow onions	3 lb	☐	☐		Sat to Mon before
Celery	1 bunch	☐	☐		Sat to Mon before
DAIRY					
Butter	1 lb	☐	☐		2 weeks out
Large eggs	12	☐	☐		Sat to Mon before
Heavy whipping cream	16 oz	☐	☐		Sat to Mon before
FROZEN AND BAKERY					
Cut green beans	2 × 16 oz	☐	☐		2 weeks out
Deep dish pie crusts	2 ct	☐	☐		2 weeks out
Brown and serve rolls	12 ct	☐	☐		Sat to Mon before
PANTRY					
Stuffing mix	2 × 6 oz	☐	☐		4 weeks out
Chicken broth	32 oz	☐	☐		4 weeks out
Turkey gravy mix	2 packets	☐	☐		4 weeks out
Cream of mushroom soup	10.5 oz	☐	☐		2 weeks out
French fried onions	6 oz	☐	☐		2 weeks out
BAKING					
Pure pumpkin	2 × 15 oz	☐	☐		4 weeks out
Evaporated milk	2 × 12 oz	☐	☐		4 weeks out
Pumpkin pie spice	2 oz	☐	☐		2 weeks out
Granulated sugar	4 lb	☐	☐		2 weeks out
ALSO NEED					
		☐	☐		
		☐	☐		
		☐	☐		
Total					



Countdown to Thursday

Year _____

Write this year's dates in the second column, then tick each job as you go.

WHEN	DATE	TO DO
4 weeks out	_____	☐ Set the guest count and budget (page 1), pick the menu (page 2) ☐ Ask guests to bring a dish; check the pantry ☐ Buy shelf-stable items; buy cranberries and freeze them
3 weeks out	_____	☐ Buy the frozen turkey and keep it frozen; clear freezer space
2 weeks out	_____	☐ Pie supplies, butter, soup, fried onions, frozen green beans ☐ Compare the turkey ad price with what you paid
1 week out	_____	☐ Confirm who brings what
Thaw day	_____	☐ Move the turkey to the fridge (work out the day in the box below)
Sat to Mon before	_____	☐ Fresh produce, rolls, cream, eggs
Tuesday	_____	☐ Make cranberry sauce; chop onions and celery
Wednesday	_____	☐ Bake the pies; roast the sweet potatoes ☐ Assemble the green bean casserole and stuffing; cover and chill
Thursday	_____	☐ Turkey in (plan the day on page 6) ☐ Leftovers in the fridge within 2 hours

When to move the turkey to the fridge

Weight _____ lb ÷ 4 = _____ days

Count back from Thursday. Move it on _____

Thaw it in the fridge at 40 °F or below: about 24 hours for every 4 to 5 lb. A thawed turkey keeps 1 to 2 days in the fridge, so a little early is fine.

Running late? Cold water takes about 30 minutes per lb. Change the water every 30 minutes and cook the turkey right away.

TURKEY	DAYS IN THE FRIDGE
12 to 16 lb	3 to 4 days
16 to 20 lb	4 to 5 days
20 to 24 lb	5 to 6 days

Thaw times: USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS).

Fridge and freezer space

Work back from dinner time. Our example: a 16 lb unstuffed turkey at 325 °F takes 3¾ to 4¼ hours (FSIS), so for dinner at 3 pm it goes in about 10:15 am, the chilled sides go in next to it at 1:45 pm, and it comes out to rest at 2:30 pm.

[illegible]

Leftovers log

[illegible]