

COOK'S

ILLUSTRATED

ROAST CHICKEN WITH ROOT VEGETABLES

Serves 4 to 6. Published September 1, 2006.

The times given in the recipe are designed to work with a 6- to 8-pound chicken. It's possible to roast a slightly smaller bird (around 5 pounds) by reducing the roasting time in step 4 to about 25 minutes, but if all you can find are 3- to 4- pound chickens, see the related recipe for Two Roast Chickens with Root Vegetables. Begin carving the chicken as soon as the vegetables are placed underneath the broiler. If using medium potatoes (2 to 3 inches in diameter), cut in half. If using large potatoes (3 to 4 inches in diameter), cut into quarters. We prefer a large, traditional (not nonstick) roasting pan for this recipe; if using a nonstick roasting pan, refrain from turning up the oven to broil when cooking the vegetables and stir them every 5 to 7 minutes to ensure they don't become too dark. If your broiler does not accommodate a roasting pan, continue to cook the vegetables at 500 degrees until done. You can substitute the following seasonal vegetables for any of those in the recipe: beets, celery root, fennel, rutabagas, and turnips; peel these vegetables (except for the fennel) and cut them into 2- to 3-inch pieces.

INGREDIENTS

Chicken and Brine

- 1 1/2** cups table salt
- 1 1/2** cups sugar
- 2** medium heads garlic , outer papery skins removed, cloves separated, unpeeled, and crushed
- 6** bay leaves , crumbled
- 1** whole chicken (6 to 8 pounds), giblets removed and discarded
- Ground black pepper
- 1** cup low-sodium chicken broth , or more as needed

Vegetables

- 1** pound small red potatoes (1 1/2- to 2-inch diameter), scrubbed and unpeeled
- 1** pound medium carrots , peeled, cut into 2- to 3-inch pieces, tapered ends left whole, large upper portions halved lengthwise
- 1/2** pound parsnips , peeled, cut into 2- to 3-inch pieces, tapered ends left whole, large upper portions halved lengthwise
- 1/2** pound yellow onions (small, 2- to 3-inch diameter), peeled, root end left intact, and quartered
- 3** tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2** teaspoon table salt
- 1/8** teaspoon ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

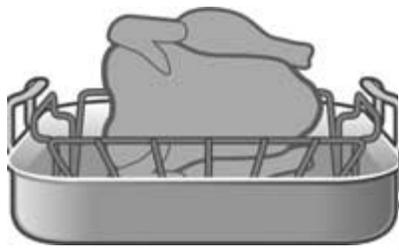
- 1.** **FOR THE CHICKEN AND BRINE:** Dissolve salt and sugar in 1 gallon cold water in large container. Stir in garlic and bay; immerse chicken and refrigerate until fully seasoned, about 2 hours.
- 2.** Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Set V-rack in large flameproof roasting pan and lightly spray with nonstick cooking spray. Remove chicken from brine and thoroughly pat dry with paper towels.
- 3.** Season chicken on all sides with pepper; set wing side up on prepared V-rack and roast for 30 minutes. Remove roasting pan from oven and, using 2 wads of paper towels, rotate chicken so other wing side faces up; continue to roast for 30 minutes.
- 4.** Remove roasting pan from oven and, using 2 large wads paper towels, rotate chicken breast side up. Add 1 cup broth and continue to roast until chicken is golden brown and instant-read thermometer registers 160 degrees inserted in thickest part of breast and 175

degrees in thickest part of thigh, about 40 minutes. (If necessary, add more broth to maintain thin layer of broth on bottom of roasting pan.) Transfer chicken to cutting board and let rest, uncovered, while roasting vegetables; remove V-rack from roasting pan.

5. **5. FOR THE VEGETABLES:** While chicken is resting, adjust oven rack to middle position and increase oven temperature to 500 degrees. Using wooden spoon, scrape browned bits in roasting pan and pour liquid into fat separator. Return now-empty roasting pan to oven and heat until oven reaches 500 degrees, about 5 minutes. Toss vegetables with oil, salt, and pepper.
6. 6. Scatter vegetables in single layer in roasting pan, arranging potatoes and onions cut side down. Roast, without stirring, for 25 minutes.
7. 7. While vegetables are roasting, pour off 1/2 cup liquid from fat separator; discard remaining liquid and fat. Remove roasting pan from oven and heat broiler. Drizzle liquid over vegetables and broil, 5 minutes. Stir vegetables, coating well with reducing liquid, and continue to broil until tender and deep golden brown, about 5 minutes. Transfer vegetables to serving platter.
8. 8. While vegetables are broiling, carve chicken. Transfer to platter with vegetables and serve.

STEP-BY-STEP

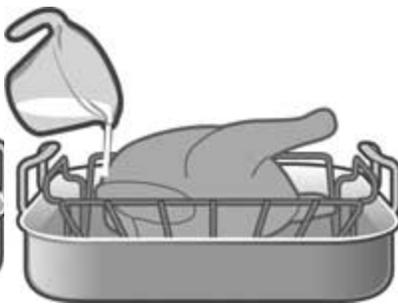
Which Comes First, the Chicken or the Vegetables?



1. Roast chicken, wing side up, for 30 minutes.



2. Roast chicken, other wing side up, for 30 minutes.



3. Flip chicken breast side up, pour broth into pan, and roast for 40 minutes.



4. Transfer chicken to cutting board to rest, and pour drippings into fat separator.



5. Reheat roasting pan while oven heats up to 500 degrees.



6. Toss vegetables with oil, add to heated roasting pan, and roast for 25 minutes.



7. Turn oven setting to broil and pour defatted drippings into pan, tossing with vegetables. Broil for 10 minutes.

TECHNIQUE

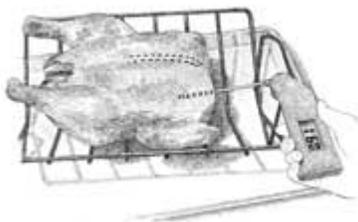
Better Chicken Flipping To flip a chicken or turkey during roasting (the test kitchen's preferred technique for ensuring even browning), we've always recommended grasping both ends with a generous handful of wadded-up paper towels. It's an effective method, but one that can be awkward.



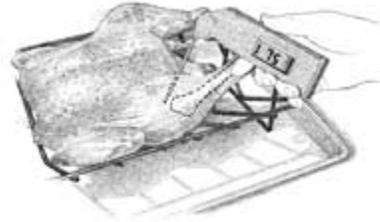
We came up with a hybrid technique that was even more reliable. Simply insert a sturdy metal or wooden spoon with a long handle and large head into the cavity of the bird. While guiding the other end of the chicken using paper towels, lift the spoon, flip the bird, then gently deposit it back onto the roasting rack. Just don't forget to remove the spoon before putting the bird back into the oven.

TECHNIQUE

Checking Chicken Doneness Taking a chicken's temperature can be tricky, no matter how good your thermometer. For the most precise readings, follow the procedures below. Also, it's important to test both breasts and both thighs in multiple spots.

**WHITE MEAT:**

Insert the thermometer into the thickest part of the breast from the neck end, keeping it parallel to the breastbone. The white meat is done when the temperature reaches 160 degrees.

**DARK MEAT:**

Insert the thermometer at an angle into the thickest part of the thigh-located between the drumstick and breast-taking care not to hit bone. The dark meat is done when the temperature reaches 175 degrees.



America's Test Kitchen is a 2,500-square-foot kitchen located just outside of Boston. It is the home of Cook's Country and Cook's Illustrated magazines and is the workday destination for more than three dozen test cooks, editors, and cookware specialists. Our mission is to test recipes until we understand how and why they work and arrive at the best version. We also test kitchen equipment and supermarket ingredients in search of brands that offer the best value and performance. You can watch

us work by tuning in to America's Test Kitchen (www.americastestkitchen.com) on public television.

COOK'S

ILLUSTRATED

TWO ROAST CHICKENS WITH ROOT VEGETABLES

Serves 4 to 6. Published September 1, 2006.

You can replace the two chickens with a 6- 8-pound chicken, see related recipe. Begin carving the chicken as soon as the vegetables are placed underneath the broiler. If using medium potatoes (2 to 3 inches in diameter), cut in half. If using large potatoes (3 to 4 inches in diameter), cut into quarters. We prefer a large, traditional (not nonstick) roasting pan for this recipe; if using a nonstick roasting pan, refrain from turning up the oven to broil when cooking the vegetables and stir them every 5 to 7 minutes to ensure they don't become too dark. If your broiler does not accommodate a roasting pan, continue to cook the vegetables at 500 degrees until done. You can substitute the following seasonal vegetables for any of those in the recipe: beets, celery root, fennel, rutabagas, and turnips; peel these vegetables (except for the fennel) and cut them into 2- to 3-inch pieces.

INGREDIENTS

Chicken and Brine

- 1 1/2** cups table salt
- 1 1/2** cups sugar
- 2** medium heads garlic , outer papery skins removed, cloves separated, unpeeled, and crushed
- 6** bay leaves , crumbled
- 2** whole chickens (3 to 4 pounds each), giblets removed and discarded
- Ground black pepper
- 1** cup low-sodium chicken broth , or more as needed

Vegetables

- 1** pound small red potatoes (1 1/2- to 2-inch diameter), scrubbed and unpeeled
- 1** pound medium carrots , peeled, cut into 2- to 3-inch pieces, tapered ends left whole, large upper portions halved lengthwise
- 1/2** pound parsnips , peeled, cut into 2- to 3-inch pieces, tapered ends left whole, large upper portions halved lengthwise
- 1/2** pound yellow onions (small, 2- to 3-inch diameter), peeled, root end left intact, and quartered
- 3** tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2** teaspoon table salt
- 1/8** teaspoon ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** **FOR THE CHICKENS AND BRINE:** Dissolve salt and sugar in 1 gallon cold water in large container. Stir in garlic and bay; immerse chickens and refrigerate until fully seasoned, about 1 hour.
- 2.** Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Set V-rack in large flameproof roasting pan and lightly spray with nonstick cooking spray. Remove chickens from brine and thoroughly pat dry with paper towels.
- 3.** Season chickens on all sides with pepper; set wing side up on prepared V-rack and roast for 20 minutes. Remove roasting pan from oven and, using 2 wads of paper towels, rotate chickens so other wing side faces up; continue to roast for 20 minutes.
- 4.** Remove roasting pan from oven and, using 2 large wads paper towels, rotate chickens breast side up. Add 1 cup broth and continue to roast until chickens are golden brown and instant-read thermometer registers 160 degrees inserted in thickest part of breast and 175 degrees in thickest part of thigh, 30 to 40 minutes. (If necessary, add more broth to maintain thin layer of broth on bottom of roasting pan.) Transfer chickens to cutting board and let rest, uncovered, while roasting vegetables; remove V-rack from roasting pan.

5. **5. FOR THE VEGETABLES:** While chickens are resting, adjust oven rack to middle position and increase oven temperature to 500 degrees. Using wooden spoon, scrape browned bits in roasting pan and pour liquid into fat separator. Return now-empty roasting pan to oven and heat until oven reaches 500 degrees, about 5 minutes. Toss vegetables with oil, salt, and pepper.
6. 6. Scatter vegetables in single layer in roasting pan, arranging potatoes and onions cut side down. Roast, without stirring, for 25 minutes.
7. 7. While vegetables are roasting, pour off 1/2 cup liquid from fat separator; discard remaining liquid and fat. Remove roasting pan from oven and heat broiler. Drizzle liquid over vegetables and broil, 5 minutes. Stir vegetables, coating well with reducing liquid, and continue to broil until tender and deep golden brown, about 5 minutes. Transfer vegetables to serving platter.
8. 8. While vegetables are broiling, carve chickens. Transfer to platter with vegetables and serve.

TECHNIQUE

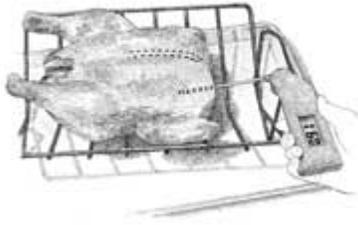
Better Chicken Flipping To flip a chicken or turkey during roasting (the test kitchen's preferred technique for ensuring even browning), we've always recommended grasping both ends with a generous handful of wadded-up paper towels. It's an effective method, but one that can be awkward.



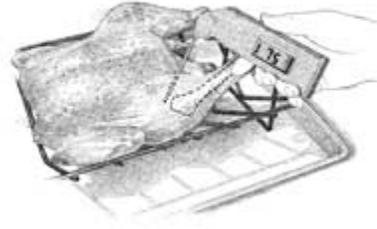
We came up with a hybrid technique that was even more reliable. Simply insert a sturdy metal or wooden spoon with a long handle and large head into the cavity of the bird. While guiding the other end of the chicken using paper towels, lift the spoon, flip the bird, then gently deposit it back onto the roasting rack. Just don't forget to remove the spoon before putting the bird back into the oven.

TECHNIQUE

Checking Chicken Doneness Taking a chicken's temperature can be tricky, no matter how good your thermometer. For the most precise readings, follow the procedures below. Also, it's important to test both breasts and both thighs in multiple spots.

**WHITE MEAT:**

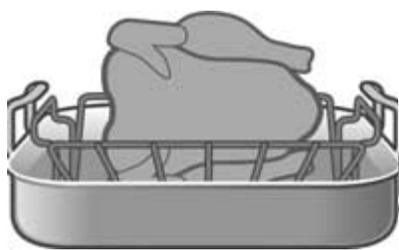
Insert the thermometer into the thickest part of the breast from the neck end, keeping it parallel to the breastbone. The white meat is done when the temperature reaches 160 degrees.

**DARK MEAT:**

Insert the thermometer at an angle into the thickest part of the thigh-located between the drumstick and breast-taking care not to hit bone. The dark meat is done when the temperature reaches 175 degrees.

STEP-BY-STEP

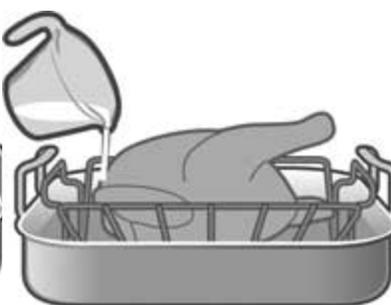
Which Comes First, the Chicken or the Vegetables?



1. Roast chicken, wing side up, for 30 minutes.



2. Roast chicken, other wing side up, for 30 minutes.



3. Flip chicken breast side up, pour broth into pan, and roast for 40 minutes.



4. Transfer chicken to cutting board to rest, and pour drippings into fat separator.



5. Reheat roasting pan while oven heats up to 500 degrees.



6. Toss vegetables with oil, add to heated roasting pan, and roast for 25 minutes.



7. Turn oven setting to broil and pour defatted drippings into pan, tossing with vegetables. Broil for 10 minutes.



America's Test Kitchen is a 2,500-square-foot kitchen located just outside of Boston. It is the home of Cook's Country and Cook's Illustrated magazines and is the workday destination for more than three dozen test cooks, editors, and cookware specialists. Our mission is to test recipes until we understand how and why they work and arrive at the best version. We also test kitchen equipment and supermarket ingredients in search of brands that offer the best value and performance. You can watch us work by tuning in to America's Test Kitchen (www.americastestkitchen.com) on public television.