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SP712 Is It Done Yet?

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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United States Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection Service

Extension

SP712



“Is it **done** yet?”

You can't tell
by **looking**. Use a
food thermometer
to be sure.



www.IsItDoneYet.gov

Do you worry about undercooked meat? Are you tired of overcooked meat?



Use a food thermometer. Thermometers aren't just for holiday turkeys and roasts – they're for all cuts and sizes of meat and poultry, including hamburgers, chicken breasts and pork chops.

Everyone is at risk for food-borne illness. One effective way to prevent illness is to use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of meat, poultry and egg dishes.

“Is It Done Yet?”

Use a food thermometer to check the temperature of food. Follow the safe minimum temperatures below to be sure you kill bacteria and other microorganisms.

USDA Recommended Safe Minimum Temperatures

Steaks & Roasts	145 F
Fish	145 F
Pork	160 F
Ground Beef	160 F
Egg Dishes	160 F
Chicken, Turkey and Duck (Whole, Pieces and Ground)	165 F



How do you use a thermometer?

The food thermometer should be placed in the thickest part of the food and should not be touching bone, fat or gristle. Insert into the inner thigh area near the breast of the chicken or turkey. For thin patties, insert the thermometer sideways.

Large-dial, oven-safe or oven-probe thermometers may be used for the duration of cooking and will state so on the package. Instant-read thermometers should be inserted to check the temperature near the end of cooking.



Thermometer Care

- Make sure to clean your food thermometer with hot soapy water before and after each use!
- Make sure your thermometer is working properly. If it is not, adjust it according to the manufacturer's directions. If it cannot be adjusted, purchase a new one. You can check the accuracy in two ways:
 - *Ice Water.* Fill a large glass with finely crushed ice. Add clean water to cover the ice and insert the thermometer stem into the ice water at least 2 inches without touching the sides or bottom. It should read 32 degrees F.
 - *Boiling Water.* Bring a pot of clean water to a rolling boil. Insert the thermometer stem into the water at least 2 inches without touching the sides or bottom. It should read 212 degrees F.





Which type do you choose?

The type of thermometer you choose depends on the thickness of the food and whether you prefer to leave the thermometer in the food while it is cooking or insert it near the end.

Dial Food Thermometers:

- Instant-read types are used in thick and thin foods. These give quick readings but cannot stay in the food while it is cooking.
- “Oven-safe” types are used in thick foods and remain in the food while it is cooking.

Digital Thermometers:

- Give quick readings.
- Can be used in thick and thin foods.
- Cannot remain in the food while it is cooking.

“Is It Done Yet?” was developed by USDA. Food safety information is available by calling the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHHotline.

Food safety education is provided in your community by University of Tennessee Extension Family and Consumer Sciences.

Contact your local Extension office:

Adapted from USDA/FSIS materials by Janie Burney, Professor, Family and Consumer Sciences.

Visit the UT Extension Web site at
<http://www.utextension.utk.edu/>

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