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Party-Planning Guide

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# 1 Month Before:

* Choose the type of party you want to throw.
* Set the date.
* Prepare your guest list.
* Mail or e-mail invitations, or call guests to invite them.

# 3 Weeks Before:

* Choose the menu; organize recipes for easy reference.
* Create a timeline for preparing your chosen recipes.
* Read through recipes and make lists of the ingredients you need to buy. Stock up on pantry

items, such as sugar, flour, and other nonperishables.

* Try out any new recipes you want to troubleshoot.
* Prepare any items that can be frozen.
* Arrange to borrow, rent, or buy serving pieces and other items that you might need, such as

platters, glasses, flatware, or table linens.

* Hire a bartender if desired.

# 2 Weeks Before:

* Purchase wine and liquor, and arrange to have cases delivered to your home.
* If you’re throwing a potluck, or if friends have offered to bring something, let guests know what to make.

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* Set the table, as a trial run, to make sure you have all the dishes and serving utensils you’ll need.

# 1 Week Before:

* Call or e-mail guests who have not yet RSVP’d to see if they plan to attend, and also follow up with guests who have offered to bring a dish.
* Make space in the refrigerator or freezer so you’ll have room to store groceries.
* Prepare recipes that keep well up to a week.

# 4 Days Before:

* Purchase all remaining nonperishables.

# 2 Days Before:

* Wash serving pieces, plates, flatware, and glasses, and polish if necessary.
* If using cloth napkins or tablecloths, iron them.
* Place frozen food in the refrigerator to defrost overnight.

# 1 Day Before:

* Purchase any perishables, such as salad greens, fresh bread, and seafood.
* Pick up fresh flowers (or have them delivered).
* Assemble any foods that can be made in advance.
* Wash and prepare salad greens and other vegetables, and blanch vegetables for crudites

(keep these wrapped in paper towels). Refrigerate all separately, in airtight containers.

# 4 to 7 Hours Before:

* Set up the bar, if it isn’t already done.
* Place flower arrangements.

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# 4 to 5 Hours Before:

* Chill white wine and sparkling wine.

# Up to 1 Hour Before:

* Finish preparing food.

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