



PARTY PLANNING CHECKLIST

One month before

- Set the date, time and place of the party.
 - Decide on a theme.
 - Determine your overall budget, then estimate the cost of each party element to be sure it's realistic.
 - Think about ways to make the party special, like surprising entertainment, beautiful decor or fabulous food.
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3 weeks before

- Mail or email invitations.
 - Order flowers from your local florist.
 - Rent extra chairs or linens from your local rental company.
 - Check to be sure you have necessary serving pieces, serving utensils and pitchers. Rent or buy to supplement as needed.
 - Source and order party favors.
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2 weeks before

- Create place cards.
- Plan your menu and create a master shopping list.
- Draft a timeline for preparing each dish.
- Prepare any menu items that can be frozen.

One week before

- Follow up with any guests who haven't yet R.S.V.P.'d.
 - Stock up on wine and liquor.
 - Create your iPod playlist.
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2 days before

- Buy groceries and additional bar items.
 - Write place cards and create seating arrangement.
 - Wash glassware, serving pieces and silverware.
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Day before

- Pick up and arrange flowers.
 - Prep and chop fruits and vegetables, wash salad greens, refrigerate.
 - Prepare any sauces and salad dressings that can be refrigerated.
 - Iron table linens and cloth napkins.
 - Let neighbors know if cars will be parked in front of their houses.
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Morning of

- Chill wine.
- Set table.
- Set up the bar, and slice lemons and other garnishes.
- Marinate meat, if necessary.
- Check the guest bathroom: empty trash, set out clean guest towels, place great-smelling soap and a flower next to the sink.

2 hours before

- Set out all serving pieces that will be used on a buffet.
- Set out favors.
- Finish prepping all food that can be done before guests arrive.
- Set aside a space for dirty dishes and glasses.
- Have trash cans and extra garbage bags ready.



One hour before

- Light candles, including a scented one in the bathroom.
- Adjust overhead lighting. Use as much "soft light" from lamps as possible.
- Turn on iPod playlist.
- Set out nuts and party snacks.
- Get dressed and party ready!