

Chicken

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## CHICKEN NUTRITION

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If you could find a carb-free, low-fat protein source that was easy to prepare and delicious, would you eat it? In 2004, of people who said they were following a high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet, 62 percent said they were eating more chicken. Why?

Not only is it economical compared to other meats, chicken is also versatile. You can roast it, fry it, barbeque it, sauté it, microwave it, poach it, or even find it pre-cooked, rotisserie or deli style, ready to eat.

Whether you count carbohydrates, fat grams, calories, points, your hard-earned pennies, or your blessings, chicken is a simple, smart choice for healthy meals.

### CHOOSE LEAN PROTEIN

Today's healthy eater talks about protein as if it is a new fad. The truth is that our bodies have always needed complete proteins found in poultry, meats, fish, eggs, cheese, and milk. Chicken is an excellent source of lean protein. Three 3-ounce portions of chicken breasts, each about the size of a deck of cards, is a full day's worth of protein for an average adult. Protein is in our body's cells, tissues, hormones, antibodies, and enzymes that produce all the body's chemical reactions. The body uses protein to grow and repair cells, organs, skin, blood, and to digest food. Even a paper cut on your fingertip cannot heal without the proper proteins.

Protein is composed of building blocks called amino acids, some of them "essential" because we find them in foods, some of them "nonessential" because our bodies can make them. Plant-based foods, like beans or barley, do provide proteins, but most are low in a few of the necessary amino acids making them "incomplete." Chicken and other animal protein sources contain all the body's essential amino acids, making them "complete" sources of protein.

#### CHICKEN'S VITAMINS AND NUTRIENTS

- 11 mg Calcium
- 28 mg Magnesium
- 196 mg Phosphorus
- 255 mg Potassium
- 17.8 mcg Selenium
- 11 mg Niacin
- .55 mg Vitamin B-6
- 20 IU Vitamin A

(Based on 3.5 oz. of raw, skinless chicken breast.)

\* Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference.

Whether it is baked for dinner or sautéed and served over a light salad for lunch, chicken provides the protein nourishment you need to stay healthy and fit.

### CHOOSE LESS FAT

Chicken breast without the skin has less fat content than sirloin steak, pot roast, hamburger (even 90 percent lean), beef tenderloin, pork chops, and ham.\* Chicken is lower in saturated fats than even salmon, making it a sensible choice for lean eaters.

We do need some fat in our diet. Fat plays a role in the development of shiny hair, healthy skin, cells, and tissue, our cushioned internal organs, and the layer of insulation under our skin that keeps us warm.

Fats contain both saturated and unsaturated (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated) fatty acids. Saturated fat raises blood cholesterol more than other forms of fat. Reducing saturated fat to less than 10 percent of calories will help you lower your blood cholesterol level. A person on a diet of 2,000 calories per day should consume fewer than 22 grams of saturated fat per day. A skinless chicken breast has only 1 gram of saturated fat, so it is an ideal choice for anyone limiting his or her intake of saturated fat.

Unsaturated fats include monounsaturated and polyunsaturated kinds. Both kinds of unsaturated fats reduce blood cholesterol when they replace saturated fats in the diet, so they are called the "good" fats. Polyunsaturated fat are found in from vegetable and fish oils and monounsaturated fats are found in olive, canola, or peanut oils. Using a tablespoon of "good" olive oil to sauté naturally lean chicken is a "good" idea!

\* Serving size 3 oz.

### CHEW THE FACTS

One pat of butter has 4 grams of fat.  
(one pat = 1/3 tablespoon or one square)

What is your dinner dish's\* equivalent in butter pat total fat?

Skinless Baked Chicken Breast = 1.1 butter pats

Skinless Thigh Meat = 2.7 butter pats

Sirloin Steak = 3.9 butter pats

Beef Tenderloin = 4.45 butter pats

Hamburger 80% lean = 4.45 butter pats

Hamburger 90% lean = 2.9 butter pats

Pork Chop = 4.15 butter pats

\* Serving size 3 oz.

## CHOOSE ZERO CARBS

Chicken has no carbohydrates. None. Nada. Zilch. Before you add breading, sauces or trimmings, chicken is a carbohydrate-free food like other proteins of animal origin.

Our bodies break carbohydrates down into glucose, our main energy source. Simple carbohydrates, found in sugar or fruit, provide an energy boost, but not a lot of nutrients. Complex carbs, found in grains or vegetables, give us energy as well as essential minerals and vitamins.

Low-carb diets are based on the body's burning fat as fuel in the absence of carbohydrates. The diets greatly reduce carb consumption so that the body will burn fat quickly. After the dieters achieve their desired weight loss goal, they gradually add complex carbohydrates back into the diet for balance and maintenance.

Carb-sensitive consumers favor chicken because it is lower in fat and calories than most protein sources. If you eat a skinless chicken breast and a spinach salad for lunch, you have plenty of space for your allotted carbs—not to mention more room for fat and calories at dinner. You can have your chicken and eat it, too!

### COOL CHOICES FOR CARB COUNTERS

The following recipes contain fewer than 17 grams of carbohydrates:

- Healthful Chicken Casserole
- Stir Fry Chicken with Vegetables
- Chicken and Spinach Medley
- Cajun Chicken Breasts
- Creole Chicken and Okra
- Ginger Chicken with Carrots
- Grilled Chicken Breast with Spicy Salsa
- Ground Chicken Gumbo
- Honey Mustard Grilled Chicken
- Light "N" Lean Chicken Breasts
- Quick Coriander Chicken Breasts
- Spanish Olive Chicken
- Barbecued Thai Chicken Salad
- Vietnamese Chicken in Tomato Sauce

For the recipes go to:

[www.eatchicken.com/nutrition/zero\\_carbs.cfm](http://www.eatchicken.com/nutrition/zero_carbs.cfm)

*Modified from National Chicken Council*

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## TIPS ON BUYING CHICKEN

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- The amount of chicken to purchase depends on the number of persons to be served; the size of serving; yield of cooked, boneless meat; the way it is cooked; and whether or not leftovers are desired. In general, one whole broiler-fryer chicken weighs about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  pounds with neck and giblets serves four and yields slightly over 3 cups of cooked, diced chicken meat without skin.
- On a price-per-pound basis, leg quarters are the least expensive. However, if time and preferences are important, buying chicken parts to suit specific needs is a wise choice. If only white or only dark meat is desired or if a recipe calls for only specific parts, choose the parts package that meets that need.
- Look for supermarket specials. Based on meat yields, chicken parts can be compared to other parts and the price of a whole chicken. For example, if whole chicken without neck and giblets is 59 cents a pound. Parts are an equally good buy at the following prices:

-Breast Halves	71 cents
-Thighs	68 cents
-Drumsticks	64 cents
-Wings	40 cents
- Check the "Sell By" date on the package label. This includes the last day the product should be offered for sale although it will maintain its high quality if properly refrigerated or cooked within a few days. Of course, freezing the package greatly extends the time of usage.
- Consumer color preference in chicken varies in different sections of the country. Skin color ranges from white to deep yellow, depending on the chicken's diet. Color does not indicate the difference in nutritional value, flavor, tenderness or fat content. Color of giblets also varies and, like skin, does not indicate a taste difference.

*Modified from National Chicken Council*

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## CHICKEN PARTS

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Chicken is a real convenience food, available in dozens of different forms:

**BREAST HALVES OR SPLIT BREAST:** White meat. Available bone-in or boneless and skin-in or skinless.

**CUT-UP CHICKEN:** Whole broiler cut into pieces - 2 breast halves, 2 thighs, 2 drumsticks and 2 wings. Usually sold without giblets.

**DRUMMETTES:** First section of wing. Ideal for hors d'oeuvres.

**DRUMSTICK:** Lower portion of leg. Two usually make an adult serving.

**GIBLETS:** The edible heart, liver and gizzard.

**GROUND CHICKEN:** A low-fat, low-calorie substitute for hamburger. Made from coarsely ground thigh meat.

**HALVES OR SPLITS:** Broiler cut into 2 pieces of approximately equal weight. Ideal for outdoor grilling.

**LEG:** The whole leg with unseparated drumstick and thigh, no back portion. All dark meat.

**QUARTERS:** Leg quarters and breast quarters usually packaged separately. Leg quarter includes drumstick, thigh and back portion. All dark meat. Breast quarter includes the wing, breast and back portion. All white meat.

**THIGH:** Portion of leg above the knee joint. Favorite of dark meat lovers. Also available boneless and skinless.

**WHOLE BROILER-FRYER:** An inexpensive way to buy chicken. Birds usually weigh 3 to 4  $\frac{1}{2}$  pounds, and are packaged with and without neck and giblets.

**WING:** Whole wing with 3 sections attached. All white meat.

**YOUNG ROASTER:** Large, meaty bird from 5 to 8 pounds.

*Modified from National Chicken Council*

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## CUTTING CHICKEN

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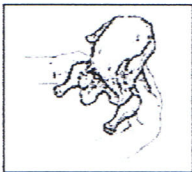
Buying a whole bird is the most cost-effective way to purchase a chicken. Markets often run specials on whole chickens, so cutting them up yourself can mean real savings.

### CUTTING A WHOLE CHICKEN



#### STEP 1

Place chicken, breast side up, on cutting board. Cut skin between thighs and body.



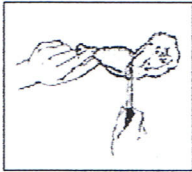
#### STEP 2

Grasping one leg in each hand, lift chicken and bend back legs until bones break at hip bones



#### STEP 3

Remove leg-thigh from body by cutting (from tail toward shoulder) between the joints, close to bones in back of bird. Repeat other side.



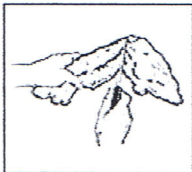
#### STEP 4

To separate thighs and drumsticks, locate knee joint by bending thigh and leg together. With skin side down, cut through joints of each leg.



#### STEP 5

With chicken on back, remove wings by cutting inside of wing just over joint. Pull wing away from body and cut from top down, through joint.



#### STEP 6

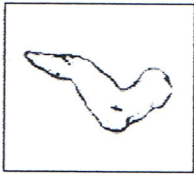
Separate breast and back by placing chicken on neck-end or back and cutting (toward board) through joints along each side of rib cage.



#### STEP 7

Breast may be left whole or, to cut into halves, place skin side down on board and cut wishbone in two at V of bone.

## CUTTING WINGS INTO DRUMSTICKS



### STEP 1

With skin side down, flatten wing on cutting board with wingtip on left and thicker (drumette) portion on right.



### STEP 2

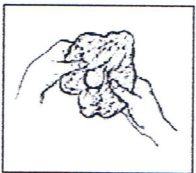
Cut through joint, leaving as much skin as possible on drumette.

## BONING A WHOLE CHICKEN BREAST



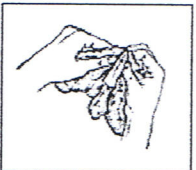
### STEP 1

Place skin-side down on cutting board with widest part nearest you. With point of knife, cut through white cartilage at neck end of keel bone.



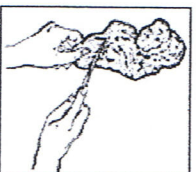
### STEP 2

Pick up breast and bend back, exposing keel bone.



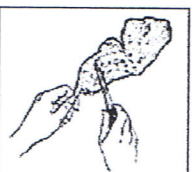
### STEP 3

Loosen meat from bone by running thumbs around both sides; pull out bone and cartilage.



### STEP 4

Working with one side of breast, insert tip of knife under long rib bone inside thin membrane and cut or pull meat from rib cage. Turn breast and repeat with other side.



### STEP 5

Working from each ends of wishbone, scrape all flesh away and cut bone from meat. (If white tendons remain on either side of breast, loosen with knife and pull out).



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## HANDLING CHICKEN WITH CARE

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Chicken, like all fresh meats, is perishable and should be handled with care to maintain top quality. Here are some basic things to remember:

- Refrigerate chicken promptly; never leave it on the countertop at room temperature.
- Packaged fresh chicken can be refrigerated in original wrappings in the coldest part of the refrigerator.
- Cooked, cut-up chicken is at its best refrigerated for no longer than two days; whole chicken cooked, an additional day.
- If chicken is stuffed, remove stuffing to a separate container before refrigerating.
- Freeze uncooked chicken if it is not to be used within two days.
- If chicken parts are wrapped separately in foil before freezing, it is easier to select just the right number and kind of parts for a single meal. Plastic sandwich bags are also good for holding a single chicken part; then gather the individual parts together in a larger plastic freezer bag or wrap in heavy duty foil and label before freezing. Be sure to press air out of package before sealing.
- Cooked chicken should be prepared for freezing the same way except when made with sauce or gravy. Then it is best to pack in a rigid container with a secure, tight-fitting lid. Keep frozen until time to thaw or cook.
- Thaw chicken in the refrigerator (not on the countertop) or in cold water. It takes approximately 24 hours to thaw a 4 pound chicken in the refrigerator; cut-up parts, 3 to 9 hours.
- Chicken may also be safely thawed in cold water. Place chicken in its original wrap or water-tight plastic bag in cold water; change water often. It takes about 2 hours to thaw a whole chicken.
- For quick thawing of chicken (raw or cooked), use the microwave. Thawing time varies according to form in which chicken is frozen (whole or parts; number of parts frozen together). Use Defrost or Medium-Low setting. Microwave 2 minutes; let stand 2 minutes. Repeat if needed. Turn chicken and separate parts as it thaws, taking care that it does not begin to cook. Defrosted chicken feels soft and moist and is cold but not hard and stiff.
- It is not recommended that either cooked or uncooked chicken be refrozen once it has been thawed. If improperly stored or handled, quality can be affected.

*Modified from National Broiler Council*

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## COOKING TIPS

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Like all fresh meats, chicken is perishable and should be handled with care. Proper handling and cooking of chicken completely eliminates the risk of bacterial infection.

### Before You Cook

- Refrigerate raw chicken promptly. Never leave it on countertop at room temperature.
- Packaged fresh chicken may be refrigerated in original wrappings in the coldest part of the refrigerator.
- Freeze uncooked chicken if it is not to be used within 2 days.
- If properly packaged, frozen chicken will maintain top quality in a home freezer for up to 1 year.
- Thaw chicken in the refrigerator — not on the countertop — or in cold water. It takes about 24 hours to thaw a 4-pound chicken in the refrigerator. Cut-up parts, 3 to 9 hours.
- Chicken may be safely thawed in cold water. Place chicken in its original wrap or water-tight plastic bag in cold water. Change water often. It takes about 2 hours to thaw a whole chicken.
- For quick thawing of raw or cooked chicken use the microwave. Thawing time will vary.
- Always wash hands, countertops, cutting boards, knives and other utensils used in preparing raw chicken with soapy water before they come in contact with other raw or cooked foods.
- When shopping, buy groceries last. Never leave chicken in a hot car. Refrigerate immediately on reaching home.

### While You Are Cooking

- If chicken is stuffed, remove stuffing to a separate container before refrigerating.

- When barbecuing chicken outdoors, keep refrigerated until ready to cook. Do not place cooked chicken on same plate used to transport raw chicken to grill.
- Always cook chicken well done, not medium or rare. If using a meat thermometer, the internal temperature should reach 180°F for whole chicken, 170°F for bone-in parts and 160°F for boneless parts.
- To check visually for doneness, pierce chicken with fork; juices should run clear — not pink — when fork is inserted with ease.
- Never leave cooked chicken at room temperature for more than 2 hours. If not eaten immediately, cooked chicken should be kept either hot or refrigerated.
- Marinade in which raw chicken has been soaking should never be used on cooked chicken.

#### **After You Cook**

- Cooked, cut-up chicken is at its best refrigerated for no longer than 2 days — whole cooked chicken, an additional day.
- If leftovers are to be reheated, cover to retain moisture and to ensure that chicken is heated all the way through. Bring gravies to a rolling boil before serving.
- If you are transporting cooked chicken, put it in an insulated container or ice chest until ready to eat. Keep below 40°F or above 140°F.

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## COOKING CHICKEN

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Chicken is versatile and can be cooked in many healthful ways:

- Boneless, skinless breasts or thighs work well with quick, low-fat cooking methods like stir-frying and grilling. Boneless, skinless thighs are also suitable for dishes with long cooking times, as leg meat does not dry out as quickly as white meat.
- Use a nonstick pan or cooking spray instead of adding fat to prevent sticking.
- To add flavor, rub chicken parts with ground spices and herbs or marinate before cooking. Another option is to use the new pre-marinated chicken products. Either way, be sure to discard the marinade or boil for at least one minute before serving with the cooked chicken
- Chicken parts can be roasted, baked, oven-fried, or grilled, preferably on a rack to allow fat to drip off the chicken during cooking.
- Use skinless parts in casserole for added flavor with little fat.
- A flavorful broiler/fryer or stewing chicken is best for soup; allow enough time to chill the soup and remove the surface fat before reheating and serving.
- When grilling chicken, think leg meat. These pieces contain a little more fat than the white meat, making them better able to withstand the intense heat of the grill. When grilling chicken parts, the various pieces will vary in the amount of time needed to be fully cooked, because part size and thickness affects time needed to thoroughly cook the meat. Check for doneness with a meat thermometer.
- Microwave cooking can be used in conjunction with grilling. Raise the temperature of chicken in the microwave until juices are flowing from the meat, and then transfer to the grill to complete the cooking process.

Check chicken for doneness before serving. Insert a meat thermometer into a thick section of the thigh without touching the bone. To check for doneness without a thermometer, pierce the thickest part of the chicken with a fork. It should feel tender and juices should run clear.

The **Cooking Time and Temperature Chart** lists poultry doneness temperature and cooking times when starting with fresh or thawed chicken, not frozen, in oven pre-heated to 350°F.

Chicken Part	Internal Temperature	Approximate Roasting Time (350°F)	Approximate Grilling Time
Leg quarters, bone in, 4-8 oz.	170°F	40-50 minutes	10-15 minutes/side
Thigh, bone in, 5-7 oz.	170°F	30-40 minutes	10-15 minutes/side
Thigh, boneless, 3 oz.	160°F	20-30 minutes	6-8 minutes/side
Breast, bone in, 6-8 oz.	170°F	30-40 minutes	10-15 minutes/side
Breast, boneless, 4 oz.	160°F	20-30 minutes	6-8 minutes/side
Whole chicken	180°F		1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours on revolving spit
3-5 lb.(broiler)		1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours (broiler)	
6-8 lb. (roaster)		1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours (roaster)	
Ground chicken, 6 oz. patty	165°F	20-30 minutes	10-15 minutes/side

*Modified from National Chicken Council*

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## STORAGE TIPS FOR CHICKEN

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Proper wrapping and storage helps keep raw or cooked chicken at top quality.

- Refrigerate fresh chicken in its original package on low shelf, in a cold part of the refrigerator for up to 2 days. Freeze uncooked chicken if it will not be used within that time. Use a refrigerator and freezer thermometer.
- For extra protection, place chicken in a plastic bag to separate it from other foods and to prevent it from dripping onto other items in the refrigerator.
- When freezing, wrap parts separately in foil or other freezer wrap. This makes it easy to defrost only the amount you need. Proper wrapping prevents "freezer burn," which results from contact with air.
- Wrap cooked chicken well before storing in the refrigerator or freezer.

The **Storage Time and Temperature Chart** shows how long you can safely store raw and cooked chicken. To ensure it is at highest quality, storage longer than these times is not recommended.

	Refrigerator (40°F)	Freezer (0°F)
Raw chicken Parts	1-2 days	9 months
Raw chicken giblets, ground chicken	1-2 days	3-4 months
Raw whole chicken	1-2 days	1 year
Cooked chicken parts, not in broth or gravy	3-4 days	4 months
Cooked whole chicken	3-4 days	4 months
Cooked ground chicken	1-2 days	1-3 months

*Modified from National Chicken Council*

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT... CHICKEN AND FOOD SAFETY

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**Q:** What is salmonella?

**A:** Salmonella is a bacteria widely prevalent in the environment. It may be found in water and soil, and in the intestinal tract and on the skin of humans and all other animals and birds. Because of its prevalence in nature, salmonella may sometimes be found in raw foods such as meat, fish, poultry, eggs, unpasteurized milk and raw vegetables. Salmonella can cause salmonellosis, an illness which results in flu-like symptoms.

**Q:** Should I be concerned?

**A:** Since Salmonella is easily destroyed by heat, the consumer can eliminate any potential threat to health by cooking foods to recommended temperatures and by following good food-handling practices.

**Q:** Should I avoid eating favorite foods, such as chicken?

**A:** No. While chicken, like any meat, may contain the salmonella bacteria, proper cooking of chicken will ensure destruction of the bacteria. As a matter of fact, chicken is less frequently a source of salmonellosis than other meats because chicken is not eaten raw or even rare.

**Q:** How can I tell if food is contaminated with Salmonella?

**A:** Since you cannot see, smell or otherwise detect the presence of salmonella, it is best to be sure to cook and handle all foods properly to avoid a problem.

**Q:** How can I avoid becoming ill from salmonella?

**A:** There are three important factors in proper handling of raw poultry: (1) cooking, (2) kitchen sanitation, and (3) storage. Cooking food properly and exercising good food-handling practices can eliminate the potential for any problem that may arise from the presence of salmonella in raw food products.

**Q:** What are chicken processors doing about bacteria like salmonella?

**A:** First of all, bacteria may exist on any raw meat or food product. Although the eradication of salmonella in domestic animals is not attainable at this time, the broiler industry and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are working to reduce the incidence of salmonella. Basically, though, consumers may protect themselves by utilizing proper handling and cooking techniques with chicken and all foods.

*Modified from National Chicken Council  
Available in Brochure format*

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## CHICKEN WORD FIND

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DIRECTIONS: Words can be across, up, down, or diagonal

BREASTS  
BONELESS  
BROILER  
CARB-FREE  
CHICKEN

DRUMSTICK  
ECONOMICAL  
FRYER  
GRILLING  
HALVES

LEAN  
LEG  
PROTEIN  
ROASTER  
SALMONELLA

SKINLESS  
THIGHS  
QUARTER  
VERSATILE  
WINGS

C	A	R	B	F	R	E	E	D	E	S	I
C	H	A	O	L	E	G	E	D	M	A	V
K	L	I	D	W	A	Q	B	R	G	L	N
M	C	T	C	T	U	K	I	U	I	M	W
R	T	Y	U	K	P	O	N	M	B	O	I
C	B	F	R	Y	E	R	C	S	L	N	N
P	R	O	T	E	I	N	A	T	E	E	G
L	E	A	N	A	P	L	N	I	T	L	S
M	A	Q	E	R	T	T	I	C	S	L	K
L	S	C	V	E	A	I	O	K	K	A	L
L	T	H	I	G	H	S	S	B	N	H	J
J	S	I	Q	U	A	R	T	E	R	S	V
G	T	U	J	K	I	L	O	C	O	P	E
A	Q	S	E	F	R	G	B	C	A	G	R
H	Y	T	J	U	I	R	K	N	S	O	S
P	L	M	N	B	O	V	C	O	T	W	A
X	A	S	D	I	F	G	S	M	E	H	T
J	K	O	L	J	Y	S	T	I	R	R	I
E	W	E	E	T	E	D	J	C	I	K	L
G	R	I	L	L	I	N	G	A	S	F	E
R	T	J	E	O	T	V	J	L	E	O	P
I	L	N	L	H	R	E	D	E	V	G	O
P	O	R	T	N	E	B	G	H	L	L	P
B	Z	S	D	F	G	T	H	Y	A	E	P
S	K	I	N	L	E	S	S	A	H	O	L