

Deboning a Turkey



1. There is no need to wash the bird. It could spread bacteria, and will make it harder to deal with. Pull out any pin feathers. Remove the giblets and save for the stuffing if desired.

2. Remove the wings. Put the bird breast up, extend the wing and look for the joint that connects the breast and the wing (arm pit). Slice through it with the knife. Save the wings for stock, or roasting.

3. Remove the breasts. Position the turkey so you can easily work. Find the breast bone cartilage that runs down the center. Using your knife, slice down the center of the breast on the cartilage. Using big, long strokes, make long slices on top of the bone. Keep your knife blade on top of the bone. Go until there is no more meat attached to the bone, then cut through the skin. Set aside.



4. Repeat on the second side. Take care to try not to damage the skin on the breast.

5. Here's what your two-boneless skin on breasts will look like. Put these into large gallon size bags for brining and back into the refrigerator for safety.

6. Flip the bird over and try to locate the oysters. These are two nuggets of meat located just above the hip of the bird. They might protrude a bit.



7. With the tip of your knife, loosen the meat but do not cut off. Now, take your knife from that incision and run it along the back of the bird to cut off the meat. When the leg joint is exposed, cut through the joint, removing the leg from the bird.



8. Here's what your two bone in legs will look like. Set them aside, wipe down your work station and knife. Place all bones in a big pot to make stock with, and refrigerate until ready.



9. Next we need to remove the leg bones to create what is called a ballotine. Find the joint bone of the leg. Work the meat off it so you can pinch it.



10. Grasp the bone firmly and use the blade of the knife to push down the meat. You are essentially going to turn it inside out.

11. Continue doing this until you get to the joint. Carefully scrape around the joint. When you get to the end, pull the bone out of the meat. Add the bone to the stock pot. Repeat with the second leg.





When you are finished, this is what it should look like. But don't worry we're going to make it better.



12. Remove the tough tendons by grasping them with one hand and pulling them so there is pressure on them, and using the knife blade to scrape the meat off them, essentially, pulling them out. Discard the tendons.



13. Feel around the meat for any cartilage or other hard pieces. Trim these out with your knife. Turn the boneless leg right side out- like a sock. You will now have a ballotine!

Congratulations of successfully deboning a turkey. It's not that hard, just takes some time and patience!!!

Now, make sure you very diligently clean up your work station, knives, and disinfect anything that may have come into contact with the raw turkey!