

Gravy with no lumps

G R A V Y

TIPS

◆ Don't let the turkey drippings burn. This can happen if the roasting pan gets too hot. Drippings usually won't burn in a heavy-based roasting pan that's just large enough to hold the turkey. If the pan is too big, the area not covered by the bird will get too hot. A too-thin pan can also cause burned juices. But if your pan is too big or flimsy, coarsely chop an onion or two and sprinkle it around the turkey in the pan to act as a heat absorber. If you need to do this, leave the onion out of the giblet broth because the drippings will be oniony enough.

◆ Make the giblet broth a day or two ahead. This gives you time to chill it and remove the fat, plus you won't be taking up extra burner space on the big day.

◆ Turkey liver makes broth bitter. Leave it out.

◆ Tailor the gravy to your taste. The basic gravy technique at right makes a delicious gravy, but after straining you can embellish it without muting the flavor of the turkey. For a bright, fresh flavor, add 1 or 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh herbs (chives, parsley, chervil, basil, or tarragon) a few minutes before serving. For a luxurious touch, stir in 1 or 2 tablespoons of soaked, drained, and chopped dried porcini mushrooms or morels. Strain the soaking liquid through a coffee filter and add that, too. For giblet gravy, finely chop the neck meat and cooked giblets from the stock and heat them in the gravy just before serving. Puréed roasted garlic adds great flavor to gravy and thickens it slightly, too. For a richer gravy, add a little heavy cream.

◆ Gravy should be smooth and pourable, but not watery. If the gravy is too thin, thicken it with a slurry of water and flour. Blend 2 tablespoons flour with 3 tablespoons water and add this, a bit at a time, to the simmering gravy until it thickens. Then simmer the gravy for about 10 minutes to cook off the floury taste.

How to make gravy

- 1 Make a broth from the giblets and neck. Add a halved onion, about 20 small sprigs of parsley, a bay leaf, and enough water to cover. Simmer gently for at least 1½ hours and then strain.
- 2 Pour the drippings from the roasting pan into a large measuring cup to separate the juices from the fat. The juices will sink to the bottom while the fat floats on top. Spoon some of the fat (see Gravy Math, below) back into the pan. Pour off the rest of the fat and discard it, reserving the juices. Put the roasting pan over one or two burners over medium heat.
- 3 Make a roux by adding some flour to the fat in the pan (see Gravy Math for amounts). Whisk the flour and the fat together over medium heat, scraping up the caramelized juices, until you have a smooth paste.
- 4 When the flour smells toasty, whisk in the liquids—the reserved juices, the giblet broth, and any extra broth needed according to Gravy Math. Pour slowly at first as you work out the lumps of roux.
- 5 Simmer the gravy to cook off the floury taste and to thicken it a bit. Continue whisking occasionally for about 10 minutes. Strain the gravy, season it with salt and pepper, and keep it warm until ready to serve.

Gravy Math

Figure on about ⅓ cup gravy per person. For the liquid component, measure the turkey juices (the pan drippings minus the fat) and add enough giblet broth to get the amount of liquid you need. If there still isn't enough liquid, add homemade or canned low-salt chicken or turkey broth.

servings	liquid	fat	flour
6	2 cups	2 Tbs.	3 Tbs.
8	2⅔ cups	2½ Tbs.	4 Tbs.
10	3⅓ cups	3 Tbs.	5 Tbs.
12	4 cups	4 Tbs.	6 Tbs.
14	4⅔ cups	4½ Tbs.	7 Tbs.
16	5⅓ cups	5 Tbs.	8 Tbs.

As a general rule, use about 1 tablespoon fat and about 1½ tablespoons flour for each cup of gravy.