

GREAT TIPS TO ENJOY YOUR THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY SAFELY

Thanksgiving is a wonderful time to gather with friends and family, eat delicious food, watch football (or the parade!), and travel to visit loved ones. While enjoying the holiday, and as things might get hectic, it is important to always keep safety in mind.



Top **safety hazards during the Thanksgiving holiday** include:

- **FIRE** ... kitchen fires, candles and outdoor deep fryers
- **FOOD** ... choking and poisoning, cuts and burns during food preparation
- **TRAVEL** ... car accidents, driving while intoxicated or distracted

KITCHEN SAFETY

- Keep children away from the stove.
- Do not leave the house while the turkey is cooking.
- Ensure the kitchen floor is kept clear and doesn't have any trip hazards.
- Keep matches, lighters, candles and knives out of the reach of children.

Thanksgiving is the #1 day of the year for cooking fires, reports State Farm insurance. The U.S. Fire Department confirms that more than 4,000 fires occur on Thanksgiving Day and preparing deep fried turkeys, using a turkey fryer, is the cause of approximately 5 deaths, 50 injuries, and the destruction of 900 homes and more than \$15 million in property damage every year.

Kitchen safety is even more important than usual during busy holiday times, like Thanksgiving, when more people might be working in the kitchen to prepare a large meal. But for casual cooks and

experienced chefs alike, the kitchen presents more hazards than imagined. Read more about [the most common ways kitchen tasks send people to the ER](#) every day so you can plan your next family gathering to be even safer.

HOLIDAY FIRE PREVENTION TIPS

- Keep baking soda on hand to put out kitchen fires.
- Prevent fires by making sure your oven and stovetop are clean and free of grease and dust.
- Do not leave food cooking or the stove unsupervised.
- Use a timer for foods cooking, so your dish doesn't become a fire hazard.
- Make sure smoke alarms are working. Replace batteries yearly.
- A household fire extinguisher should always be nearby.
- Do not leave candles burning unattended and do not burn candles near flammable items like curtains or potpourri.
- Follow all instructions carefully when using a deep fryer and monitor closely!

Incidents of choking and food poisoning increase during the holidays, especially around Thanksgiving, as people are preparing and consuming more food than usual. Food Safety News reports that approximately 51 million turkeys are consumed on Thanksgiving.

FOOD SAFETY

- Always wash your hands after handling raw or under-cooked poultry.
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meat and produce to prevent cross-contamination.
- The USDA recommends cooking the turkey at a minimum of 325 degrees. Use a food thermometer and cook the turkey to an internal temperature of 165 to 180 degrees to ensure the turkey is cooked thoroughly and to avoid illness caused by consuming under-cooked poultry.
- Store leftovers within 2 hours or toss them.

PET SAFETY

The Veterinary Medical Association warns that turkey and chicken bones should never be given to pets because they can splinter and pets may choke.

Dogs should be kept away from any dish that has onions, leeks, garlic, raisins, grapes or chocolate, as those foods can be hazardous to your dog's health.

HOLIDAY TRAVEL SAFETY

With Thanksgiving being one of the most travel-heavy times of the year, it is important to be prepared before hitting the road and to drive defensively, especially during bad weather.

Drivers who are texting take their eyes off the road for an average of 5 seconds. Driving at 55 mph, that is about the length of a football field.

- Buckle up, every trip.
- Make sure your vehicle is well maintained.
- Plan your route ahead of time.
- Carry an emergency kit in the car.
- Be aware of weather conditions.
- Take caution in parking lots while out shopping.
- No texting while driving.

According to the National Highway Safety Association, more than 40% of holiday car accidents involve alcohol. **DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE.**

There's never a time when employees, parents or families can 'take a break' from safety. Workplace safety is often our focus because there may be bigger hazards present and we all want to [get home safely to our families](#) and loved ones at the end of the day, but safety at home is also important. Take a breather and remind yourself what the holidays are truly about and know that nothing is more important than having a safe holiday this year.

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