

## Butchering Poultry

### How to Cut Up a Whole Chicken

Save money when you buy a whole chicken and cut it up into pieces. Buying a whole chicken is cheaper than buying pieces, and the leftover parts are ideal for making backbone of soup stocks. The same cutting method can be used for other fowl like duck or squab.



1. Place the chicken breastbone-side up on a clean, flat cutting surface.



2. Use a standard, sharp kitchen knife to slice off the wing joints. The wings can be set aside and reserved for stock.



3. To remove the breasts, make a shallow incision running along one side of the breastplate.



4. Deepen the incision by slicing into the chicken toward the rib cage. Pull the meat away from the rib cage as you slice down. As you progress further into the bird, slide the knife off of the rib cage repeatedly to ensure that you are removing any meat attached to the rib cage.



5. Your knife will come to a point, just underneath the wishbone, where the wing joint meets the rib cage. The wing joint cartilage is soft enough to slice through easily. Slice completely through the joint, stopping only when your knife reaches the cutting surface. At this point, the breast is almost completely off the bird.



6. Slice through the skin that runs from the tail end of the bird to the point where the leg meets the breast.



7. The breast should come off of the bird with little effort. Pull the breast outwards, away from the bird, being careful not to rip or tear the flesh. You might need to slice through some still-attached skin to remove the breast.



8. Cut through the leg joint until you reach the point where the leg bone meets the body. This joint can be difficult to cut through, so stop cutting when you reach bone. Don't try to cut through the leg bone.



9. Grasp the leg and pull it behind the bird, pressing your fingers into the back of the joint until the joint pops loose. You will feel the bone pop out of the socket. Remove the leg by cutting in and around the joint. Keep cutting until you have freed the leg from the body. Now, turn the bird around and remove the other breast and leg the same way, following steps 3 through 9.



10. The carcass, along with the wings, can be used for making soup stock.



11. You can debone the final cuts of meat further, or cook them whole, depending upon your recipe requirements.