

Recipe for a perfect party

[Art & Culture](#), [Music](#)



So you need to plan a party. Where do you begin? Party planning involves many steps and is essential to being a good host or hostess. Parties can vary from theme, to size, to guests attending. Three major steps in any perfect party is choosing a date, creating a menu, and setting the atmosphere.

Choosing a date is the first step in planning a party.

For example, if you are planning a Christmas party, chances are your guests will have other parties to attend this time of year and you won't want this to interfere with your party. This is also crucial as you need to make your invitations and RSVP's to know when your guests will or will not be likely to attend. Ask your potential guests when would be the best time for them. This not only gathers information for your party but also relieves the stress in not knowing how much time you have to prepare, including creating a menu.

The second step in planning a party is choosing and creating a menu. This can tie into the theme or main reason for your party I. e.

: Christmas/New Year's Eve, Birthday, Wedding etc. If your theme is Christmas/New Year's you may want to go all out and have an expensive menu as opposed to a Birthday party where you may only want to have pot luck. Creating a menu also includes drinks- both hot and cold, desserts and finger foods. Often a key ingredient in parties, drinking allows your guests to socialize and get more acquainted with each other. Make things interesting by having a dessert table served buffet style. You may also want to use this serving style for serving finger foods, or drinks. This way guests can help themselves which may alleviate stress of serving food or beverages at specific times.

Such foods/beverages that may be served buffet style may include Do-it-yourself cocktails, fresh fruits and vegetables- suitable for dips, cheese and crackers, or even a chocolate fountain. This is a simple but effective way in making your party a pleasant experience and can also be used in a variety of parties. The second element is whether you will be making the food yourself or hiring a caterer. If you are making the food yourself, take into consideration any dietary requirements of your guests. Are there any guests allergic to anything? Are any guests vegetarian? The last thing you want is someone getting sick or not having anything to eat thus leaving your guest(s) hungry. Also, recognize what time of day your party will be held in relation to the time the food will be served. For instance, if your party is to be held at 2: 00pm you are not likely to serve a complete 3 course meal.

The third step but not necessarily the final step in planning a perfect party is the creating your atmosphere. This is often the most time consuming step as it involves a variety of things, but can also be the most fun. Creativity is key in setting the perfect atmosphere. Location, music and decorations are covered in this step. Select a location that can be tied into your theme. For example if you are having a winter or Christmas themed party, you may want to host your event at a skating rink. When selecting your location, ask if there are any features- which may be beneficial to your party, such as a sound/light system, dance floor or kitchen area.

Most locations that are commonly used for this type of entertaining have some of these features. Music- a key component in parties- can set the mood for a memorable party. Keep things inexpensive by using your own CDs or

songs. This saves money on renting a DJ or other music service and you also know what you're getting which will help avoid disappointment. Create a song list that relates to your theme. If you are having a New Year's Eve party, you may want to include the traditional "Auld Lang Syne" or other holiday related songs. You may also want to ask your guests which genre of music or artists they like.

Be sure to include both fast and slow music- perfect for dancing! Decorations which are the finishing touch on any party, are a great way in showing off your creativity and ideas. These can vary both big and small, expensive or inexpensive. One easy way to decorate is making your own homemade decorations. For a Christmas party, use a Christmas ornament with your guests name on it as a place card. This doubles as a party favour. Other decorating ideas may include grouping together unscented candles of different heights and colors that suit your theme. This is perfect for some ambient lighting, and it's also effective for those who have allergies- because there are no flowers or strong perfumes involved.

If your party takes you outside, decorate the outside using simple but attractive white lights. Lights of any color, can be used any time of year and easily adds that festive feel. Among other decorations, offer your guests an area for photo opportunities such as a backdrop that may include a swing to sit on, a festive scene or, if available, something as simple as the scenery. This will allow for others to look back and appreciate your party long after it has ended. As you can see, party planning involves many details, options and time, and can be overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be. Every party is

different and there is no right or wrong way to plan but starting with these three simple steps, you are on your way to planning the perfect party of any theme or type, perfectly. You chose your date, created your menu, and decorated your venue.

Also one of (if not) the most important steps in planning a perfect party is to do just that. Party! Have fun, relax and enjoy yourself! P. S- Leave the cleanup for tomorrow, you deserve it!