

Children's Birthday Party Checklist

We have compiled a no fuss checklist to help plan your child's birthday party from A to Z. Whether you are celebrating indoors or outdoors we have all the tips and tricks to simplify the steps for an enjoyable day for your child and hopefully a low stress event for you.

6 weeks before the party

- Discuss with your child as to which type of party or theme he or she wants**

Let your child pick the general idea so you can narrow down decoration and activity choices.

- Decide on a budget.**

Parties can become larger than life if you don't stick to a definite budget from the start.

- Decide on the venue**

Will it be at home, a park or another venue?

- Decide whom to invite**

Do you want to keep it small or invite the entire class to the celebration? Remember the type of party or theme your child decides on may place limits on how many guests you can invite.

- Set the Date**

Make sure you check that the essential guests can make it on the preferred date before setting the date and making bookings. Nothing is more upsetting if a loved family member can't make the celebrations or your child's best friend is not available. School holiday dates are not advised as you may find that many friends will be away on holidays.

- Research and book any entertainment/venue you plan on**

Plan and book any entertainment sooner rather than later as most children's party entertainers are regularly booked weeks to months in advance. Ask friends and family if they have any recommendations for proven and reliable entertainment. Make sure that you check for any setup requirements (eg: large area, props etc). This also includes if you want a photographer for the big day.

4 weeks before the party

- Decide on how long the party will last as you need to put a time frame on the invitations and also helps to plan your activities**

Don't forget to include time for cutting the cake and present opening.

- Send out the invitations**
- Plan your menu and order any food required**

Keep it as simple as possible as young children do not like anything too exotic or complicated and often forget to eat if having fun. Basic sandwiches, fruit kebab sticks, crisps along with chicken nuggets, sausage rolls, pizza slices are always popular. Try to avoid sugary drinks and think of serving only water and fruit juices.

- Plan and order any decorations**

This includes balloons, banners, streamers, themed or coloured tableware, party hats, party bags, party favors and games and prizes

- Schedule activities for the party**

This includes games, props and any music you wish to play in the background. Check this comprehensive list of popular childrens' party games that have been tried and tested.

Get ideas from this site

www.partyproducts.com.au/shopcontent.asp?type=party-games

Keep in mind the time frame you have set for the party to include the all important cake cutting.

- Make a list of supplies that you will need**
Book or borrow any extra tables, chairs, coolers, serving dishes, tableware, cutlery, utensils, tablecloths.
- Order the birthday cake if not baking it yourself**

2 weeks before the party

- Check to see who has not responded to the invitations yet and do a follow up**

- Enlist any help that you may need**

If you need help keeping the party on track then ask friends or family for assistance. Recruit them to take charge of one particular part such as preparing food or supervise activities or games.

- Make a list of groceries you need**

1 week before the party

- Follow up on any guests who have not replied to your RSVP date to determine final numbers**

- Make a final check to ensure nothing has been overlooked**

- If you are hosting an outdoor party do a major yard cleanup**

- Bake and freeze layers of the birthday cake if baking yourself**

This will save you a lot of stress closer to the day. Remove the cake the day before and ice the day before the party.

- Order any balloon bouquets or centrepieces**

- Buy any non perishables supplies from your grocery list**

This includes plenty of rubbish bags

- Organise and test any games or activities**

- Confirm any booked entertainment or catering**

- Make up the party bags**

Ensure you have extra bags in case siblings attend

1 day before the party

- Buy any perishable groceries and prepare any food that can be kept overnight**
- Charge batteries in camera and camcorder**
- Decorate the party area if party is to be held at home**
- Make sure there are no potential hazards in and around your home and remove any items which may break.**
- Do a general yard and house clean up**

Day of the party

- Arrange to collect cake if not baked yourself**
- Collect any balloon bouquets or centrepieces ordered**
- Display party food and drinks**
- Do a final check on everything to make sure you are happy with the set up**
- Remember everything may or may not go to plan so just improvise if /when necessary**
- Give your tasks to the people who you previously enlisted to help on the day**
- Serve the cake and or dessert**
- Gift opening**

You may or may not want your child to open the gifts. This may depend on the venue and whether it is more convenient to pack them into the car still wrapped to avoid items and cards becoming lost.

- Make a list of gifts and who gave them**

This is especially important if the gifts are opened while the guests are still at the party. The children will get excited to see what the birthday boy or girl receives and the cards may become lost in the wrapping.

- Send everyone off with party favors**

2 days after the party

- Help your child send thank you notes to the guests and send your own to the people who helped on the day**