

The Thanksgiving Countdown

One page. Four weeks. One calm Thursday.

Nov 26

THANKSGIVING 2026
TAPE IT TO THE FRIDGE

The one rule: if a task can be done before Thursday, it must be done before Thursday. The day itself holds the bird, the sides and the people — nothing else.

4–3 weeks out

BY THU, NOV 5

- ☐ Date and start time confirmed
- ☐ Invites sent (a text counts)
- ☐ Budget set — with a buffer written in pen
- ☐ Menu drafted, and every dish has an owner

2 weeks out

BY THU, NOV 12

- ☐ RSVPs chased; allergies and plus-ones noted
- ☐ Pantry run done: flour, butter, stock, foil, containers
- ☐ The one tricky recipe tested once
- ☐ Turkey ordered or bought (1–1½ lb per person)

1 week out

BY THU, NOV 19

- ☐ Headcount final — chairs and plates counted
- ☐ Oven grid written: dish, temp, in, out, rack
- ☐ Defrost day circled (see Turkey math)
- ☐ House reset: coat spot, bathroom, fridge space

Tuesday

NOV 24

- ☐ Fresh groceries: herbs, cream, bread, flowers
- ☐ Make-ahead: cranberry sauce, pie dough, dessert

Wednesday

NOV 25

- ☐ Table set tonight, serving spoons included
- ☐ Veg chopped, stuffing prepped, drinks batched
- ☐ Ice, glasses and a zero-proof option staged

The morning after

FRI, NOV 27

- ☐ Leftovers in the fridge within 2 hours of dinner
- ☐ Label containers; eat within 3–4 days

Turkey math

Guests _____

× 1–1½ lb per person _____

Fridge thaw: 1 day per 4–5 lb _____

Bird moves to the fridge on _____

12–16 lb: 3–4 days · 16–20 lb: 4–5 days. Cold-water backup: about 30 min per lb, then cook right away. (USDA food-safety guidance)

Thursday, backwards

Dinner _____

Carve _____

Rest 30–45' _____

Bird in _____

Preheat _____

The resting window is free oven time — rolls and casseroles go in then. Guests who text “on the way” are 25 minutes out.

Notes
