

## Denny's: Home for the Holidays

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# **Denny's: Home for the Holidays**

by [daoniesidhe](#)

## Summary

Langly's cooking. Run for your lives.

10AM Thanksgiving day.

"Butterball Turkey Talk-Line. My name is Helen. This call may be recorded to assure you the highest quality of service. How may I help you?"

"I'm thawing my turkey in the microwave, right? And I was wondering how long it'd take."

"Well, it really depends on how big the turkey is, and how much of it you put into the microwave at a time."

"All of it."

"Okay. How big are the pieces?"

"No, I mean. I put the whole thing in, like, it's still in the bag."

"All right. Since it's a smaller turkey, it shouldn't be too bad. How much does it weigh?"

"It seems kind of big to me... Twenty-six pounds."

"Sir? You fit it into the microwave in one piece?"

"Oh. It's, like, a homemade microwave. My housemate put it together."

"Oh," Helen said faintly. "I'm not sure I can help without knowing more about the microwave."

"Okay. I'll go try it, I guess. I don't mind experimenting a little. Thanks."

\*\*

10:30AM

"Butterball Turkey Talk-Line. My name is Helen—"

"Helen? It's me again. I gave up on the microwave, because it was throwing off sparks and stuff. Can I, like, thaw it in the oven?"

"It's not recommended. When are you planning to serve dinner?"

"Uh, I dunno. I mean, whenever it's done, I guess."

"Um, all right. Did you take it out of the bag yet?"

"No. Should I?"

"No, it's all right. First I want you to fill the sink with cold water."

"Why?" he asked suspiciously.

"Leave the turkey in the bag, and put it in the sink. You're going to defrost the turkey that way."

"Shouldn't I use hot water?"

"No. Definitely cold water. You'll need to change it every half hour."

"Uh. The turkey?"

"No, sir. The water."

"Oh. How long will this take?"

"You need to give it half an hour for every pound of turkey."

"That's thirteen hours!"

"Yes, but there's not much we can do about it."

"And then I still have to cook it."

"Yes, sir."

"Can't I use, you know, heating pads or something? An electric blanket?"

"No, sir. It's really not recommended. Cold water is definitely the best way."

"Okay. I better get started. Thanks, Helen."

\*\*

2PM

"Butterball Turkey Talk-Line—"

"Helen?"

"Yes, this is Helen. How may I help you?"

"It's me, the guy with the turkey in his sink."

"Um, all right. What do you need to know?"

"Okay, I filled the sink, and then I put the turkey in it, and water got all over the floor, so I probably should have done it the other way around, but that's not why I'm calling really. I decided I didn't have time to defrost it, so I went out and got a fresh turkey, okay?"

"All right. When were you planning to serve it?"

"I'm not sure. Just sometime tonight, okay?"

"Okay. How much does your new turkey weigh?"

"Nineteen pounds. It's kinda small. I asked if they got any bigger than that, but the guy said, no, because they were dead already."

Helen laughed. "All right. So your new turkey is nineteen pounds, and it's fresh, not frozen."

"Right."

"Are you planning to stuff it?"

"What? Oh, wait. Um. I haven't decided yet. What do you think?"

"I do think you might be better off cooking the stuffing separately."

"You're the turkey tech. I've got, you know, a couple of boxes of Stove Top, and they have instructions on the back. So I can do that okay. How long do I cook my turkey?"

"Three-and-a-half to four hours, at three hundred and twenty-five degrees. You *are* roasting it, right?"

"Uh, yeah. I mean, I don't know what else to do with it."

"All right. Three-and-a-half to four hours."

"Okay. So I don't have to start that for a while."

"It depends on when you want to serve it."

"It seems really small," he said dubiously.

"Can I ask, how many people were you intending to serve dinner for?"

"Four, with Jimmy. No, five, with Mulder coming over."

"Okay. It should be plenty, really."

"Six, maybe. If Yves turns up."

"Well, we recommend a pound to a pound-and-a-half for each person."

"So, I could invite some other people over too."

"Yes, sir. I wouldn't worry about not having enough."

"Well, maybe I better not just invite people over. I mean, this is my first turkey, and I don't know how good it'll be. I don't want to embarrass myself."

"Now you're thinking ahead," Helen laughed.

"Um, right. I've still got a turkey in my sink, though."

"How long has it been defrosting?"

"About three hours."

"Oh. I think you should probably dispose of that. You're not going to be able to safely refreeze it."

"But what about gigantothermy?"

"Pardon me?"

"You know, how big things keep their temperature longer."

"How big is it?"

"Twenty-six pounds. But, the show I was watching, where they talked about gigantothermy, that was about dinosaurs."

"Your turkey may not qualify. I'd advise you to dispose of it."

"Um, okay. Hey, is my turkey genetically modified?"

"It's probably been specially bred."

"Specially bred?"

"To maximize breast size and white meat."

"Oh." There was a long pause. "I bet you get a lot of jokes about that."

Helen laughed. "Yes, we do."

"Okay, so how do I cook my mutant turkey?"

"It probably has a bag of giblets inside it, so you'll need to take that out."

"Okay, let me get the bag off."

"All right. The giblets will be in a sort of waxy bag inside the posterior cavity."

"The posterior cavity?"

He heard her laugh again. "Yes."

"How do I get that out?"

"You may need to cut the drumsticks apart, if they're tied together with string."

"Okay."

"Then just reach in and find the bag."

"Reach in?"

"Yes, sir."

"With my hands?"

"One will probably suffice."

"Now, wait. You want me to put my hand inside this cold dead bird's butt, and pull out its, what did you say again?"

"Giblets. Its liver and heart and neck, that sort of thing."

"Is this some kind of defective turkey?"

"Pardon me?"

"Well, why didn't you guys just take that stuff out at the factory?"

"We did."

"And then you bagged it up and stuffed it in the turkey's butt?"

Helen managed to stop laughing. "Yes."

"*WHY?*"

"Some people use it to make turkey broth for soup."

"Well, I'm not doing that, so I can just throw it away, right?"

"Go right ahead."

"Turkey pervs," Langly muttered under his breath.

Helen was laughing again.

"Okay. Then what?"

"Wash your hands with soap and hot water, and then pour a little vegetable oil into a bowl. Not much, you only need a couple of tablespoons."

"I'm writing this down now. I can't make myself stick my hand in the bird yet."

"Okay. The important thing to remember is to wash your hands before and after you touch raw meat. Every time."

"Okay. 'Treat turkey like nuclear waste'," he muttered, writing.

She kept laughing. "It's not that bad. But you don't want to ruin the holidays with food poisoning."

"Well, okay."

"You'll want to spread the oil all over the turkey, so the skin won't dry out, and so it'll turn out golden brown."

"Okay."

"Then insert an oven-safe meat thermometer..."

"Oh. I don't know if we have one of those. Um, will a temperature probe do okay?"

"What do you mean, exactly?"

"Uh. Fro—One of my housemates, made it, and we use it to, you know, see if stuff's overheating, or check for surveillance equipment, because sometimes it gives off a lot of heat, and... That sort of thing. It's not oven safe, though, there's a lot of duct tape on it that I think might melt. But can I just check the turkey with it after I take it out of the oven?"

"Uh. How accurate is it?"

He rummaged through a drawer. "It says point-oh-oh-three..." he paused. "Oh, wait. That's the Geiger counter. Hang on a sec."

"Sir?"

"Uh, yeah?"

"Is there a little round white plastic thing stuck into your turkey?"

"Yeah."

"Okay, that's a disposable temperature monitor. It'll pop up when the turkey's done."

"Oh, okay. That makes it easy. Hey!" he yelped. "This bird's radioactive!"

"What?"

"It's clicking, right?"

"Sir, did you *do* anything with the turkey?"

"What do you mean? Like, did I get it too close to the MRI or something? No. I don't think so. I mean, it hasn't even been turned on in days."

"Sir?"

"Yeah?"

"I don't normally recommend this, but Jennie-O makes a fine product called a 'Turkey Pan Roast', that you might try. It's really much easier to cook."



\*\*

5:30PM

"Ta-da!" Langly said, gesturing at the table.

"Langly?" Byers said into a moment of stunned silence.

"Yeah?"

"Chicken McNuggets?"

"With all the fixings." Langly beamed proudly.

"Fries?" Mulder started laughing.

"Hey, cranberry sauce for dipping!" Jimmy said cheerfully.

"Kid, I thought you were making a turkey?" Frohike was still gazing at the table.

"Well, I tried. But Helen stopped taking my calls."

"Helen?"

"The chick at the turkey hotline."

Mulder snickered. "That's gotta be a first."

"I guess that explains the turkey splattered on the sidewalk," Frohike commented.

"I decided to let them live free," Langly explained.

"Them?" Mulder asked.

"Shut up, Mulder. Like you could've done any better."

"Chicken McNuggets," Byers repeated.

Frohike sighed. "Boys? I'm driving. Langly, I'll buy you a slice of apple pie if you promise to stop sulking."

"Hot fudge cake sundae?" Langly asked hopefully.

"Whatever. Let's roll."

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