

How to Safely Handle Raw Poultry

(chicken, turkey, duck, goose, game birds)

& Tips on Cutting Up a Whole Bird

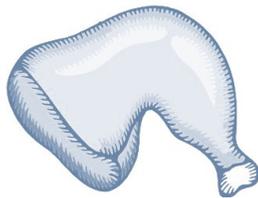
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Handling Fresh Raw Poultry

- Keep raw poultry separate from fresh fruits and vegetables in your grocery cart using the plastic bags provided at the supermarket. Discard plastic bag, Do not reuse.
- **Never** leave raw poultry at room temperature. Place in the bottom of the refrigerator in a bowl or on a plate. If raw poultry is not used within 1-2 days freeze for 9-12 months for best quality.
- **Never** wash raw poultry. The juices that splash during washing can transfer bacteria onto the surfaces of your kitchen, other foods and utensils.

Thawing Frozen Raw Poultry

- Thaw poultry in the refrigerator, never on the countertop. Poultry requires at least 24 hours for every five pounds of weight to thaw.
- Poultry may be quickly and safely thawed in cold water. Place frozen poultry in a water-tight plastic bag in cold water. Change water every 30 minutes until thawed.
- For quick thawing of raw poultry, the microwave may be used if poultry is cooked immediately after thawing.



How to Cut Up Raw Poultry

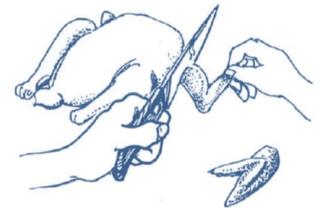
Wash hands before following these step by step directions.

1. Remove the neck and heart, liver and gizzard from the bird.

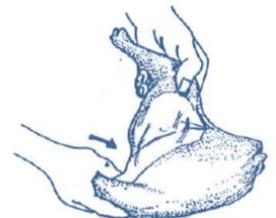


They are usually wrapped in paper inside the chicken body and neck cavity.

2. Remove wings by cutting into the joint, keeping knife close to the bone. This is easier if one hand holds the wing tip away from the bird.



3. Cut skin between thigh and body of bird. Grasp the leg and apply pressure to snap the hip joint.



4. To remove the leg and thigh from body, cut from the tail toward the neck. Rock knife in hip joint to cut tendons.



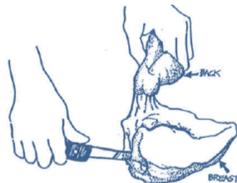
- Pull leg away and cut connecting skin.



- Cut through leg joint to separate thigh from leg.



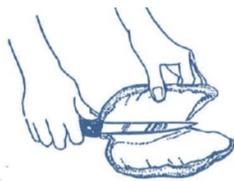
- Place breast on cutting board so backbone is face up. Separate back from breast.



- Lift back and end strip out. Cut through skin to remove tail and breast sections from back.



- The breast remains. Split by placing skin side down and cut through "V" of the neck. Bend breast back as if opening a book and cut out breastbone. Cut breast in half lengthwise.



Cooking Poultry

- If cooking in an oven, place the poultry in a roasting pan and set the oven temperature no lower than 325° F.
- Always** cook poultry, including ground poultry to 165° F. Check temperature with a food thermometer.
- When barbecuing (outdoors), keep poultry refrigerated until ready to cook. Do not place cooked poultry on the same plate that was used for raw poultry.
- When marinating raw poultry always throw away used marinade. Never reuse the marinade from raw poultry on cooked poultry.

Handling Cooked Poultry

- Cooked poultry should be stored no longer than three days in the refrigerator.
- Freeze cooked poultry for 9-12 months for best quality.
- Always reheat poultry leftovers to 165° F.



Always wash hands with warm, soapy water before, during and after handling raw or cooked poultry. Dry hands thoroughly.



Cleaning and Sanitizing Cutting Boards & Utensils When Handling Raw Poultry

- Wash cutting boards and utensils in hot soapy water and rinse well.
- Mix one tablespoon of 6% liquid chlorine bleach in one gallon of warm water.
- Dip the cutting board and knives in the bleach solution for 30 seconds and air dry.

Plastic or glass cutting boards can be washed in an automatic dishwasher.

Resources: Michigan State University Extension Eating Right is Basic curriculum and USDA Food and Inspection Service.

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