

Christmas cooking guide

Christmas Day cooking can be stressful even for the most experienced of cooks.

The kids are high on chocolate, there's wrapping paper everywhere, you can't find the batteries for that one toy out of a 100 that the little one wants to play with and the in-laws have arrived.

And that's all before 10am!

One way to deal with it would be to grab the sherry and lock yourself away.

Another way, is to follow Macbeth's no-frills, no-fuss, step-by-step, easy-peasy Christmas Day Guide.

It's all in the preparation. Preparation, preparation, preparation. If you prep, you're already on the road to creating a Christmas meal to rival all others, even if usually you can barely peel a tattie without slicing off your thumb!

Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve will be a picture of calm. The kids will be quietly playing, your other half will be watching *It's A Wonderful Life* by a roaring fire whilst toasting chestnuts and you can crack on with the PREP!

Okay it might not be that idyllic, but if you can spare some time, it will make things ever so slightly easier on the big day. Why not make an event of it – get the kids involved, stick on some Christmas tunes and it could become your new family tradition.

- A nice bit of [venison](#) or [beef](#) bought from Macbeth's can stay in the fridge until Christmas morning. However, if it's been frozen, you will need at least 24 hours to defrost. DO NOT FORGET to take it out of the freezer. If it's defrosted or fresh you can rub it with some salt and pepper and leave it in the fridge overnight. Doing this tiny

thing now will save you valuable minutes for sorting out arguments over whose toy is whose in the morning.

- Peel your tatties and par boil them for about 10 minutes. Drain them, let them cool and they will be ready for roasting on Christmas day.
- You can also peel any other roasting veg such a parsnips and par boil them too.
- Other veg can be washed, prepared and left in cold water overnight. Don't worry about the sprouts – nobody eats them anyway.
- Stuffing whether you opt for your own or the off the shelf variety can also be made ahead. Roll it into little balls, put them on baking paper or a well-greased dish and voila, you're on your way to a stress-free Christmas.

[Christmas Day >](#)



Christmas Day

Our step-by-step guide is based on eating Christmas dinner at 2pm giving you enough time to eat and be ready for the Queen's speech.

We've opted for a 5lb bone-in piece of [beef](#) or [venison](#) which should feed between 6 to 8 adults. Choosing venison or beef as an alternative, is definitely the easier choice. You don't have to worry about basting, basting, basting and instead just pop it in the oven and forget about it until it's done to your preference.

Depending on the size of joint as well, it doesn't take as long as a turkey, meaning if you don't have kids you can have a lie in. If you do, well tough, you will have been up for hours already, drinking copious amounts of coffee and wondering if it's too early to open the gin!

11.45 Preheat oven for 25 minutes to 240°C/Gas 9

12.10 Cut two unpeeled onions into thick slices to make a 'bed' for the beef. Place the onions in the base of the oven tray and sit the joint on them. (You can of course do this the night before). Roast the joint for 20 minutes.

12.20 Reduce the oven temperature to 190°C/Gas 5. You now have just under an hour to relax (ha ha ha). Sit back, pour yourself a drink and grit your teeth at the awful present the in-laws have got you.

1.10 Heat up a couple of spoonfuls of oil or goose fat in a roasting pan. Add the prepped tatties and bang them in the oven.

1.20 Brush the parsnips with oil, arrange them on a baking tray and put them in the oven.

1.25 Stick your pigs in blankets in the oven along with your stuffing balls.

1.30 Start boiling your other vegetables.

1:40 Take the meat out of the oven and ensure it's loosely covered with tin-foil and leave to rest for 20 minutes.

1.45 Start steaming the Christmas pudding, which will take about an hour, or for all normal people, wait and stick it in the microwave just a few minutes before you want it.

1.55 Remove the potatoes, stuffing and pigs in blankets from the oven. Drain the veggies. Transfer everything to warmed serving dishes and then present to the dinner table.

2.00 Dinner is served. Pour yourself a glass of champagne and celebrate.

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