Grilled chicken time and temperature chart

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165°F (74°C) **Done for every cut of chicken**, read with a food thermometer in the thickest part **before it comes off the grill** (USDA). The times below are a guide; the thermometer decides.

Direct heat (food over the fire) Indirect (no fire under the food)

CUT	HEAT · GRILL TEMP	GRILL TIME, MINUTES (0 15 30 45 60 75 90)	Done at (USDA)
Breast pounded thin ¼ in thick	Direct, high 450–550°F (232–288°C)	4–5 min	165°F
Kebabs 1½ in breast cubes	Direct, medium 350–400°F (177–204°C)	8–10 min	165°F
Boneless thighs 3–4 oz	Direct, medium 350–400°F (177–204°C)	8–10 min	165°F
Boneless breast 6–8 oz	Direct, medium 350–450°F (177–232°C)	8–12 min	165°F
Drumsticks about 4 oz	Direct, medium-high 400–450°F (204–232°C)	16–20 or 40–50 min	165°F
Wings 2–3 oz pieces	Direct, low to med-low 250–350°F (121–177°C)	20–25 min	165°F
Bone-in breast 10–12 oz, skin-on	Indirect, medium 350–450°F (177–232°C)	30–40 min	165°F
Bone-in thighs skin-on	Indirect, then direct 350–425°F (177–218°C)	36–50 min	165°F
Spatchcocked chicken 3¼–5 lb	Direct, skin side down 375–425°F (191–218°C)	about 45–50 min	165°F
Leg quarters 10–12 oz	Indirect, medium 350–400°F (177–204°C)	50–60 min	165°F
Whole chicken 3–4 lb	Indirect, medium 350–400°F (177–204°C)	1¼–1½ hr	165°F
Whole roaster 5–7 lb	Indirect	*18–25 min per lb (USDA)*	165°F

Every cut is done at 165°F (74°C) in the thickest part, read with a food thermometer.

Options from the table: sear bone-in breasts 5 min first; wings can sear 1–3 min, then 8–10 min indirect at about 400°F; spatchcock can cook indirect at about 375°F (190°C).

Check it right

- **Pieces:** probe the thickest part, not touching bone. Thin cutlets: in from the side to the center.
- **Whole chicken:** three places: the innermost thigh, the innermost wing and the thickest part of the breast.
- **Check every piece.** Size and grill position make pieces finish at different times.
- Most food thermometers read within 2–4°F, so aim for a clear 165°F, not 163°F.
- **Color doesn't tell you.** Clear juices aren't proof, and safely cooked chicken can still look pink.

Rest and serve

- **Don't pull it early** and count on carryover: reach 165°F on the grill.
- **Rest** pieces 3–5 min and a whole or spatchcocked bird 5–15 min (Weber).
- Keep cooked chicken at **140°F (60°C) or above** until served: the cool side of the grill does that.
- Separate platters and tongs for raw and cooked. Don't wash raw chicken.
- Refrigerate leftovers promptly. Throw out chicken left out over 2 hours (1 hour above 90°F / 32°C).
- Dark meat: many cooks prefer 175°F (79°C) for texture. That's preference; 165°F is the safety line.

Sources: grill times from Weber and Kingsford recipes (read October 2026); USDA FSIS Chicken from Farm to Table, Safe Minimum Internal Temperature Chart and Grilling Food Safely; America's Test Kitchen (dark-meat preference).