Raw Chicken Breast

Raw chicken breast must be handled safely and fully cooked before eating. This beginner recipe explains how to take refrigerated raw boneless breast from package to skillet, avoid cross-contamination, and produce a simple cooked chicken portion at 165°F (74°C). The finished dish is cooked chicken, not raw chicken.



Prep	Cook	Additional	Total	Servings
10 min	15 min	5 min	30 min	4

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 pounds raw boneless skinless chicken breasts / 680 g, in 4 portions
- 1 tablespoon olive oil / 15 ml
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons water / 30 ml, for the covered skillet finish

Instructions

1. Keep the chicken refrigerated until preparation. If frozen, thaw it safely in the refrigerator; counter thawing is not appropriate.

2. Wash hands with soap and water. Set out a board and utensils reserved for raw poultry and a separate clean plate for cooked meat.

3. Open the package without splashing juices. Do not rinse the chicken. Pat dry with disposable paper towels and discard them.

4. Flatten the thick areas to about 1/2 inch (1.3 cm). Season both sides with salt and pepper. Wash hands and clean contaminated equipment and surfaces before touching other foods.

5. Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. Brown chicken for about 4 minutes per side; reduce the heat if the surface darkens too quickly.

6. Add the measured water carefully at the side of the pan, cover and cook another 2 to 5 minutes as needed. Check the thickest part of every portion for 165°F (74°C).

7. Use clean utensils to transfer the cooked chicken to the clean plate. Rest for 5 minutes, then slice and serve. Never return it to the raw-chicken board.

Time, Temperature & Doneness

The raw ingredient becomes safe cooked chicken only after every portion reaches 165°F (74°C) in its thickest part. Never taste raw chicken, and do not use color, texture or juices as the sole safety check.

Ingredient Notes & Substitutions

Raw storage: Refrigerate fresh raw chicken at 40°F (4°C) or below and cook or freeze within 1 to 2 days.

Thawing: Refrigerator thawing is the simplest plan-ahead option. Chicken thawed in cold water or a microwave must be cooked immediately.

Safety: Smell, meat color and clear juices cannot replace a thermometer.

Tips for Success

Prepare side dishes before opening the raw-chicken package.

Use separate raw and cooked utensils.

Insert the thermometer into the thickest area.

Clean the thermometer probe before and after checking.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Washing raw chicken in the sink.

Thawing chicken on the kitchen counter.

Serving partially cooked chicken or relying on color alone.

Recipe Variations

Unseasoned cooked version: Omit salt and pepper while keeping the safety steps.

Herb version: Add 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano to the seasoning.

Oven version: Bake equal-thickness portions at 400°F (200°C) to 165°F (74°C), checking early.

Serving Suggestions

Serve only after the chicken is fully cooked, with rice and vegetables. Keep raw poultry away from salad ingredients and other ready-to-eat foods.

Storage

Refrigerate cooked leftovers promptly in shallow containers within 2 hours, or within 1 hour when exposed to temperatures above 90°F (32°C). Keep at 40°F (4°C) or below and use within 3 to 4 days.

Freezing

Freeze promptly cooled cooked portions airtight at 0°F (-18°C) or below for up to 3 months for best quality. Label with the date and thaw in the refrigerator. Continuous freezing preserves safety longer, but texture can decline.

Reheating

Reheat covered in a 350°F (175°C) oven with a small splash of water or broth until the center reaches 165°F (74°C). Check more than one spot; heat thin pieces only as long as needed.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I eat raw chicken breast?
No. This recipe cooks the chicken to 165°F (74°C) before serving.

Should I wash raw chicken?
No. Washing can spread germs around the kitchen; safe cooking is the required step.

How long can raw chicken stay refrigerated?
Fresh raw chicken generally keeps 1 to 2 days at 40°F (4°C) or below before cooking or freezing.

Can white chicken still be undercooked?
Yes. Appearance is not a reliable safety test; measure the internal temperature.

Recipe & Sources

View the recipe on HowToCookChickenRecipes.com

USDA FSIS - do not wash raw poultry

FoodSafety.gov - safe minimum internal temperatures

FoodSafety.gov - cold food storage chart

FoodSafety.gov - prompt chilling and cross-contamination prevention

USDA FSIS - safe thawing methods