

How to Bake Chicken Breast and How Long

Even thickness and a thermometer are the best starting points for juicy baked chicken. This simple version works for salads, sandwiches, bowls, or dinner.

MAKES 2 SERVINGS • PREP 10 MIN • BAKE ABOUT 18-25 MIN • REST 5 MIN

Ingredients

- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, about 6-8 ounces each
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon fine salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika, optional

Tools: Baking dish, cutting board, food-safe bag or parchment, mallet or rolling pin, instant-read thermometer.

How to Tell It’s Ready

Use the thermometer, not the clock or the color of the juices. Remove individual pieces as each reaches 165 F.

How to Make It

1. Heat the oven. Preheat a conventional oven to 425 F. Lightly oil a baking dish.
2. Even out the thickness. Do not rinse raw chicken. Place it between parchment sheets or in a food-safe bag and gently pound the thick sections to about 3/4 inch. Wash hands and clean tools and surfaces after handling raw chicken.
3. Season. Pat dry with paper towels, then coat with oil and seasonings. Place in the dish with space between the breasts.
4. Bake and check. Bake about 18-25 minutes, checking earlier for smaller pieces. Insert the thermometer from the side into the center of the thickest part. Each breast must reach 165 F before it comes out.
5. Rest before slicing. Let the chicken rest for 5 minutes, then slice across the grain. Spoon any juices from the dish over the slices.

Troubleshooting

Very thick breasts cook unevenly. Slicing immediately also lets more juices run out.

Jane’s Note

A simple chicken breast is useful all week. Change the seasoning or sauce to suit the meal.

Refrigerate cooked chicken promptly and use within 3-4 days. Reheat leftovers to 165 F. The timing here assumes thawed chicken; frozen pieces need a different method.

janesmithlifestyle.co/post/cooking-101-how-to-cook-chicken-breast