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**Buddy's**  
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# The Ultimate Party Planning Guide





# Stress Less. Celebrate More.

Throwing a party should feel exciting, not exhausting. Between food, invites, playlists, and setup, it's easy to get overwhelmed. That's where this **ultimate party guide** comes in. We'll walk you through the essentials and how to create a vibe that makes people want to stay late and ask when you're doing it again. Whether you're throwing a **casual get-together** or something a **bit more polished**, this guide will help you do it without burning out before guests arrive.

## Inside This Guide:

- Setting the Basics
- Guest List & Venue Tips
- Activities & Entertainment
- Tips & Tricks For Hosting
- Ultimate Party Checklist





# When to Start **Planning**

If you can, start planning about six weeks before the party. It's not a must, but it'll make things way less stressful. You can spread out shopping and avoid the last-minute scramble. Plus, giving guests more notice means more of them can come.

## **Set the Basics: Date, Time & Location**

Figure out where you'd like to host your event, keeping in mind your budget and estimated number of guests. The time of your party will determine the food you serve, which will also reflect on your budget.

## **Picking a Location**

When picking a location, there are a lot of factors that can go into this decision. Hosting a party at home offers convenience, plenty of prep time, and an easy, comfortable environment for guests. However, it also means cleaning before and after, limited space, and the need to provide entertainment.

## **Party Timeline**

Certainly, not every party needs a scheduled timeline. If you are hosting a dinner party or a cocktail party, for example, you probably don't need to plan that out so specifically. However, if you are hosting a birthday party or bridal shower, for example, you will need to have a basic idea of when you'll be playing games, serving food, and cutting cake. For parties like this, as a general rule, 2 hours is the ideal amount of time.

## **Creating Your Guest List**

As you create your guest list, consider how many people your space can comfortably hold and how your budget can accommodate them. The number of guests directly impacts what you'll need regarding food, beverages, seating, and other party essentials. Always confirm the guest of honor's availability before locking anything in. Once the invitations go out, be sure to request RSVPs so you can get an accurate headcount for planning purposes.

## **Plan What Your Guests Will Do**

Think through what guests will do at your party. You'll want to plan out any activities and make a list of supplies that you'll need. For example, if you are having a cocktail party, you may not need any activities. If you are hosting a kid's birthday party or maybe a baby shower, think of what your guests will do while there. I usually recommend self-serve activities for parties. Whatever you decide, be sure to make a music playlist to play in the background, too; every party should have music, even if there isn't dancing.

## **Consider Catering with Buddy's Bagels**

One of the best ways to ease the stress of party planning is to have your food catered, so let Buddy's Bagels take the stress off your plate. Our flavorful menu makes hosting effortless and keeps guests happy.





# Tips & Tricks For Hosting

## Make It Easy for Guests to Find You

If you are throwing a party at a venue make sure the venue access and location are all easily accessible for the guest.

## Always Have a Backup Plan

For outdoor parties, have a backup plan in case of bad weather, reserve a covered area if possible and gather guests' phone numbers for last-minute updates.

## Label Everything

Whether it's food (especially if there are allergies), activity stations, or bins for trash and recycling, simple labels reduce questions and help guests feel more comfortable navigating the space.

## Overestimate on Essentials

Always buy a little more than you think you'll need, cups, napkins, ice, and drinks in particular. Running out of the basics mid-party is a quick way to create unnecessary stress.

## Set Up a Self-Serve Drink Station

Let guests help themselves to drinks to avoid playing bartender all night. Add a fun sign or drink menu for a personal touch.

## Create a Mini Schedule (Just for You)

Even if you don't share it with guests, a loose timeline will help you stay on track. Include things like when to serve food, start activities, or bring out dessert. It's a small thing that keeps the whole event running smoothly.

## Avoid the Last-Minute Rush

Prep as much as you can the day before, set up tables, lay out decor, organize supplies, and prep food that can be made ahead. The less you have to do on party day, the more relaxed you'll be.





# Party Planning Checklist

## 6 Weeks Before

- ☐ Choose a date & time
- ☐ Decide on a location
- ☐ Create a guest list
- ☐ Choose a theme
- ☐ Set a budget
- ☐ Book venue or reserve space if needed

## 4-5 Weeks Before

- ☐ Send out invitations (digital or printed)
- ☐ Plan menu (decide if you'll cook or cater)
- ☐ Book catering if needed (Buddy's Bagels is a great option!)
- ☐ Plan entertainment, games, or activities
- ☐ Make a basic party timeline (especially for showers/birthdays)

## 2-3 Weeks Before

- ☐ Confirm RSVPs and follow up if needed
- ☐ Make or order decorations
- ☐ Create a shopping list for food, drinks, and supplies
- ☐ Make a playlist or plan music: Recommend tools (Spotify, Youtube, Apple Music)
- ☐ Plan for photos (photo spot, and props)

## 1 Week Before

- ☐ Deep clean party space (if at home)
- ☐ Order or shop for non-perishable items
- ☐ Check in with any vendors or helpers
- ☐ Confirm catering details
- ☐ Prep party favors

## 2-3 Days Before

- ☐ Shop for perishable food & drinks
- ☐ Decorate (or at least start!)
- ☐ Set up tables, chairs, serving areas
- ☐ Prep any food that can be made ahead

## It's Party Time

You did all the planning, now it's time to enjoy it! Soak up the fun, and make sure to capture the moment by snapping plenty of photos throughout the party. Whether it's group shots, or just sweet little moments between guests, you'll be glad you documented it all. Parties come and go, but the memories you make are what last.



## Day of the Party

- ☐ Finish food prep / pick up catering
- ☐ Set out food & drinks
- ☐ Put out decorations & final touches
- ☐ Set up music / playlist
- ☐ Double-check timeline and supplies
- ☐ Take lots of pictures!
- ☐ Most importantly, enjoy yourself!





# About Buddy's Bagels

## Catering

Serving the **Sarasota and Manatee** areas since 2023, **Buddy's Bagels** has established itself as a trusted name for quality, consistency, and local flavor. While our signature bagel platters, cold cuts, and house-made spreads remain fan favorites, we're now excited to offer an expanded catering menu.


By blending **Jewish culinary tradition** with **classic Italian comfort food**, Buddy's now offers a **one-of-a-kind** catering experience. New additions like lasagna, eggplant parmesan, and sliced braised beef brisket, are perfect for lunch, dinner, or any occasion that calls for something special.

**Let us handle the food so that you can enjoy the moment.**

### Contact Information

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