



Thanksgiving Dinner CHECKLIST



A MONTH BEFORE

- Send out invitations
- Start planning menu

THREE WEEKS BEFORE

- Finalize menu. Be sure to include appetizers and drinks
- Finalize guest list
- Assign dishes (if guests will be bringing food)
- Plan the seating arrangement
- Make out grocery list. Be sure to include any spices or condiments you're out of
- Start watching for Thanksgiving coupons/sales
- Make dinner rolls, pie crusts and anything else that freezes well
- Order turkey (if buying fresh). Plan on 1 lb per person
- Test new recipes
- Start deep cleaning home
- Inventory china, glassware, serving pieces, linens and cookware. Buy/borrow anything you don't have
- Make arrangements to borrow extra tables/chairs (if necessary)
- Test seldom-used appliances (electric carving knife, mixer, etc.)
- Decide on décor. Buy or make anything you'll need
- Stock up on foil, freezer bags and leftover containers
- Plan kids' activities
- Plan meals and activities for overnight guests

TWO WEEKS BEFORE

- Polish silverware
- Finalize Thanksgiving playlist
- Make room in hall closet for guest's coats

A WEEK BEFORE

- Prepare guest room(s)—include wi-fi login info and a place to recharge devices
- Shop for groceries and alcohol (if applicable)
- Restock supplies & check equipment if grilling, smoking, or frying turkey
- Make space in freezer for turkey (if buying frozen)
- Decorate home
- Take special occasion dishes, glasses and serving pieces out of storage. Wash if necessary

FOUR TO FIVE DAYS BEFORE

- Clean out the fridge to make room for Thanksgiving foods
- Thaw turkey in the refrigerator (allow 24 hrs for every 5 lbs)
- Iron table linens

TWO DAYS BEFORE

- Pick up ham/turkey (if fresh)
- Pull rolls, pie crusts and other made-ahead foods from freezer
- Baby-proof house (if expecting young guests)

THE DAY BEFORE

- Make cranberry sauce, side dishes and pies
- Set the dining room table
- Set up a bar/drink station (coffee, tea and alcoholic beverages)
- Chill drinks
- Clean bathrooms
- Put out fresh towels
- Refill soap dispensers and put out extra toilet paper
- Vacuum
- Buy ice
- Recharge your camera/buy fresh batteries

THANKSGIVING DAY

- Cook the turkey
- Make the stuffing and gravy
- Reheat/warm any dishes that you made ahead
- Make anything else that's still on your list
- Stock the bar/drink station

AFTER DINNER

- Put away leftovers within two hours
- Pack up leftovers for guests
- Pretreat table linen stains

THE DAY AFTER

- Wash table linens
- Put away dishes, silverware, glassware and serving pieces
- Put away extra tables/chairs
- Treat any carpet/upholstery stains

A FEW DAYS AFTER

- Make turkey broth
- Freeze remaining leftovers
- Return food dishes and anything else you borrowed
- Organize and share photos. Order prints
- Email any recipes guests asked for



GOOD TO HAVE ON HAND

- SUGAR SUBSTITUTES
- MILK
- NON-DAIRY CREAMER
- COFFEE (*decaf and regular*)
- TEA (*an assortment*)
- WHIPPED CREAM
- ICE CREAM
- BAR ITEMS (*seltzer/mixers, lemon/lime*)
- DRINK COASTERS
- WINE GLASS TAGS
- TOOTHPICKS
- SALT & PEPPER FOR THE TABLE
- MATCHES
- CANDLES
- STERNO
- TO-GO BOXES/BAGS
- EXTRA VASES (*if guests bring you flowers*)
- EXTRA SERVING PIECES (*platters, bowls, serving spoons, tongs*)
- EXTRA PLATES, SILVERWARE AND GLASSES
- EXTRA POT HOLDERS/POT RESTS
- BATTERIES
- EXTRA TOILETRIES (*anything overnight guests might forget*)
- PAIN RELIEVERS
- ANTACIDS