



Party Planning Checklist

Use this checklist as a guide for planning your party. This checklist assumes you are hosting the party in your home.

First things first

- Decide on a theme.
- Set the date and time.
- Establish a party budget.
- Create a guest list.
- Buy party invitations and response cards or select the e-mail invitations.

6-weeks before the party

- Mail invitations/response cards or send the e-mail invitations.
- Purchase decorations and party favors.
- Plan menu:
 - If you are preparing the food, make a list of the items you need for the menu.
 - If hiring a caterer, obtain three quotes to find the best price. Make sure the caterer you are considering has a Food Handler's License and liability insurance for at least one million dollars. Request that the caterer show you a copy of their license.

2-3 weeks before the party

- Plan activities for your guests.
- Start organizing music for the party (if you are not hiring a DJ).
- Determine if you will use your china or purchase plates and glasses.
- Buy any gifts needed. These can be used as prizes if you have games at your party.

1 week before the party

- Call guests who have not responded to your invitation and then determine the final head count. The final head count helps you figure out how much food and beverages to buy.
 - If using a caterer, give them the final head count.
- Begin to clean and prepare your house (call a cleaning service to make this process less stressful).
- Organize the party space (make sure you have seating for 30% of your guests). Begin decorating the space.
- Purchase non-perishable food and drinks (if no caterer).

1 - 2 days before the party

- Purchase any additional food items (if no caterer).
 - If hiring a caterer, call them to confirm the delivery time.
- Prepare as many food items that can be refrigerated (if no caterer).
- Charge your digital camera or camcorder.
- Check your CD player (if not hiring a DJ).
 - If hiring a DJ, call them to confirm their arrival time.
- Prepare your favors.
- Finish decorating the party space.

Day of the party

- Prepare additional food items that you are supplying (if no caterer).
- Set up area for food and bar.
- Set up area for coats, if necessary.
- Don't forget the ice (approximately 40 lbs. per 10 guests).
- Make sure the bathrooms are clean; provide liquid soap and disposable hand towels.
- Clean up the kitchen.
- Place small wastebaskets around the party area.
- Start the music 30 minutes before the party begins.
- Get ready to greet your guests with a smile.

End of the party

- Don't forget to pass out the favors.