

THEPARTYTEACHER.COM

# 4-WEEK PARTY PLANNER

PLANNING & SHOPPING CHECKLIST

# 4-Week Party Planner



*You're going to eat this elephant one bite at a time ... or in this case, a little bit of party planning every day for four weeks. Some days you'll be planning, some days you'll be doing. Steps are presented in the order of items that may require the most lead time, but make the steps work for you, and tackle them in the order that your schedule permits.*

## WEEK 1: BRAINSTORMING

**Day 1:** What is the theme or jumping off point for your party?

**Day 2:** What is your party budget?

**Day 3:** How many adults and kids will you invite?

- Will the parents stay or drop off?
- Boys only? Girls only? A mix?
- List the names, addresses and phone numbers.

**Day 4:** What day and time will you host your party?

- Given your time, do you need to double up on some of these steps?
- How will the time of day of your party influence your menu?

**Day 5:** If you will host your party at home ...

- Which room or rooms? Or, which outside spaces?
- What is required to make your space party-ready?
- Will you need to remove or protect furniture?
- Will you need folding tables or rental chairs?
- If you need to mark any areas off limits, how will you do that?
- If you need to declutter, start now and do a little every day.

If you will host your party away from home ...

- Do they have your party date available?
- What is the rental fee? Is it within your party budget?
- Do you have to buy food/drinks through the facility?
- How much setup and tear-down time do they allow?
- What rules do they have about hanging decorations?

**Day 6:** It's time to brainstorm: pull out your party planning worksheets and start imagining the style of your party + your games and activities.

**Day 7:** Which invitation and party printables will you use? Order now. If you want custom stamps for your invitations, try [Zazzle.com](http://Zazzle.com).

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## WEEK 2: PLANNING AND ORDERING

- Day 1:** Send your printables to a printing and trimming service and take that to-do off your plate. Try [Print & Cut Your Printables on Etsy](#) or [Paper + Pop](#).
- Mailing a lot of invitations? You also can send an image file to WalMart and have them printed as matte photos. The trimming's done for you!
- Day 2:** Cruise Pinterest to fill-in your brainstorming. Are there any other ideas that you (1) can't live without, (2) fit in your budget, and (3) that you have time to accomplish or purchase?
- Day 3:** What party favors do you want to give?
- For favors and packaging inspiration, visit my [Party Favors Pinterest board](#).
- Day 4:** What will you serve? A meal, appetizers, or desserts only? Plan your menu today.
- If you need dessert table menu ideas, [check out this post](#).
  - What about beverages? List those as well.
  - Order desserts now, either locally or online.
- Day 5:** Speed shop on Etsy and order today: desserts, party favors, supplies (like straws, treat bags, etc.), and decorations.
- Day 6:** How will you arrange food on your dessert table?
- For tips and a list of must-have serving pieces, [read this post](#).
  - How do you want to [style your dessert table](#)?
- Day 7:** How do you want your party backdrop to look?
- Here's everything you need to know about [how to build your backdrop](#).
  - Buy your supplies, fabric, extra large printables, vinyl decals or die cut wood.
  - Try [Ten23 Designs](#) for decals and wood die cuts.
  - For large format printing of a backdrop design, try <http://www.stickersbanners.com/banners.html>.

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## WEEK 3: SHOPPING AND CRAFTING

**Day 1:** Address and mail your party invitations.

**Day 2:** How will you set your dining table? Do you have or will you need to buy:

- Chargers, plates, utensils, glasses, mason jars, milk bottles, napkin rings?
- Visit my [Place Settings Pinterest board](#) for inspiration.
- Try the dollar store, Goodwill or Cost Plus World Market -- they have divine utensils and don't have to buy a full set of silverware.
- If you want to dress up your chairs, visit my [chair decorations Pinterest board](#).

**Day 3:** It's time to run your local errands. You'll be shopping for craft supplies, party favors (if you don't plan to order them online), and supplies for games or activities.

- From WalMart, pick up balloons, helium tank, 3/8" grosgrain ribbon for your printable banners, 7/8" ribbon for tying on apothecary jars, Aleene's Thick Tacky Glue, double-sided tape, safety pins, [3M Command Strip party products](#), paper trimmer, and 2" round circle punch.
- From your local craft store, pick up colored envelopes. You want size A7 to fit 5"x7" invitations. You also may want fabric for your dessert and dining tables, backdrop or photo booth.
- If you want to use disposables, Party City has some high-quality plastic utensils and thick plates in solid colors.
- If you need to build your dessert table serving pieces stash, try HomeGoods, Marshalls, TJ Maxx, Cost Plus World Market and craft stores like Michaels or Hobby Lobby.

**Day 4:** You've already done some online shopping at Etsy and Zazzle. Now it's time to fill in the blanks from services with speedy delivery.

- Order napkins and table linens from Tablecloth Factory or Linen Tablecloth. You can order from them via Amazon.
- Also look for any party game or activity supplies you still lack.

**Day 5:** Do you need any local rentals? What about ...

- Tables and chairs? Balloon display? Party rentals, like a bounce house?
- Do you want to hire an entertainer, face painter or princess?

**Day 6 and 7:** Do you have any crafting to do? Are you assembling party favors or making decorations? Whip out your glue gun and get busy crafting.

# 4-Week Party Planner



## WEEK 4 – IF YOUR PARTY IS AT HOME

**Day 1:** Finish any remaining crafting.

**Day 2:** Iron your tablecloths and any fabric you may be using. Put up your backdrop structure.

**Day 3:** Clean the party floor of your house (or schedule to have cleaned). Sweep your front stoop and wipe down your front door.

**Day 3:** Set your dessert table with your backdrop, tablecloth, serving pieces and any other decorations.

**Day 4:** If space permits, set your party dining table. Set up your party favor table.

**Day 5:** Grocery shop and buy flowers. Bake any food you will provide.

### **Day 6 – The Day Before:**

- Arrange flowers.
- Pick up any baked goods previously ordered (if ordered locally). If your party is on a Sunday, your cake bakery may not be open. It also may not be open all day on Saturday. When you order your cake, confirm the pick up hours so you are not disappointed.
- Charge your camera and video camera batteries.

### **Day 7 – Morning of the Party:**

- Assign someone to pick up rentals as early as possible.
- Get yourself ready early so you don't cheat yourself on time.
- Make any last-minute food.
- Set out chilled drinks.
- Attach balloons to your mailbox.
- Set out food that doesn't require refrigeration.

# 4-Week Party Planner



## WEEK 4 – IF YOUR PARTY IS AWAY FROM HOME

**Day 1:** Finish any remaining crafting.

**Day 2:** Iron your tablecloths and any fabric you may be using.

**Day 3:** Organize any party elements into totes that you'll use to transport them to the party site. Try to keep like items together: all serving pieces in one tote, all dining table in another, all photo booth in a third, etc.

**Day 3:** Create a party day emergency bag with crafting supplies like safety pins, scissors, adhesives, etc.

**Day 4:** Grocery shop.

**Day 5:** Bake any food you will provide. Buy flowers.

### **Day 6 – The Day Before:**

- Arrange flowers.
- Pick up any baked goods previously ordered (if ordered locally). Confirm the bakery's pick up hours so you are not disappointed.
- Charge your camera and video camera batteries.

### **Day 7 – Morning of the Party:**

- Assign someone to pick up rentals as early as possible.
- Get yourself ready early so you don't cheat yourself on time.
- Arrive at the location as early as permitted with a helper and unload your totes.
- Decorate one area at a time. I usually start with the dessert table, then do the dining table, then the photo booth or games/activities area.

### **Day 7 – Afternoon of the Party:**

- Set out chilled drinks.
- Set out food that doesn't require refrigeration.
- Pre-scoop ice cream into candy cups.

### **Day 7 – After the Party:**

- Repack and reload your totes.
- Dispose of any trash.
- Vacuum quickly, if available or required.