

SLIM's Guide to Stress-Free Thanksgiving Prep

Slim breaks down shopping, cleaning and cooking into manageable bites so you can *actually* enjoy yourself!

Hosting Thanksgiving at your house this year?

With so many details to coordinate, guests to host and dishes to cook, having a plan will save headaches and pave the way for a beautiful feast you can really feel grateful for.

Slim's breakdown of just what to do and when, from the early preparations to Thanksgiving day, can help.

One Month Ahead

Figure out a few basics: How many people will you be inviting? Do you want it to feel elegant, cozy, casual? Start a list that you can add to over the month as you think of things you need.



- Order your turkey early, especially if you are planning to get a heritage bird (*they do sell out*).
 - Choose recipes and figure out who will be making what.
 - Do a walk-through of your house. Does anything need fixing or updating before the big day? Make a plan to take care of repairs and decorating projects now, while you still have ample time. *Call Slim Fixin's! ;)*
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- Clear space in the pantry, checking levels of staple ingredients as you go.
 - Clean the coat closet — move extra coats into another space temporarily if you need to, so guests can use the main hall closet on the big day.
 - Figure out now if you will need to rent, borrow or buy anything — extra chairs, serving platters, silverware etc.

Two to Three Weeks Ahead

- Make any DIY table decor table decor you'd like to personalize, such as napkin rings, candleholders and place cards.
- Make your shopping lists: one for perishables and another for nonperishables.
- Make your cooking schedule. Look up all the recipes you will be making, noting down cooking times and temperatures, as well as which dishes can be made in advance (*and how far in advance*).
- Shop for all the items on your nonperishables list, but don't unpack them. Instead leave them neatly packed in their bags and tuck them away in a closet or cupboard. This saves you time putting everything away now — and helps on turkey day when you don't have to go rummaging around for, say, the canned pumpkin.

A few extras you may want to think about including: paper takeout containers for handing out leftovers, crayons and butcher paper for the kids' table and wineglass charms or removable stickers for glasses.

If you still need extra chairs, platters or coffee cups and haven't yet bought or borrowed them, now is the time. A local party rental business is a good option.



Thanksgiving Shopping List

Bread/Grains <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> rolls/biscuits<input type="checkbox"/> stuffing mix<input type="checkbox"/> pie crust<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____	Dairy <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> milk<input type="checkbox"/> cream<input type="checkbox"/> whipped cream/ dairy topping<input type="checkbox"/> butter<input type="checkbox"/> margarine<input type="checkbox"/> eggs<input type="checkbox"/> cheese<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____	Frozen <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> vegetables<input type="checkbox"/> frozen dinners<input type="checkbox"/> sugar-free ice cream<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Meat <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> turkey<input type="checkbox"/> Tofurky<input type="checkbox"/> ham<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____	Snacks <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> nuts<input type="checkbox"/> chips<input type="checkbox"/> dip<input type="checkbox"/> fruit/veggie plate<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____	Condiments & Baking <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> flour<input type="checkbox"/> sugar<input type="checkbox"/> vanilla extract<input type="checkbox"/> honey<input type="checkbox"/> oil<input type="checkbox"/> marshmallows<input type="checkbox"/> cinnamon<input type="checkbox"/> bay leaves<input type="checkbox"/> nutmeg<input type="checkbox"/> pumpkin pie spice<input type="checkbox"/> nuts<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Beverages <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> coffee/tea<input type="checkbox"/> wine<input type="checkbox"/> apple juice<input type="checkbox"/> sparkling cider<input type="checkbox"/> soda<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____	Cans/Jars <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> pumpkin<input type="checkbox"/> broth<input type="checkbox"/> olives<input type="checkbox"/> pickles<input type="checkbox"/> soup<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____	Fruits/Veggies <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> apples<input type="checkbox"/> celery<input type="checkbox"/> cranberries<input type="checkbox"/> garlic<input type="checkbox"/> green beans<input type="checkbox"/> onions<input type="checkbox"/> oranges<input type="checkbox"/> squash<input type="checkbox"/> sweet potatoes<input type="checkbox"/> _____

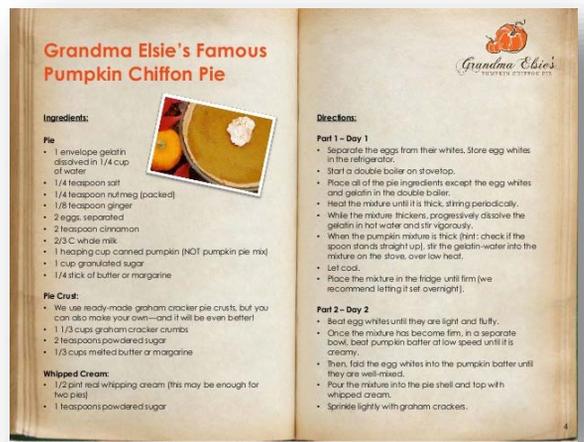
A Per-Person & GUIDE For Planning THANKSGIVING DINNER



The Weekend Before

- Give your house an all-over cleaning. Don't waste your time with hidden areas and deep clutter — focus on the entryway, bathrooms, dining room and living room.
- Tidy up the front porch, check porch lighting and add a few fresh potted plants or a wreath on the door.
- Clean out the fridge and freezer.
- **If you're buying a frozen turkey, pick it up now and begin thawing it in fridge.**
- Shop for and begin cooking dishes that can be made ahead and frozen, like pie dough.
- Review the menu and gather all necessary serving pieces and trivets in one spot; use sticky notes to label each platter with the dish it will hold.
- Polish any silver you'll be using.

- If you want to be **super-organized**, print copies of all your Thanksgiving recipes and put them in a presentation binder with clear plastic sleeves. After the big day, you can add notes and shopping lists, and next year you'll be ready to go!



Thanksgiving Week

- Shop for perishables.
- Pick up the turkey if you're buying fresh.
- Unless you made a Thanksgiving binder over the weekend, now is the time to gather your recipes. Pin copies to a bulletin board, tape them to the kitchen wall or at least bookmark them in your cookbooks for easy reference.
- Write the cooking plan (oven temperatures and cooking times) on a whiteboard or tape it to the wall, somewhere that you and your helpers can easily check it.

The Night Before

- Set the table if you're serving family style or set up the buffet.
- Put labeled serving dishes and implements on trivets on the table or buffet.
- Tidy up around the house.
- Set up the kids' table.
- Prep any dishes you can to ease the workload for the next day.
- Put anything you made in advance and froze in the fridge to thaw.
- Arrange flowers.

How to Set a Table

(visit [Slim Fixin's Tips & Downloads Page](http://www.slimfixin.com) to learn how to "properly" set a table!)



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On Thanksgiving Day!

- Fill a dishpan with soapy water and use it to clean as you go.
- Start the turkey in the morning and follow your cooking plan.
- **If anyone offers to help, accept!**
- Wrap up leftovers promptly to avoid food-borne illnesses. If you're giving leftovers to guests, pack the food in takeout containers and store it in the fridge until it's time to go.
- Run a load of dishes in the dishwasher before sitting down to dessert.

Now sit back and enjoy that pie!

