

Event Planning Tips – Birthday Parties

Planning an event can be a daunting task.

We hope these tips will assist you in making the process easier.

If you need additional assistance, feel free to call us at
(800) 899-1140 or visit us at www.lifeofthepartyonline.com.

1. **Date of the event:** When picking the date of the party, try to maximize your guests' availability. Take a brief survey to see if there are any conflicting events (eg. another party, sports events). If you are scheduling your event for a holiday weekend, be aware that many people may be out of town. Because of this, people tend to adjust their parties to weekends before and after holiday weekends, making these alternate weekends particularly busy. If you are scheduling a party on one of these weekends, it is a good idea to plan and reserve everything early.
2. **Time of the event:** There are many things to consider when planning your party times. Guests tend to run late, so factor that into the start time. If you are planning a Sunday afternoon party, you may want to adjust the times if many of your guests are coming from church. If you are planning a weekday party, you may want to schedule your event so your guests can avoid rush hour traffic. If you are planning an outdoor party, you may want to schedule to avoid darkness or the heat of the day. Make sure to schedule enough time to allow for everything in your itinerary. Keep in mind that younger kids have a limited attention span, so you may want to avoid a long party.
3. **Choosing a location:** There are many places to have an event. Here are just *some locations for you to consider*: homes (backyard, indoors), parks / recreation centers, beaches, restaurants, banquet halls, hotels, party facilities (eg. Chuck E-Cheese, bowling alleys, skating rinks, etc), church / temple community rooms, kids gyms. If you live in a condominium or planned community, you may have access to the complex's community center.

If you are planning an *outdoor party*, you may need a rain contingency plan (eg. an alternative location or renting a tent with heaters). If you are planning an indoor home party, try your best to arrange furniture to maximize space.

As an alternative, consider *holding the party at your child's school*. Arrange with the teacher a time during class that you can celebrate your child's birthday. Most of your child's friends will already be there, there will be excellent supervision, and clean up will be minimal. Just note that it may be difficult to invite additional friends or family members.

4. **Choosing a theme:** Party themes can greatly enhance your event. Choosing a theme can help you decide on party favors, decorations, and entertainment. *Popular themes include*: western, Hawaiian, renaissance, super-hero, princess, circus, favorite character, etc.

5. **Create a budget:** Parties can run the gamut for expenses. Knowing your budget will help you figure how elaborate you can make your party. *Costs to consider include:* food / cake, utensils, decorations, facility rental, entertainment / equipment rentals, etc.
6. **Guest Lists / Invitations:** Managing your headcount can be tricky if you have limited space. Determine a range of how many people you can comfortably handle. Will the kids be bringing siblings? Will their parent's be attending? Will you be inviting the entire class? Mail out these invitations early (3-6 weeks) with an RSVP deadline.
7. **Event Itinerary:** Developing an outline for your event can help keep everything running smoothly. A sample itinerary may be helpful for your event. Keep in mind that your outline should be used as a guideline, and schedules rarely work out exactly as planned. In fact, it is sometimes a good idea to have some padding in the schedule just in case things run behind schedule.

Sample Itinerary

11:30 – 12:30	Guests arrive
12:30 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:00	Entertainment
2:00 – 2:15	Piñata
2:30 – 2:45	Birthday Cake
2:45 – 3:15	Gifts

Please note that this is just one sample itinerary. We suggest that you create a schedule that meets your unique needs.

8. **Hiring Entertainment:** Decide early what kind of entertainment you want. Then reserve it. Make sure you are working with a reputable company. Companies that emphasize high quality often book up during peak times, so we recommend that you book early if quality is important to you. Remember, weekend afternoons are peak times for birthday parties.

While a good event planner can sometimes handle last minute bookings, we recommend scheduling your entertainment 3 or more weeks in advance (even earlier for April through June, October, & December) to help insure availability.

9. **Decorations / Supplies:** Most party stores have a complete supply of decorations and party supplies. Your decorations can help create an atmosphere to support your theme if you have one. A list of some items include:

Plates	Cups
Utensils	Tablecloth
Food / Drinks	Ice
Birthday Cake	Candles
Lighter	Cake Server
Trash Can / Bags	Balloons / Posters / Decorations
Tables / Chairs	Canopy
Heater Lamps	Ice Chest / Tubs

10. **Party time:** On the day of the party, decorate your mail box with balloons. If your party is at a large park, make sure to have signs clearly posted so that your guests can find you. If parking is an issue, reserve parking space for any entertainment you are hiring. Moving a parked car will allow your performer to park close by. Please note that it is customary to reimburse your entertainers for any parking fees associated with your event.

Name-tags are a great way of identifying your guests at parks.

If your party is at your home, make sure to secure any pets. Even a friendly pet can become agitated during an unusual situation, like a party.

11. **Enjoy:** During the party, try to remain flexible and enjoy yourself. Kids are notorious for not following an itinerary.

***As long as your goal is to make sure the children are having fun,
you will open yourself up to many more possibilities for
achieving a successful party!***

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