Birthday Party Checklist

Birthday person _____ **Party date** _____ **Guest count** _____

6 weeks out: decide

- [ ] Set a total budget and write it down
- [ ] Pick a date and a start and end time
- [ ] Choose home or a booked venue
- [ ] Book venue, entertainer or rental
- [ ] Draft the guest list
- [ ] Check clashes with school and holidays
- [ ] Choose a theme, or skip it on purpose
- [ ] Ask the birthday person for their top 3 wishes
- [ ]

4 weeks out: invite

- [ ] Send invitations with an RSVP deadline
- [ ] Put address, end time and drop-off or stay on it
- [ ] Ask guests to list allergies
- [ ] Plan the menu
- [ ] Order the cake
- [ ] Pick 2 or 3 activities
- [ ] Order decorations and favors
- [ ] Decide a weather or indoor backup
- [ ]

2 weeks out: confirm

- [ ] Chase missing RSVPs
- [ ] Lock the final headcount
- [ ] Buy plates, cups, napkins, cutlery
- [ ] Buy candles, lighter, cake knife
- [ ] Assemble party favors
- [ ] Build the music playlist
- [ ] Name a helper for each job
- [ ] Plan parking or arrival spot
- [ ]

1 week out: prepare

- [ ] Reconfirm venue, entertainer and cake
- [ ] Send a reminder text with final details
- [ ] Do the main grocery shop
- [ ] Buy ice and drinks
- [ ] Charge camera, phone and speaker
- [ ] Clear and clean the party space
- [ ] Print the party day schedule
- [ ]

Day before: stage

- [ ] Pick up the cake
- [ ] Make food that holds overnight
- [ ] Blow up balloons and hang decor
- [ ] Set out tables, chairs and a gift spot
- [ ] Label food for allergies
- [ ] Put trash bags and wipes where you can find them
- [ ] Lay out the birthday outfit
- [ ]

Party day: host

- [ ] Start setup 2 hours early
- [ ] Fill the cooler with ice
- [ ] Test the music
- [ ] Meet guests at the door
- [ ] Start the first activity right away
- [ ] Cake and singing at the planned time
- [ ] Hand out favors as guests leave
- [ ] Take photos of the birthday person
- [ ]

After: close the loop

- [ ] Write down who gave which gift
- [ ] Send thank-you notes within a week
- [ ] Return rentals and borrowed items
- [ ] Note what you spent against budget
- [ ] Jot down what to repeat or change
- [ ]
- [ ]

Tick as you go. Move undone items to the next stage, never drop them.

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