

Party Timeline Checklist

The more preparation you do in advance, the more fun and less frazzled you'll be at party time.

Use this countdown to help you plan your tasks and be party-ready.

✓	When:	What To Do:
	1 month in advance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Invite guests. › Plan the menu. › Make your shopping list.
	2 weeks in advance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Buy wine and other items with long shelf lives, such as crackers, nuts, and hard cheeses. › Make sure you have serving utensils, glassware, napkins, and plates on hand, and purchase or rent anything you need, if necessary. › Plan your serving table layout. › Plan your place settings, centerpieces, and table arrangements if you're planning a sit-down dinner. › Plan your party decorations and gather any nonperishable elements.
	1 week in advance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Prepare any foods that can be made ahead and frozen. › Confirm the guest list and follow up with those who have not responded to your invitation. › Review your plans for guest seating, serving, and dining.
	2 to 3 days in advance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Buy flowers and other perishables. › Make any foods that can be made ahead and stored in the refrigerator. › Finish any party decorations. › Make sure all tableware is ready to use. › Load tunes into your music player for a party playlist.
	Day of party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Chill all beverages early in the morning. › Buy ice. › Prepare last-minute dishes. › Pick up any last-minute needs, such as flowers, if you haven't already done so. › Finish the serving table. › Light candles, turn on the music, dim the lights, and let the party begin!