Thanksgiving Dinner Planner

Date _____ Guests _____ Dinner time _____

4 weeks out: decide

- [ ] Pick the date and dinner time
- [ ] Count adults and kids
- [ ] Ask about allergies and diets
- [ ] Draft the menu (main, 2 starches, 2 veg, bread, dessert)
- [ ] Assign dishes to guests
- [ ] Check oven, stovetop and fridge space
- [ ] Order the turkey or buy a frozen one
- [ ] Test any brand new recipe once
- [ ]
- [ ]

1 to 2 weeks out

- [ ] Confirm guests and who brings what
- [ ] Write the grocery list by aisle
- [ ] Buy pantry items, broth, butter, foil
- [ ] Buy drinks and ice
- [ ] Find a meat thermometer and roasting pan
- [ ] Borrow chairs, platters, serving spoons
- [ ] Make and freeze rolls, pie dough or gravy base

Thaw and shop: 4 to 6 days out

- [ ] Frozen turkey into the fridge (1 day per 4 lb)
- [ ] Set it on a rimmed tray, bottom shelf
- [ ] Check the fridge is 40°F or colder
- [ ] Buy fresh produce, dairy and herbs
- [ ] Make the cranberry sauce
- [ ] Clear one full fridge shelf

Tuesday

- [ ] Chop onions, celery and carrots
- [ ] Dry out bread cubes for stuffing
- [ ] Make stock or gravy base
- [ ] Make pie dough or bake pies
- [ ] Wash table linens, find the gravy boat
- [ ] Sticky-note a serving dish for every recipe

Wednesday

- [ ] Dry brine the turkey if you are using that method
- [ ] Bake pies
- [ ] Assemble casseroles, cover and chill
- [ ] Peel potatoes, hold in cold water
- [ ] Set the table
- [ ] Chill drinks, stock the ice
- [ ] Empty the dishwasher, take out the trash
- [ ] Write Thursday oven times in the margin
- [ ]

Thursday morning

- [ ] Check the turkey is fully thawed
- [ ] Turkey in the oven at: _____
- [ ] Probe in the thickest part of the thigh
- [ ] Set casseroles out to take the chill off
- [ ] Put out appetizers
- [ ] Start coffee and cider
- [ ] Set out leftover containers

Final hour

- [ ] Pull the turkey at 165°F in the thigh
- [ ] Rest it 30 minutes under foil
- [ ] Casseroles and rolls into the free oven
- [ ] Reheat the sides
- [ ] Make gravy from the drippings
- [ ] Carve and plate
- [ ] Light candles, call everyone to the table

After dinner

- [ ] Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours
- [ ] Strip the turkey, save bones for stock
- [ ] Label containers with the date
- [ ] Send guests home with leftovers
- [ ] Jot down notes for next year
- [ ]
- [ ]

Tape the Thursday groups to the fridge. Write the turkey weight and thaw date in the margin.