

# Party timeline template

Parties don't fail on the food. They sag in the middle because nothing was scheduled to happen. Fill in the times, print it, and hand a copy to one person who isn't you.

## THE WEEK BEFORE

- |                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>7 days out</b><br>Confirm final head count with caterer or finalise the shopping list.         | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>2 days out</b><br>Clean, then set out furniture and tables. Test the playlist end to end.       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>5 days out</b><br>Confirm every vendor: arrival time, contact number, what they need from you. | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>1 day out</b><br>Buy ice, fresh food and flowers. Chill drinks. Set the bar up.                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>4 days out</b><br>Buy alcohol and non-perishables. Chill nothing yet.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Morning of</b><br>Final food prep. Set out cups, napkins, bins, coats space, bathroom supplies. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>3 days out</b><br>Make anything freezable. Charge speakers, cameras, lights.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>2 hrs before</b><br>Get yourself ready first. Everything after this belongs to the guests.      |

## THE DAY, FILL IN YOUR TIMES

### Vendors arrive

Caterer, bartender, photographer

### Setup complete

Walk the room once, alone

### Music on, doors open

Never open to silence

### Guests arrive

Someone greets and takes coats

### Drinks & canapés

The first hour is drinks, not dinner

### Food served

The natural low point, feed them through it

### Toast or speeches

Short. Two people maximum

### Cake

### Music shifts up

The moment the party turns

### Photos / group shot

Before anyone leaves or gets tired

### Last drinks called

### Guests leave

Lights up, music down, coats out

## TIMING THAT WORKS FOR A 4-5 HOUR PARTY

| HOURL     | WHAT'S HAPPENING                                | WHY                                                                          |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| -0:30     | Music on, bar ready, first drink poured         | Early guests should never walk into silence                                  |
| 0:00-1:00 | Arrivals, drinks, canapés                       | People need a drink in hand before they'll talk                              |
| 1:00-2:00 | Food served                                     | Late enough that everyone's arrived, early enough to soak up the first round |
| 2:00-2:20 | Toast, then cake                                | Peak attendance. Any later and you're speaking to a half-empty room          |
| 2:20-4:00 | Music up, dancing, the actual party             | Everything before this was warm-up                                           |
| 4:00-4:30 | Last drinks, slow the music, lights up slightly | Ending a party well is a skill. Signal it                                    |

## ASSIGN THESE TO A HUMAN, NOT TO YOURSELF

- |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Greeter</b><br>Welcomes people, takes coats, points at the bar.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Food runner</b><br>Refills platters, clears empties.                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Bar keeper</b><br>Watches ice, mixers and glasses. Restocks before it runs out. | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Photos</b><br>Someone whose job is to take them, or you will have none.    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Music</b><br>One person owns the playlist and the volume. Not a committee.      | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Timekeeper</b><br>Holds this sheet and nudges you when it's toast o'clock. |

## THE THINGS PEOPLE FORGET

- |                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>More ice than you think</b><br>Drinks, coolers and the bar tub all eat it at once. | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>A quiet corner</b><br>Someone always needs one.                                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Somewhere for coats and bags</b>                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Taxi numbers or ride app ready</b>                                                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Bin bags and a plan for rubbish</b><br>Two bins beat one overflowing one.          | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Leftovers containers</b><br>So food goes home instead of in the bin.                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Bathroom supplies</b><br>Spare roll, hand towel, bin.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Something for the next morning</b><br>Water and painkillers by the bed. You will thank yourself. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Phone chargers</b><br>Guests will ask.                                             |                                                                                                                              |

**The one rule:** print this and give it to someone else. A timeline that lives only in the host's head isn't a timeline, it's a source of stress.

**Using this with the HavenKept Milestone Birthday Planner:** the times you fill in above go straight into the **Day-Of Schedule** section. Guest counts live in **Guest List**, the drinks and food in **Menu & Catering**, and the running order for music in **Playlist**. The role assignments on this sheet are yours to keep on paper, the planner tracks the schedule, not who's holding the clipboard.