THE REAL CHIC LIFE

The Ultimate Thanksgiving & Friendsgiving Hosting Checklist

A thoughtful guide to planning, preparing, and enjoying a beautiful holiday gathering.

A little planning goes a long way. Use this checklist to organize the details ahead of time, make your guests feel welcome, and leave room to enjoy the celebration yourself.

4 Weeks Before · Start Planning

- ■ Choose your gathering date and time.
- ■ Create your guest list and send invitations.
- ■ Set an RSVP deadline.
- ■ Decide on your menu and hosting style.
- ■ Ask about dietary restrictions and food allergies.
- ■ Decide whether the gathering will be a potluck or fully hosted meal.
- ■ Create a grocery and supplies list.
- ■ Establish your entertaining budget.

2 Weeks Before · Organize the Details

- ■ Confirm guest count and RSVPs.
- ■ Finalize your menu and recipes.
- ■ Coordinate potluck contributions.
- ■ Order specialty ingredients or supplies.
- ■ Plan your tablescape and color palette.
- ■ Check dinnerware, glassware, linens, and serving pieces.
- ■ Plan your beverages and signature drink.
- ■ Create a holiday playlist.
- ■ Plan activities for children and guests.

THE PREPARATION

Getting Your Home Ready

Tackle a few things at a time so the days leading up to your gathering feel calm and manageable.

1 Week Before · Prepare Your Home

- Complete grocery shopping for pantry items and beverages.
- Purchase fresh flowers and seasonal decorations.
- Clean the guest bathroom and common areas.
- Wash table linens and cloth napkins.
- Polish glassware and serving pieces.
- Finalize guest seating arrangements.
- Confirm any remaining guest details.
- Create a cooking and preparation timeline.
- Purchase takeaway containers for leftovers.

1–2 Days Before · Get Ahead

- Shop for fresh ingredients.
- Prepare desserts and make-ahead side dishes.
- Chop vegetables and prep ingredients.
- Make cranberry sauce, dips, and appetizers.
- Set the dining table.
- Arrange flowers and decorations.
- Set up beverage and coffee stations.
- Stock the guest bathroom with essentials.
- Prepare children's activities.
- Chill beverages and sparkling cider.

Thanksgiving or Friendsgiving Day · Final Preparations

- Begin cooking the turkey or main dish.
- Prepare and reheat side dishes.
- Set out appetizers and snacks.
- Arrange drinks, glasses, and cocktail napkins.
- Finish last-minute table decorations.
- Light candles and start your playlist.
- Set out extra seating and blankets.
- Get dressed and ready before guests arrive.
- Welcome guests and offer refreshments.
- Enjoy dinner and meaningful conversation.
- Serve dessert, coffee, and tea.
- Package leftovers for guests.
- Take photos and enjoy the memories.

THE LITTLE DETAILS

Finish the Plans, Then Enjoy

Use these spaces to keep your menu and guest details in one convenient place.

The Finishing Touches

- Prepare small parting gifts, if desired.
- Send guests home with leftovers.
- Share photos with friends and family.
- Send a thank-you message to guests who contributed.
- Take a moment to appreciate a wonderful gathering!

Menu Planning Notes

Main dish

Side dishes

Appetizers

Desserts

Signature drink

Guest Details

Number of guests

Dietary restrictions

Potluck assignments

Arrival time

Dinner time

A little reminder: The goal isn't to create a perfect holiday celebration. It's to create a welcoming space where everyone can relax, connect, and enjoy being together. Give yourself permission to delegate, simplify, and enjoy your own party!