

Party Planning Checklist

6 weeks ahead:

- Decide on the date, place, and style of party.
- Make up the guest list.
- Choose and order invitations at Funvitations!

4 weeks ahead:

- Mail invitations
- Plan the menu. Find recipes
- Decide on tablesettings, decorations and centerpiece
- Make arrangements for any items you'll need to rent or purchase.

1 to 2 weeks ahead:

- Call any guests who have not responded to your invitations to give them a friendly reminder and get a final guest count.
- Do "deep" housecleaning, including appliances (refrigerator, grill, oven, etc.)
- Make grocery shopping list. Remember to check quantities of things you have on hand first
- Check that table linens are clean and ironed
- Decide on tableware and serving pieces.
- Decide on centerpieces and/ or candles for the party
- If possible, make some foods ahead and freeze them.
- Compile music play list for the party
- Order any special order food items (such as meats)
- Wash and check all serving items. Polish silver items

2 to 3 days ahead:

- Shop for everything but the most perishable items. Remember wines and beverages
- Plan your timetable for cooking the foods.
- If possible, make nonperishable items, such as snack mixes, ahead.
- Make all items you can make ahead, and freeze or refrigerate
- Clean out coat closets to make room for guest coats, adding hangers if needed
- Move meats from freezer to refrigerator to defrost for cooking
- Working backwards from serving time, make food preparation timetable for day of party

1 day ahead:

- Shop for last-minute items, such as fresh fruits and produce, meats or other perishables
- Do last minute clean-up in house
- Decorate for the party
- Set up tables and serving areas. Re-arrange furniture, if needed
- Pre-make any food items to prepare for cooking
- Chill beverages for party day
- Pick up flowers and arrange

Day of party:

- Walk through the house to make sure all is in order for guests to arrive.
- Using timetable, prepare food to be ready when guests arrive.
- Pick up additional bags of ice, if necessary.
- Set tables, including condiments, centerpieces, place cards, place mats, chargers, salt and peppers
- Put food on serving platters, when possible
- Keep dishes washed and sink open
- Check bathrooms for clean towels and extra toilet paper

1 hour ahead:

- Put all the finishing touches on the meal and tables
- Run and empty dishes out of dishwasher, to make room for dirty dishes
- Set out garbage cans, if needed
- Set out nonperishable snack foods
- Make coffee and ready dessert dishes

15 minutes ahead:

- Open wine
- Set out perishable hors d'oeuvres
- Put ice in ice buckets
- Put out any punch or cold beverages on ice
- Light candles
- Put on music
- Relax and enjoy yourself!