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SPATCHCOCK CHICKEN

Slow and steady is key. A spatchcock chicken requires medium coals for about 30-40 minutes of cooking. If your coals are too hot, they will scorch and burn the outside of the bird before the inside is cooked through.

Test the heat of your braai by holding the palm of your hand right above the grid for 5 seconds. If you can manage that safely, it's good to go.

OUR TOP TIP: If space allows, keep the main fire going on one side of the braai so that you can top up the coals as you braai.

CHICKEN PORTIONS

- Don't cook chicken straight from the fridge – let it come to room temperature to ensure even cooking. If the inside is still ice-cold, the outside will be done while the inside stays raw.
- If marinating, brush off excess marinade before braaiing so that the skin can crisp up nicely.
- Never cut slits into the meat to “speed up” cooking. This will just dry it out.
- Use tongs to turn portions – a fork pierces the skin and dries out the meat. Or enclose portions in a braai grid for easy turning.

CHICKEN WINGS

These are quick-cooking – perfect for grilling over high heat, which ensures the crispiest skin. You can braai these first while waiting for the heat of the coals to die down to cook the larger cuts of chicken. If you can hold your hand above the grid for no more than 2-3 seconds, the coals are ready.

CHICKEN FILLETS

As chicken fillets are thicker on one side than the other, they should always be flattened to ensure even cooking on the braai. These are great in burgers or salads. This cut doesn't have moisture from skin or bones, so be sure to cook over a high heat so the fillet does not dry out.

HOW TO CHECK IF THE CHICKEN IS COOKED

In the absence of a meat thermometer (it's understandable if you don't have one!), these are our pro tips:

- Don't be tempted to slice your chicken to check the inside. Nope, don't do it! You will lose all the succulence as the juices leak out.
- Rather wiggle a chicken's joints at the drumsticks and thighs - if loose, it is cooked through.
- If you're still unsure, or there are no joints to wiggle, pierce the thickest part of the chicken with a small knife tip. If the juices run clear (with no redness), it's done.

[For more chicken braai recipes, click here.](#)

1. Spatchcock butter chicken



Flattening a whole chicken ensures faster and even cooking. The meat stays flavourful and moist with crispy charred skin. This recipe is a summer-approved version of a winter favourite.

[Get the spatchcock butter chicken recipe here.](#)

2. [Ginger and papaya chicken flattie](#)



For chicken that is packed with flavour, marinating overnight is key. This sweet, tropical marinade is also an excellent tenderiser - papaya contains an enzyme called papain that helps break proteins down.

[Get the ginger and papaya chicken flatties recipe here.](#)

3. [Cheese and chilli pineapple chicken burgers](#)



The secret to succulent chicken fillets on the braai is to pound them to an even thickness. This will ensure they all cook evenly at roughly the same speed. Once grilled, we suggest letting your guests assemble their own burgers.

[Get the cheese and chilli pineapple chicken burgers recipe here.](#)

[4. Honey, sesame and ginger chicken espetadas](#)



Sure, sticky ribs are good, but these sticky Asian-inspired sosatias are even better! Give them a squeeze of orange or lime before serving to add much-needed acidity to the dish. If you're using bamboo skewers, soak the skewers in warm water for an hour first.

[Get the honey, sesame and ginger chicken espetadas recipe here.](#)

[5. Chilli chicken hot wings](#)



Wings need a quick cook on high heat, as they have little meat. Make these wings as a spicy appetiser to serve while your guests wait for the mains. Everyone will be begging for the recipe.

[Get the chilli chicken hot wings recipe here.](#)