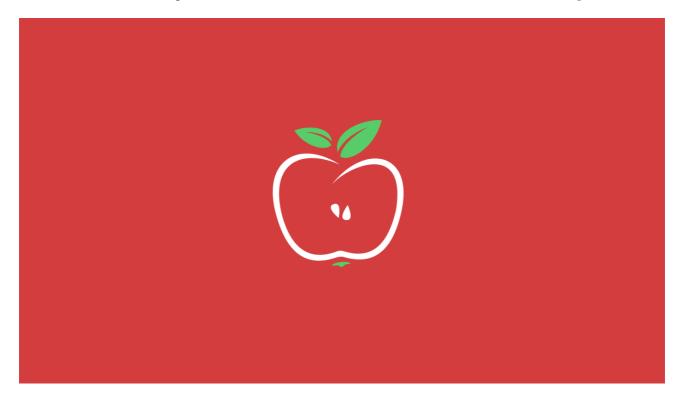
# **Cocktail Party Checklist: Free Detailed Planning Guide**



#### **3 Weeks Ahead**

Choose a date & time: Verify date for conflicts, Call key invitees to choose best date

Choose a theme

Invite guests: Make the guest list, Gather addressss, Create an invitation

#### 2 Weeks Ahead

Send invitations

#### 1-2 Weeks Ahead

Send any remaining invites or additions
Map the party layout
Plan the bar setup
Start 5 shopping lists (see shopping checklists): Decorations & Supplies, Liquor Non-perishables & Frozen, Foods Perishables, Last minute Items
Plan decorations, then add items to the appropriate list
Incorporate birthday festivities
Order decorations from PartySwizzle.com
Plan drinks, then add items to the appropriate list : Alcohol->Liquor list, Mixers->Non-Perishables list, Garnishes-

>Perishables list

- Plan food, then add items to the appropriate list
- Determine dishes, serving trays, glassware & pitchers needed: Bar supplies, Two hors d'oeuvre serving trays, Cocktail glasses, Bowls or dishes for garnishes, nuts, toothpicks (fresh & used), dipping sauce, shrimp tails, etc.
- Pitchers for: Specialty drink Juices & mixers Water Liquid waste at the bar
- Label dishes and pitchers to avoid confusion later
- Check indoor & outdoor lighting and walkways for needed repairs
- Determine any household and home improvement supplies
- **Buy Decorations & Supplies**
- Reserve any needed rental supplies
- Hire bartender, if applicable
- Install dimmer (rheostat) switches

#### 1 Week Ahead

- Launder tablecloths, towels, rugs
- Check weather & plan outfit
- Drop-off dry cleaning
- Create party playlist in iPod or make CDs
- Buy Non-perishables
- Buy Liquor
- Order flowers, if applicable
- Call all invitees that have not viewed the invitation
- Polish any silver you will be using

#### 3-4 Days Ahead

Light house cleaning	
Thorough bathroom cleani	ng
Clean fireplace, if needed	

- Pick up dry cleaning
  - Arrange for a few close friends to "help" and get to the party 15 minutes early

## 2-3 Days Ahead

Prepare anything you can freeze for your hors d'oeuvres (this may require an extra trip to the grocery to buy some

Clean/mow/trim/shovel outside areas including front walk, door mat, front door, and smoking area

## 2 Days Ahead

- Clean out your refrigerator, you will need the space
- Upload/clear out pictures in camera
- Peel doilies for serving trays
- Call any important invitees that have not RSVP'd
- Arrange furniture, stereo and lighting
- Start placing decorations
- Clear area for coats, put out umbrella stand
- Confirm bartender & rentals

#### 1 Day Ahead

- Defrost frozen foods
- Buy Perishables
- Pick up rentals
- Pick up flowers
- Prepare sauces & fillings
- Prepare anything that is served chilled
- Prepare Jell-o shooters, store on baking sheets in refrigerator
- Prepare anything that needs to marinate overnight
- Setup the bar including alcohol, unopened mixers and pitchers
- Finish placing decorations
- Setup smoking area
- Charge camera battery
- Make simple syrup, if needed
- Mix specialty drink
- Listen through playlist to see if any adjustments are necessary
- Set fireplace, if using
- Cash and cab numbers on hand
- Remove any "interesting" prescriptions from the medicine cabinet

# **Day Of Party**

Morning: Prepare garnishes, cover with a wet paper towel

Prep as much of the food as possible : Herb garnishes, Drain ingredients, Pre-cook any food possible, Take out butter & items for softening, Prepare spreads, Cut vegetables Assemble hors de oeuvres that won't get soggy, Crisp Bouchees

Afternoon: Put out any signage, Last minute tidying and spot-check decorations, Empty trash cans, especially bathrooms, Assemble hors d'oeuvres, store on baking sheets in refrigerator

Run dishwasher

Set outdoor decorations & lighting

#### **3 Hours Before:**

Buy last-minute items and ice. Store ice in freezer and ice chests.

Empty dishwasher and set out bus trays for dirty glasses and trash

Put away any valuables

#### 2 Hours Before:

Adjust thermostat. Cooking, guests, candles & stereo will generate extra heat.

#### Get yourself ready

Get yourself ready

#### 1 Hour Before:

Take out any hors d'oeuvres to be served room temperature

#### 30 Minutes Before:

- Turn music shuffle off and crossfading on (for iPods). Start the pre-party playlist (30 minutes of songs before the party playlist). See Making Music.
- Arrange first hors d'oeuvres on trays
- Turn on and adjust outdoor lighting
- Light fireplace, if using
- Have your key friends, which you invited to come early, mix you a cocktail

#### **15 Minutes Before:**

# Make and Share Free Checklists checkli.com