

Eat, Smile, Share

An Unforgettable Thanksgiving

24 PAGES OF WONDERFULLY INSPIRING DISHES, TRADITIONS, PRAYERS, GAMES, AND MORE TO HELP YOU HAVE THE BEST HOLIDAY EVER





Welcome to Your Unforgettable

Thanksgiving

EVERY YEAR AND BLESSEDLY WITHOUT FAIL, Thanksgiving arrives on our calendars as an oasis. Perched between the hectic hubbubs of Halloween and Hanukkah, Christmas, and New Year's, this celebration puts our focus on life's essentials: gratitude, food, family, friends, and—for some of us—football. And although the run-up to the event often comes with the pressures of travel, hosting, and cooking, once we're all seated at the table, everyone's to-do list suddenly becomes simple and sweet:

Eat, Smile, Share





THIS BOOKLET IS OUR GIFT TO YOU to help you accomplish those aims and have an unforgettable Thanksgiving with your loved ones. Each page falls under one of three goals—Eat, Smile, or Share—and contains activities, recipes, and reads that you and your guests can enjoy either before or during your holiday celebration. And, throughout the booklet, you'll see callouts where you can add your favorite dishes, stories, jokes, and ideas.

Thanksgiving, as we know it, has been celebrated in America for almost 400 years. Today, it's more important than ever for us to hit pause on our busy lives and to come together, as families and as a nation. We want to thank you for turning to our magazines for advice and inspiration, and we wish you all a healthy, happy, and safe holiday.



BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE EDITORS OF

Reader's
digest

CountryWoman

Taste
of Home

Birds&Blooms

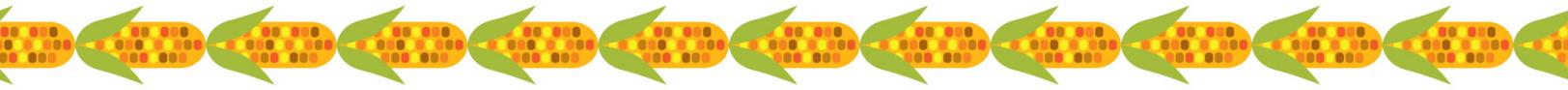
Reminisce

THE FAMILY
Handyman

Taste of Home
SIMPLE &
DELICIOUS

Country

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LIVING



A Timeline To Follow for Dinner

A few weeks before: Prepare two grocery lists—one for nonperishable items and one for perishable items. Order a fresh turkey, or buy a frozen turkey and put it in the freezer. Purchase the nonperishable items, and store them to use later.

A few days before: Buy the perishable items, including fresh turkey if ordered.

Two days before: Set the table.

One day before: Make sauces and/or soups; cover and refrigerate. Assemble the stuffing; cover and chill. Clean and trim vegetables (but not potatoes, turnips, or salad greens, as these will spoil), and refrigerate. Toast nuts, store in covered containers, and refrigerate. Bake pies and/or cakes; refrigerate.

On Thanksgiving Day: In the morning, peel potatoes and turnips. Cover with cold water; refrigerate. Prepare turkey as directed. Bake stuffing. While the cooked turkey is cooling, make gravy. Wash salad greens, and assemble salad. Cook vegetables. Reheat soup; bring sauces to room temperature. Remove pies and cakes from fridge, and bring to room temperature. Wrap bread in foil, and warm briefly in oven.

☀ What should go on *your* grocery lists?

PERISHABLES

NONPERISHABLES



E A T

A Turkey

To Feast On

Rosemary Roasted Turkey

- 3 whole garlic bulbs*
- 6 large onions*
- 5 fresh rosemary sprigs*
- 1 turkey (14 to 16 pounds)*
- 2 cups white wine*
- 3 tablespoons olive oil*
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary*
- ¾ teaspoon salt*
- ¾ teaspoon pepper*
- ¼ cup butter, cubed*
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour*



REMOVE PAPERY OUTER SKIN from garlic, but do not peel or separate cloves. Cut tops off garlic bulbs. Place garlic, onions, and rosemary sprigs in roasting pan. Pat turkey dry. Tuck wings under turkey; tie drumsticks together. Place turkey breast-side up over onion mixture. Pour wine into pan.

Brush turkey with oil and sprinkle with minced rosemary, salt, and pepper. Bake uncovered at 325 degrees in oven for 3½ to 4 hours or until a meat thermometer reads 180 degrees, basting occasionally with pan drippings. Cover loosely with foil if turkey browns too quickly. After removing turkey from oven, cover and let stand for 20 minutes before carving. Reserve drippings to make gravy (see following recipe).

☀️ What are your must-have Thanksgiving dishes?

A Foolproof Gravy

Turkey Gravy

Start to finish: 20 mins.

Makes 2 $\frac{1}{3}$ cups

Drippings from 1 roast turkey
½ to 1 cup turkey or chicken broth
¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
½ cup fat-free milk
1 teaspoon chicken bouillon granules
¼ teaspoon poultry seasoning
½ teaspoon white pepper

POUR DRIPPINGS into a 2-cup measuring cup. Skim and discard fat. Add enough broth to the drippings to measure 2 cups; transfer to a small saucepan and bring to a boil.

In a small bowl, whisk flour and milk until smooth; gradually stir into drippings mixture. Stir in the bouillon granules, poultry seasoning, and white pepper. Return to a boil, stirring constantly; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened.



☀️ What are your tried-and-true Thanksgiving sides?



A Sweet Take on *Leftovers*

Choco-tato Truffles

- 1 cup (8 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips*
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped*
- 2 tablespoons butter*
- 1 egg yolk, beaten*
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar*
- ½ cup ground pecans*
- ⅓ cup mashed potatoes (with added milk)*
- 2 tablespoons Irish cream liqueur, Kahlúa, or strong coffee*
- Baking cocoa or additional ground pecans*

IN A DOUBLE BOILER or metal bowl over simmering water, heat the chocolate chips, unsweetened chocolate, and butter until melted, whisking frequently.

In a separate bowl, whisk a small amount of the mixture into egg yolk. Add this to the main mixture and continue to heat, whisking constantly. Cook and stir until mixture is thickened and coats the back of a spoon.

Remove from the heat, stir in the sugar, pecans, mashed potatoes, and liqueur or coffee. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle. Shape into 1-inch balls. Roll them in cocoa or pecans. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until firm. Store in the refrigerator. Makes 3 dozen.



☀️ What do you plan to do with your Thanksgiving leftovers?



SMILE

Create a Tree

To Display Your Blessings

MATERIALS

Dried tree branches
Fabric square (about 2 ½ times the height of vase)
Decorative branches
Photos of what you're thankful for
Balsa wood tags (available at craft stores)
Decoupage glue
Twine
Extrafine glitter
Large vase or jar
Paintbrush

DIRECTIONS

1. On your computer, size photos to fit the balsa wood tags, and print out on ordinary copier paper.
2. Cut photos into the appropriate size for the tags.
3. Brush a layer of decoupage glue on one side of the tag. Put the photo in place, and add another layer of glue over the photo. Let dry.
4. String the tags with twine. (If tags don't have holes, make holes with a knife first.)
5. Pour glitter onto a sheet of paper. Brush a thin layer of glue around the edges of the tag and lightly press all sides into glitter. Let dry.
6. Place vase in center of fabric square. Pull up the sides, and wrap at the top with twine.
7. Arrange branches in vase, and hang tags on branches.
8. After Thanksgiving, use the wood tags to decorate a Christmas tree or wreath.



☀️ What photos will you use to show the people, things, and places you're grateful for?



S M I L E

Jokes & Stories

To Tell

WHAT DID THE TURKEY SAY upon receiving an invitation to Thanksgiving dinner?

“No, thanks. I’m stuffed.”

“DID YOU HAVE A GOOD HOLIDAY?” Carol asked Joan.

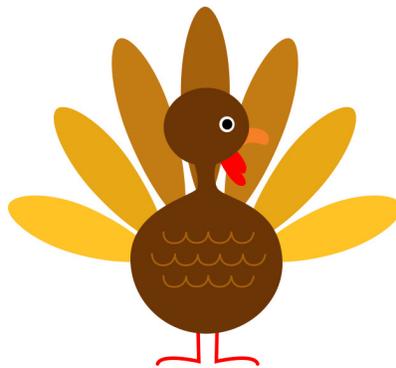
“Sure did,” Joan said. “Our family invited a lawyer, a stock analyst, a politician, and my brother-in-law over to eat. It was great. We had our choice of turkeys.”

THE NEW BRIDE WANTED EVERYTHING to be perfect for the Thanksgiving dinner she was hosting for her in-laws. So she called the turkey hotline and said, “I bought a twelve-pound bird. How long does it need to cook?”

“Just a minute,” said the hotline operator, paging through a reference book.

“Thanks!” said the bride, and hung up.

(continued)





S M I L E

OVERHEARD: “I still can remember the first time I watched my mother cook a Thanksgiving turkey. It was disgusting. Every half hour or so, she’d open the oven, pull out the turkey, and stick a thermometer into it. I told her, ‘If it’s that sick, I don’t want any.’”

THE OVEN ON MY ALMOST-NEW STOVE hadn’t worked in weeks, and frequent calls to the serviceman produced no results. As Thanksgiving approached, I told my husband that this year we’d be having boiled turkey. “I’ll have that oven fixed in time for Thanksgiving,” he promised. The week before the holiday, the serviceman at last arrived. I asked what magic words my spouse had used. Replied the serviceman, “Your husband said that if the oven wasn’t fixed by Thanksgiving, you were inviting yourselves to my house for dinner. My wife didn’t like that idea at all.”

I WAS PREPARING MY NURSERY SCHOOL CLASS for Thanksgiving. Many, many years ago, I told them, the Pilgrims survived a difficult voyage, arrived at Plymouth Rock, and met the Native Americans, who helped them prepare a great feast. The mother of one of my pupils came to school the day after our class discussion. Her daughter had reiterated the story of the Pilgrims, and the mother asked her what the menu for the first Thanksgiving had included. The little girl replied, “I’m not sure, but you can ask my teacher—she was there!”



 What’s your favorite Thanksgiving joke or story?

SOURCE: A. JAYNELLE ST. JEAN, *READER’S DIGEST*, NOV. 2005; AMERICAN LEGION, *READER’S DIGEST*, DEC. 1995; *LAUGHTER REALLY IS THE BEST MEDICINE* (2011); RON DENTINGER, *DODGEVILLE WISCONSIN CHRONICLE*, *READER’S DIGEST*, NOV. 1995; MARGARET HILLER, *READER’S DIGEST*, NOV. 1973; JANICE SOFRAN, *READER’S DIGEST*, NOV. 1989



SHARE

Play the *Manners Game*

What's the Right Thing to Do?

I THE DILEMMA TO DISCUSS: If guests are late to Thanksgiving dinner, is it okay to start without them?

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

- A)** Yes. I expect punctuality, and latecomers will have to eat lukewarm food.
- B)** Yes, but I give people a grace period of 20 to 30 minutes to show up. After that, bring out the turkey.
- C)** No, it's polite to wait for everyone to show up.

THE ETIQUETTE EXPERT SAYS: It's a numbers game. If half or more of the seats are empty, you'll have to wait and sacrifice the soufflé. If just a few folks are missing, cater to the majority and feed them, keeping some plates warm for the stragglers. *(continued)*





SHARE

2 THE DILEMMA TO DISCUSS: As host of the Thanksgiving meal, can I institute a no-phone policy until after we're finished?

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

A) Yes. It's your home, and you set the rules. Better yet, collect phones beforehand in a basket.

B) No, but if someone's phone rings, ask him or her to silence it or leave the room to take the call.

C) No. It is the 21st century, after all.

THE ETIQUETTE EXPERT SAYS: Yes. Here's how: Start by giving thanks to everyone for turning their ringers off.

3 THE DILEMMA TO DISCUSS: My mother-in-law always sends me home with the Thanksgiving leftovers. Is it rude to decline?

A) Nope. Honesty is the best policy, especially with family members, but tell her no as politely as possible.

B) No. But come up with a good excuse about why you can't take the food, like you have no room in your refrigerator or you're going away soon.

C) Yes. But before accepting, first try to redirect her by saying, "Oh, I'd love to take it, but I think [relative X] could really use it."

THE ETIQUETTE EXPERT SAYS: Just say thanks and take the food. Freeze what you can for another day, and give the rest away if you must. Squandering leftovers is better than damaging family relationships, especially during the holidays. *(continued)*





SHARE

4 THE DILEMMA TO DISCUSS: A strict vegan is coming to Thanksgiving dinner. Do I need to cater to her?

A) Yes, because she's the only vegan that you know of. Some of your other guests may have adopted new eating habits, so you should be prepared.

B) No, but since many people seem to be eating less meat these days, it doesn't hurt to go heavier on the vegetables.

C) No, but you should tell her to bring her own Tofurky.

THE ETIQUETTE EXPERT SAYS: If it's a strict vegan sister or brother, yes. Vegan cousin, maybe. But your cousin's girlfriend? She can fend for herself, although you'll win hostess points if you provide enough vegan-friendly sides for her to make a meal.

5 THE DILEMMA TO DISCUSS: If someone has the nerve to announce to the whole table that my turkey is dry, what do I say?

A) Apologize and let her know that it's hard to make sure all the meat stays moist in a turkey.

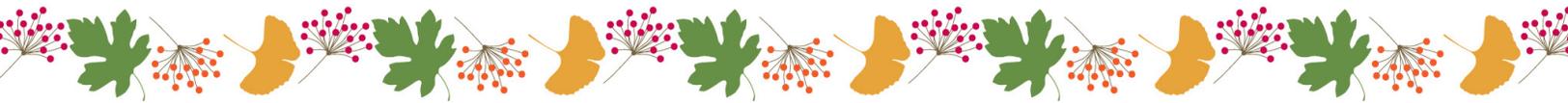
B) Ask her if she has any advice on how to fix it.

C) Tell her that you've always found her personality a bit dry, but you've never complained.

THE ETIQUETTE EXPERT SAYS: Smile and pass the gravy.



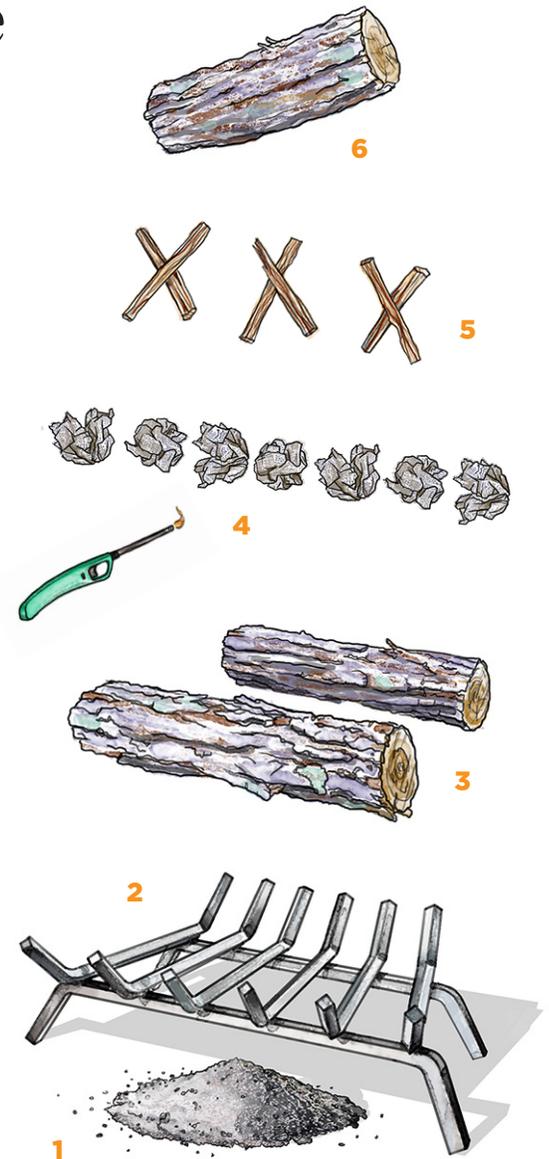
 What has been your biggest Thanksgiving dilemma? How did you handle it?



Warm Guests

With a Fire

1. Start with the ash bed from your last fire: Two inches of ash insulates fireplaces and creates a hotter fire. But keep one inch clear between the ash and metal grate.
2. Use a metal grate or andirons to raise logs off the ground so air can fuel the fire from below.
3. Lay two dried logs (look for gray logs with loose bark) parallel on each end of the grate. If you're purchasing wood from a store, look for these words—seasoned, ready to burn, or kiln-dried—on the label.
4. Stuff seven grapefruit-size balls of newspaper between the two logs. You'll light them to start the fire. Add dried orange peels for an inviting scent. But never burn wrapping paper or boxes; they can damage your fireplace and release harmful chemicals.
5. Crisscross kindling, like thin sticks of wood, across the starter logs for air circulation. The flames will spread through the kindling first and then to the logs. Never use driftwood or wood with paint or varnish as kindling (it may release toxic chemicals).
6. Add another log every ten to 20 minutes for the first hour, but don't get too aggressive in building the fire. You should always be able to see the top of the flame in the fireplace.



 What items do you need to get so you can build a fire?



S M I L E

Carry On Cherished *Traditions*



Catching Leaves

YEARS AGO, MY SISTER AND I started our own Thanksgiving ritual. After Grandmama's enormous dinner, we'd go out to the big southern red oak and wait for the wind to blow, which it almost always did there on Thanksgiving. Then we'd tear out after the leaves as they twirled to the ground. According to Appalachian folk wisdom, catching just one was sufficient to ward off a cold for the winter, but we figured the more we caught, the healthier we'd be. These days, after my husband and I clear our table, we take our sons outside under the big red oak and wait for the leaves to dance.

Go for the Gold

MY FATHER ORGANIZES what we've come to call the Thanksgiving Olympics—and all 25 family members and friends who gather at my parents' house that day participate. Dad plans the games, such as shooting a basketball, pitching pennies in our yard, or doing a word scramble. Everyone's favorite Thanksgiving Olympics memory is when my mom, who never played a game of basketball in her life, sank all three of her shots. We cheered like crazy. And let's not forget the prizes. We cover the table with goodies such as a tin of popcorn, a box of chocolates, stationery, and toys for the kids. I am so thankful for my family, but especially for my mom and dad and for everything they do to make the holiday so special. *(continued)*



Put It on the Table

EVERY YEAR, EACH PERSON at the table uses a permanent marker to write one thing he or she is thankful for on the white tablecloth. After Thanksgiving, we wash the cloth on the gentle cycle and put it away until next year, when we bring it out and do the same thing. It's fun to see how people change, and it's a powerful way to remind us what the holiday is all about.



Take It Outside

THE FAMILY OF MY HUSBAND started a tradition in 1957 that I thought was crazy when I first heard of it: a picnic. That's right—turkey and all the trimmings outdoors in the open. Turns out it's loads of fun and a welcome breath of fresh air after the summer heat has kept us indoors in air-conditioning. We set up camp along a creek near where we live in Arizona, and friends and family stop by. It seems as if something exciting always happens. There have been rainouts, a flu epidemic, and the unforgettable Thanksgiving of 2000, when the wind blew so hard that tables overturned and the bird flew! The dogs feasted that year.

A Beautiful Chain

I'VE IMPROVISED A NEW TRADITION, the Thanksgiving chain. Each person receives strips of colored paper, on which they write things for which they feel thankful. Then we go around the candlelit table, reading them aloud in turn. After we do, we link our strips to form a paper chain.

 **What is your most beloved Thanksgiving tradition or ritual? Is there a tradition you'd like to start?**



SHARE

A Classic Story

To Read Out Loud

A Thanksgiving Lesson

WHEN MRS. KLEIN TOLD HER FIRST GRADERS to draw a picture of something for which they were thankful, she thought how little these children, who lived in a deteriorating neighborhood, actually had to be thankful for. She knew that most of the class would draw pictures of turkeys or of bountifully laden Thanksgiving tables. That was what they believed was expected of them.

What took Mrs. Klein aback was Douglas's picture. Douglas was so forlorn and likely to be found close in her shadow as they went outside for recess. Douglas's drawing was simply this:



A hand, obviously, but whose hand? The class was captivated by his image. "I think it must be the hand of God that brings us food," said one student. "A farmer," said another, "because they grow the turkeys." "It looks more like a policeman, and they protect us." "I think," said Lavinia, who was always so serious, "that it is supposed to be all the hands that help us, but Douglas could only draw one of them."

Mrs. Klein had almost forgotten Douglas in her pleasure at finding the class so responsive. When she had the others at work on another project, she bent over his desk and asked whose hand it was. Douglas mumbled, "It's yours, Teacher."

Then Mrs. Klein recalled that she had taken Douglas by the hand from time to time; she often did that with the children. But that it should have meant so much to Douglas ... Perhaps, she reflected, this was her Thanksgiving, and everybody's Thanksgiving—not the material things given unto us, but the small ways that we give something to others.

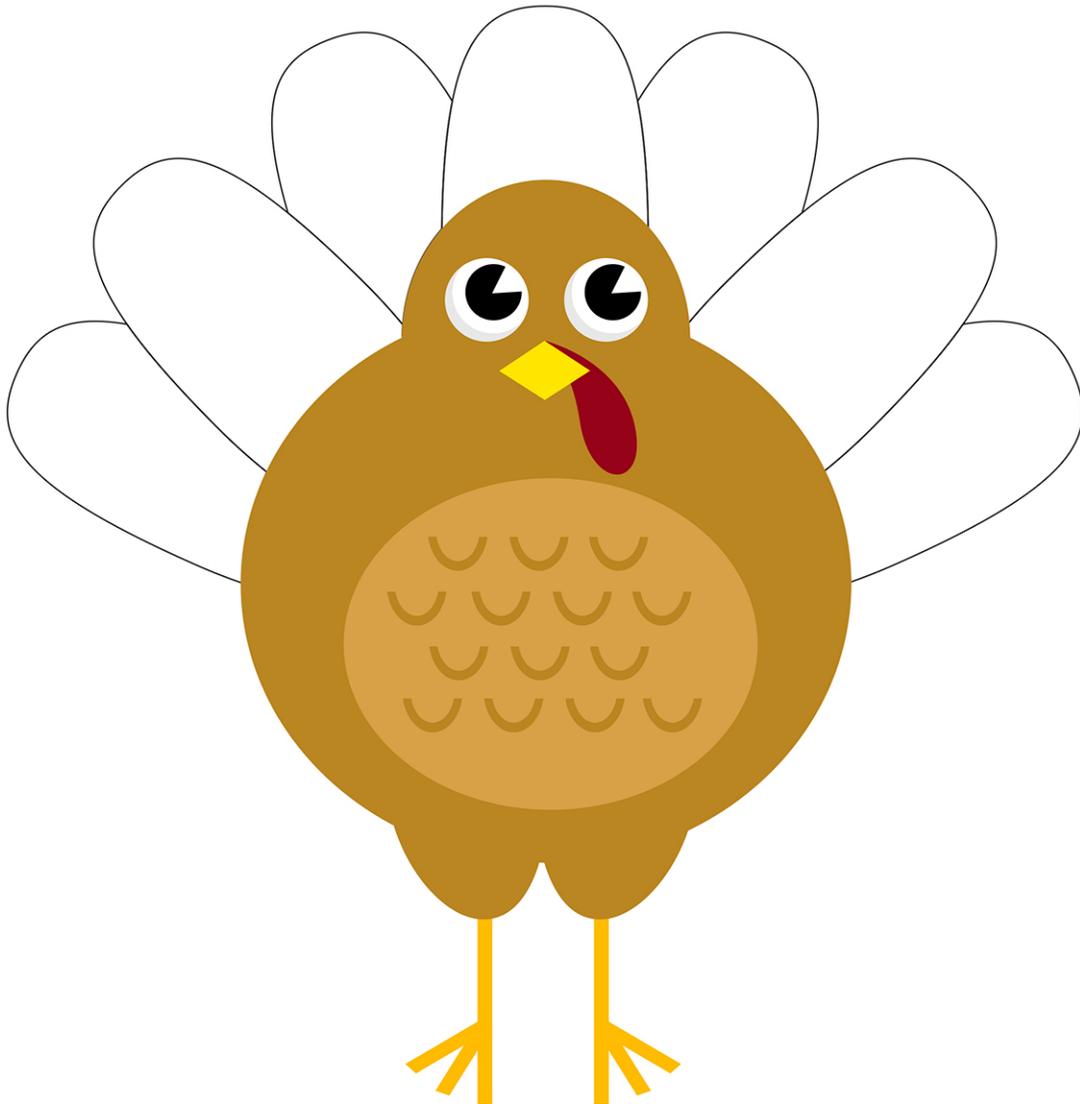
 What's your favorite inspirational Thanksgiving story?



SMILE

A Turkey Day Game to Play

Divide your guests into teams, and give each team its own turkey diagram (you'll need to print or copy extras). Choose someone to read aloud the questions and to act as judge. This is a game of knowledge and speed: The first team to choose the correct answer gets to color in a feather—let the little ones help—on its turkey. The first team to fill in all seven feathers is the winner and earns gobbling rights for the day. *(continued)*





S M I L E

Test Your Thanksgiving Knowledge

(THE CORRECT ANSWERS ARE IN BOLD)

1. What percentage of Americans eat turkey on Thanksgiving?
A) 67
B) 76
C) **88**
2. In the early 1900s, wild turkeys were in danger of becoming extinct. How many wild turkeys currently live in North America (not just in the United States)?
A) more than 20 million
B) **more than 7 million**
C) more than 3 million
3. It's unclear whether turkey was eaten at the first Thanksgiving, although historians know the Pilgrims frequently consumed the fowl. However, there was one meat specifically named by an eyewitness as part of the meal. It was:
A) pigeon
B) duck
C) **venison**
4. Which Founding Father once quipped that the turkey was a more "respectable bird" than the bald eagle to serve as America's national emblem?
A) Alexander Hamilton
B) **Benjamin Franklin**
C) George Washington
5. In what year did Congress pass legislation to declare the official date of Thanksgiving to be the fourth Thursday of November?
A) 1912
B) 1864
C) **1941**

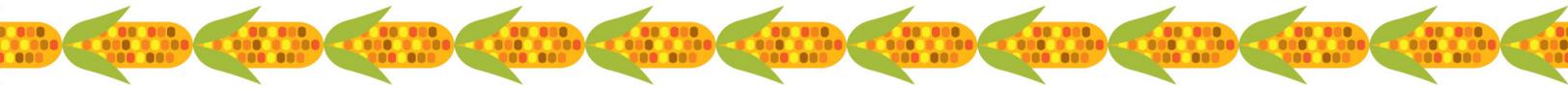
(continued)



S M I L E

6. Even though it was held on Thanksgiving, the Macy's parade was initially called the Christmas Parade since it was created to launch the Christmas shopping season. In what year did the first Macy's Christmas Parade take place?
- A) **1924**
 - B) 1934
 - C) 1914
7. Detroit Lions owner George A. Richards started a team tradition of playing a game on Thanksgiving Day in order to attract publicity and sell tickets. What year was the first Detroit Lions Turkey Day game?
- A) 1974
 - B) **1934**
 - C) 1954
8. Which team did the Lions play in that first game?
- A) **Chicago Bears**
 - B) Green Bay Packers
 - C) New York Giants
9. The Thanksgiving long weekend contains some of the busiest air-travel days in the United States. Of all of the days in that Wednesday to Sunday period, which is the busiest travel day?
- A) the Wednesday before Thanksgiving
 - B) the Saturday after Thanksgiving
 - C) **the Sunday after Thanksgiving**
10. In the 1960s, police officers in this major American city were the first to dub the day after Thanksgiving "Black Friday" because of the bad traffic and bad behavior occurring on that day. Which city was it?
- A) **Philadelphia**
 - B) Los Angeles
 - C) Chicago

(continued)



S M I L E

11. Which U.S. president officially began the annual tradition of pardoning turkeys for Thanksgiving?
A) Ronald Reagan
B) George H. W. Bush
C) Abraham Lincoln

12. What was the total combined weight of the two turkeys pardoned by Barack Obama in 2015?
A) 95 pounds
B) 85 pounds
C) 75 pounds

13. Every year, more than 100,000 people in Canada and the United States call the toll-free Butterball Talk Line to get turkey help. Talk Line advisers have traditionally been female; in what year were male advisers added?
A) 1993
B) 2003
C) 2013

14. According to the *New York Times*, which of these three has the most calories?
A) ½ cup of mashed potatoes with butter and gravy
B) ⅔ cup of green bean casserole
C) a dinner roll with butter

☀️ What's your favorite piece of Turkey Day trivia?





SHARE

A Special Prayer

To Read Out Loud

We come to this table today, O Lord, humble and thankful and glad.

We thank Thee first for the great miracle of life, for the exaltation of being human, for the capacity to love.

We thank Thee for joys both great and simple—

For wonder, dreams, and hope;

For the newness of each day;

For laughter and song and a merry heart;

For compassion waiting within to be kindled;

For the forbearance of friends and the smile of a stranger;

For the arching of the earth and trees and heavens and the fruit
of all three;

For the wisdom of the old;

For the courage of the young;

For the promise of the child;

For the strength that comes when needed;

For this family united here today.

Of those to whom much is given, much is required. May we and our children remember this. Amen.

 What's your favorite Thanksgiving prayer?



S H A R E

A Few Different Graces to Say

“THIS GRACE WAS OFFERED by a Catholic nun at a family dinner,” recalls Ruth Wetzels of West Reading, Pennsylvania:

Down with your head and up with your paws, and thanks God for the use of your jaws.

“I CARE FOR THREE LITTLE CHILDREN FREQUENTLY,” says Valerie Larkin from Stonewall, Manitoba. “Watching them with their eyes tightly closed and their tiny hands folded when we say this grace truly warms my heart”:

Thank you, God, for food so good, and help us do the things we should.

“MY STEPFATHER, Jake, always has a beautiful blessing to say before each meal, including this Irish prayer,” says Sheila Hansen of Bonners Ferry, Idaho:

May God grant you always a sunbeam to warm you, a moonbeam to charm you, a sheltering angel so nothing can harm you, laughter to cheer you, faithful friends near you, and wherever you pray, Heavenly Father to hear you.

“SOME SPECIAL FRIENDS shared this prayer with us many years ago,” says Julie Stein from Libertyville, Illinois. “It’s simple but meaningful”:

Some people in the world are hungry and have no food. Some people in the world are lonely and have no friends. Thank you, God; we have both.



 What grace does your family say?



SHARE

One Final Toast

To Offer the Table

**For all that has been,
Thanks!
To all that shall be,
Yes!**

 **What final words would
you like to offer your guests?**



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