



Where to Place the Thermometer



MEAT

When taking temperature of beef, pork, or lamb roasts, the thermometer should be placed midway in the roast, avoiding the bone. When cooking hamburgers, steaks, or chops, insert a thermistor or thermocouple in the thickest part, away from bone, fat, or gristle. If using a dial bimetal thermometer, see thin foods below. When the food being cooked is irregularly shaped, such as may be the case with a beef roast, check the temperature in several places.

POULTRY

When cooking whole poultry, the thermometer should be inserted into the thickest part of the thigh. If stuffed, the center of the stuffing should be checked after the thigh reads 180 °F (stuffing must reach 165°F). If cooking poultry parts, insert thermometer into the thickest area, avoiding the bone. The thermometer may be inserted sideways if necessary.

THIN FOODS

When measuring the temperature of a thin food, such as a hamburger patty or chops, a thermistor or thermocouple thermometer should be used, if possible. A dial bimetallic thermometer averages the internal temperature along the length of the sensor within its probe. Thin foods usually cannot accommodate the 2-inch probe if it is inserted from top to bottom and, thus, it will not give an accurate reading.

For thin foods, the bimetal thermometer may be inserted sideways so that it will average temperature in the center of the food. To avoid burning fingers, it may be helpful to remove the food from the heat source (if cooking on a grill or in a frying pan) and insert the thermometer sideways after placing the item on a clean spatula or plate.



COMBINATION DISHES

For casseroles and other combination dishes, place the thermometer in the thickest portion of the food or center of the dish. Egg dishes, and dishes made using ground meat and poultry, should be checked in several places.