

## Just Wing It!

Are you a chicken wing lover? Nothing is quite as finger-licking good as a classic chicken wing!

I will take you on a mouth-watering journey of chicken wing varieties and sauces. Whether you prefer them spicy, tangy, or sweet, I've got you covered to become a chicken wing connoisseur.

Chicken wings are sold whole or cut into sections. There are three parts to a whole chicken wing. Did you know that they are called the drumette, flat or wingette, and tip?

The drumette is the portion of the wing that's attached to the main part of the chicken. This is called the drumette, probably due to the fact that it's shaped like the larger chicken drumstick. There's one main bone in the middle, with some joints and cartilage on both ends. The middle part of the wing is called the wingette or flat. There are two thin bones that run parallel to each other down the length of the flat, and it has dark meat and is completely covered with skin. Wing tips are tiny, pointy pieces shaped like a feather at the end. Tips are almost entirely skin, bone, and cartilage, with very little meat.

Breast meat is used for boneless chicken wings. The breast meat is removed from the bone and then cut into a size and shape that looks like chicken wings.

Plan on serving one pound of chicken wings per person. That is typically 8 to 12 pieces. Keep in mind much of the weight of 1 pound of chicken wings is bone. If you will offer a large food spread, 1/2 pound per person should be sufficient.

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw chicken. The USDA recommends against washing your raw poultry to help minimize the spread of bacteria.

Wings can be breaded, brined, marinated, or dry rubbed. A marinade is great if you love lots of flavor and saucy wings. Dry rub wings offer a rich flavor and can be cooked immediately. Plus, the baking powder in that dry rub yields really crispy skin.

Different cooking methods produce varying styles of wings. Chicken wings can be prepared in various ways, including air-frying, baking, broiling, deep-frying, grilling, roasting, searing, or smoking.

Chicken should always be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165°F. Avoiding the bone, use a food thermometer to check the temperature of each wing.

From classic flavors to unique and creative options, there is a wing for every taste preference. Here are some ideas to get you started: mango habanero wings, sriracha lime wings, maple bacon wings, jerk wings, and lemon pepper wings.

No chicken wing feast is complete without some delicious dipping sauces. Here are dipping sauce ideas:

- Buffalo Wing Sauce

- Blue Cheese Dressing
- Ranch Dressing
- Honey Mustard Sauce
- Barbecue Sauce
- Sriracha Mayo
- Sweet Chili Sauce
- Garlic Parmesan Sauce and
- Sticky Honey Glaze

Since wings are often served buffet-style, it's essential to refrigerate or freeze leftover chicken within 2 hours or 1 hour if the food is exposed to temperatures above 90°F. Keep wings hot by placing them in a preheated oven, warming tray, or slow cooker.

Adding fresh herbs, such as cilantro or parsley, to the chicken wings can elevate their presentation and add a pop of color.

Elevate your meals and gatherings with irresistible chicken wings. Whether you eat them plain, cooked in seasoning, or coated in sauce, wings rule the roost. Happy wing-eating!