YOUR HOLIDAY HOSTING
TIMELINE & CHECKLIST

4 Weeks Before: Make a Game Plan
☐ Send out invitations.
☐ Take inventory of your tables, chairs, plates, cups, napkins and utensils. If you’re short on any plan to rent, borrow or buy extras.
☐ Order your turkey, ham or roast.

3 Weeks Before: Focus on Food
☐ Plan the menu.
☐ Sketch out a preliminary grocery list.

2 Weeks Before: Follow Up
☐ Reach out to guests who have not RSVP’d.
☐ Double-check your grocery list and add any missing items.
☐ Polish silver, clean china and dig out your roasting pan.

1 Week Before: Start Shopping
☐ Purchase non-perishable items and beverages.
☐ Set out seasonal decorations.
☐ Make a party playlist.
☐ Start using up bulky items in your fridge or freezer to make room for holiday prep.

5 Days Before: Clean It Up
☐ Check your frozen turkey or ham and determine how long it’s going to take to thaw. Every 4 pounds of bird will need 24 hours of defrosting time.
☐ Vacuum and dust the house.

3 Days Before: Keep Calm Before the Storm
☐ Purchase remaining groceries. Don’t forget ice!
☐ Iron any table linens.
☐ Come up with a warming plan to ensure all of your dishes will be hot and ready to serve at once.

2 Days Before: Start Assembling
☐ Set the table or assemble your buffet.
☐ Pull out serving dishes and label with the food that will go in each.
☐ Spot-clean the house.
☐ Tuck away any items (especially in your kitchen) that you won’t use at the party.

1 Day Before: Prep! Then Prep Some More
☐ Set out fresh flower arrangements.
☐ Make as many dishes ahead of time as you can.
☐ Measure or chop ingredients for any dishes you can’t make ahead.
☐ Place beverages in the fridge (or garage, if you’re short on space) to chill.

The Morning Of: Finish the Meal
☐ Roast your turkey, ham or roast in the oven.
☐ Finish the rest of the recipes.

2 Hours Before: Add Finishing Touches
☐ Set up a bar so guests can pour their own drinks.
☐ Set out fresh hand towels in the bathroom.
☐ Make sure any sandwich rolls are pre-cut.

30 Minutes Before: Get Ready to Host!
☐ Set out appetizers.
☐ Start your party playlist.
☐ Light any candles and turn on any holiday lights.
☐ Pour yourself a glass of wine and give yourself a pat on the back—you did it!