

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!