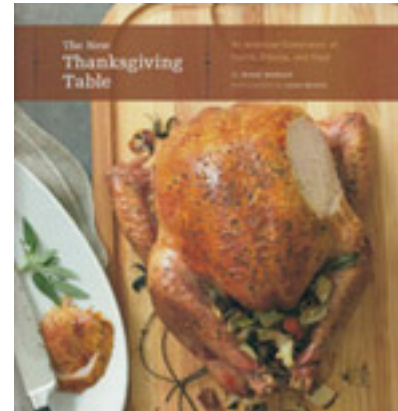


## Trussing a Turkey

Trussing a turkey means nothing more than securing the bird with string, skewers, or poultry pins in order to keep its limbs primly in place. This is basically a presentation issue. The turkey looks prettier with its wings tucked in close to the breast and its legs demurely closed. And, honestly, it is easier to turn the turkey while roasting it when it is securely tied. I own a trussing needle but almost never use it. It is easy, and quite effective, just to tie the bird with some cotton kitchen twine (see page XX) using the methods detailed below. Though I prefer to roast an unstuffed turkey (because I like stuffing as a side dish that is crispy and beautifully browned on top), here are directions for trussing both a stuffed and unstuffed bird, plus a hybrid trussing method.



From: *The New Thanksgiving Table*  
An American Celebration of  
Family, Friends, and Food  
By Diane Morgan

### To Truss an Unstuffed Turkey

Have ready one 4-foot length of kitchen twine. Place the turkey, breast side up, on a work surface with the legs facing you. Arrange the flap of neck skin so it covers the neck cavity. Center the twine across the back (on the work surface) under the shoulders of the turkey, making sure it secures the neck skin. With an end in each hand, pull the string up over the top of the breast, tightening it so the wings are drawn in close to the body; then cross over the two ends and tie. Now bring the twine down to the legs, bring the legs together, wrap the string around the ends (knobs) of the legs, and tie a knot. Trim any extra length of string.

### To Truss a Stuffed Turkey

Have ready one 4-foot length of kitchen twine and one 1-foot length, plus 4 or 5 thin metal skewers or poultry pins. Loosely fill both the neck and chest cavities with stuffing.\* (Stuffing expands when heated, which is why you don't want it packed in the cavities. Put any extra stuffing in a buttered baking pan and bake it separately.) Pull the flap of neck skin over the stuffed neck cavity and secure it to the body with a skewer. Now pull the skin together on either side of the chest cavity and close it securely with 3 or 4 skewers. Using the short piece of twine, tie a knot around the tail. Lace the twine up the skewers, from bottom to top, as if lacing a shoe; then knot the ends of the string together. Cut off the excess string. Use the 4-foot length to tie the rest of the bird as directed in the instructions for trussing an unstuffed turkey.

### Quick Trussing Method

The simplest way to keep a turkey contained without a lot of fuss, whether the turkey is stuffed or unstuffed, is to tie the legs together with kitchen twine so they hold their shape, and to tuck the wing tips under, bending the wing tip back and under the second wing joint.

\* The stuffing should be at room temperature. Cold stuffing, when packed inside the turkey, may not reach 165°F (the temperature it needs to reach to avoid harmful bacteria from developing) by the time the turkey is done.