# Holiday Dinner Countdown Checklist

**TheRecipeBuffet.com**

Dinner date: _____ Serving time: _____ Guests: _____

## One Week Out

- ☐ Pick the menu
- ☐ Count guests and check plates, glasses and serving dishes
- ☐ Map the oven: what goes in, at what temperature, and when
- ☐ Write the shopping list
- ☐ Clean out the fridge and freezer

Notes: _____

## 4 to 5 Days Out

- ☐ Start thawing a frozen turkey in the fridge (see thaw chart below)
- ☐ Shop for pantry and non-perishable items
- ☐ Make space: drinks to a cooler

Notes: _____

## 2 to 3 Days Out

- ☐ Buy fresh and perishable items
- ☐ Make dishes that hold well ahead of time

Notes: _____

## The Day Before

- ☐ Chop veggies and store in labeled containers
- ☐ Set the table
- ☐ Clear and clean the counters
- ☐ Set up stations: prep, raw meat, hot landing zone, serving, dishes
- ☐ Label serving dishes with sticky notes

- ☐ Get the cooler and ice ready

Notes: _____

## Dinner Day Schedule (work backward from serving time)

| Time | Task |
|---|---|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

## After Dinner

- ☐ Put leftovers away within 2 hours, in shallow containers
- ☐ Label with the date
- ☐ Eat or freeze within 4 days
- ☐ Reheat leftovers to 165 F

## Safe Numbers

- Fridge: 40 F or below
- Hot food held at: 140 F or above
- Poultry and reheated leftovers: 165 F
- Food left out: no more than 2 hours (1 hour above 90 F)

# Turkey Thaw Chart

| Turkey size | Refrigerator | Cold water (change water every 30 min) |
|---|---|---|
| 4 to 12 lb | 1 to 3 days | 2 to 6 hours |
| 12 to 16 lb | 3 to 4 days | 6 to 8 hours |
| 16 to 20 lb | 4 to 5 days | 8 to 10 hours |
| 20 to 24 lb | 5 to 6 days | 10 to 12 hours |

Thawed in the fridge: cook within 1 to 2 days. Cold-water thawed: cook right away.

My helpers and their jobs: _____

*Source: USDA FSIS and FoodSafety.gov. Visit TheRecipeBuffet.com for more recipes and kitchen tips.*