



## Party Planning Checklist

Planning a party and staying organized can challenge even the most meticulous hostess. It's so easy to forget something when you have a checklist the size of Santa's Christmas list. Use this guideline and you won't miss a beat! All your friends will be talking about how organized you are. Shhh!!! It'll be our little secret.

### Months Before Party

- What type of party do you want to have (birthday, bridal, holiday, baby shower)?
- Decide on the style of party you want (at home casual party, formal, etc.).
- Determine a budget.
- Pick your party theme,
- Decide amount of guests you would like to invite.
- Set a date, time, and place for your party.
- Settle on a RSVP date.
- Decide if you want drinks, finger foods, buffet, full meal, or other.
- Search, investigate and book your location and entertainment and pay any required deposit.

### Four to Six Weeks Before Party

- Put together your guest list and gather addresses and phone numbers.
- Order party supplies: invitations, decorations, paper goods, favors, balloons, and any party props.
- Order piñata, candy and fillers.
- Determine activities, games, and crafts and order supplies.
- Buy stamps, write and send out party invitations.
- Make sure camera is ready and buy extra batteries and film.
- Contract for any services (caterer, entertainment, etc.).
- Plan your menu and purchase non-perishable foods and drinks.
- Contract for any equipment rental (chairs, tables, etc.).
- Test all equipment for activities.
- Hire or arrange for helpers.
- Gather party supplies (tablecloths, utensils, food platters, etc.).
- Select your music and/or download and make CDs.
- Place RSVP guest list and pen by the phone.

## Two Weeks Before Party

- Pick out your party outfit and have it cleaned.
- Finalize the space layout and decorations.
- Shop for bulk of perishable food.

## One Week Before Party

- Order cake or make cake and freeze.
- Order flowers.
- Buy birthday candles and matches.
- Schedule crafts and activities.
- Call non RSVP guests.
- Prepare your exterior.
- Make all required decorations.
- Buy all required first aid medicines.
- Delegate particular tasks to your volunteer helpers.
- Plan your food preparation timetable and start preparing what is possible.
- Check out weather forecast.
- If party is outside and weather forecast is bad, prepare for indoor.

## Two to Three Days Before Party

- Clean party area.
- Decorate party room.
- Childproof party area.
- Make necessary space in the refrigerator.
- Buy extra garbage bags, foil & plastic wrap.
- Arrange party favors.
- Confirm entertainment.
- Fill piñata.
- Defrost frozen food.
- Clean bathrooms.
- Charge video recorder.
- Gather games or activities.

## One Day Before Party

- Buy undelivered floral arrangements.
- Prepare food that refrigerates well overnight.
- Arrange food delivery.
- Eat out or order in.
- Defrost cake before bed.
- Shop for any last-minute food or supplies.
- Touch base with contracted services.
- Assign specific tasks to your volunteer assistants.
- Make preparations for cleaning up, returning equipment, etc.

## The Big Day

- Finalize the decorations and place settings.
- Instruct any hired and volunteer helpers.
- Make any final food preparations.
- Prepare the dishwasher to be ready for used dishes and glasses.
- Prepare a place for garbage.
- Pick up ordered cake, ice, balloons.
- Frost & decorate homemade cake.
- Decorate indoor and outdoor party areas.
- Set up party games.
- Have camera ready.
- Check bathroom for needed supplies (toilet paper, hand towels, soap).
- Secure pets as needed.
- Relax and enjoy yourself.
- Put your party clothes on.

## After the Party

- Send out thank you cards
- Collect photos and save in photo album
- Give yourself a big pat on the back!