



## Get Organized With A Party Checklist

Planning a party, gathering or local event takes strong organizational skills. Wright Group Event Services wants to help you stay on top of all of the details to create a lifetime memory for your next event. Use this handy checklist to think through your needs then continue to refer to it before, during and after your gather.

### Getting Started

Advanced planning is needed to create the overall structure of your event. Consider the following starting points to lay down the foundation to your retirement party, graduation, reunion, even corporate event.

**Date and time** – Select a date and time that works best for the event. Consider conflicts like holidays, festivals or personal conflicts that could reduce attendance.

**Location** – Selecting a location for your event can include indoor/outdoor options, event centers, restaurants and even homes. Make sure you select a location that can easily house your attendees and any activities you may have planned.

**Audience** – Start considering your guest list if a private event is in the works. If your event is open to the public, think about where you may find this group to create awareness as well what messaging may appeal to them to drive attendance.

**Menu** – Food and beverages can be a complicated task. Ask yourself if you will be providing snacks, a full meal, light beverages, alcoholic beverages and/or a bring your own scenario. Food trucks, liquor licensing and catering could all be needs. Consider as well how you may deal with [special food requests](#).

**Budget** – For private events, consider how much you are willing to spend to host a great party. For example, a graduation party in Colorado based on 60 people averages \$1129 (FinanceBuzz, 2022) versus a wedding in Colorado at \$24,500 (The Knot, 2022). Corporate events can run into the thousands of dollars so planning well can maximize resources and keep focus on the goals and objectives.

Theme – Every event has some sort of theme. Whether celebrate nuptials, graduates, corporate performance or gathering for a festival, considering your theme can provide insight into decorative needs, seating options, traffic flow, gift bags and other details.

Team – Adding help to party planning and execution may be required, especially for larger events. Will your team consist of volunteers, paid staff or a combination of both?

### **One To Three Months Prior To Event**

A few months before a large event and/or a few weeks before a smaller gathering, there are important details to plan and review. Spending time before the event occurs reviewing all of your needs will alleviate last minute surprises.

Agenda – Lay out your plan for the timing of the event and any special occurrences that may be included. Having a rough schedule of the day can create flow and ease, allowing everyone to have a great time.

Equipment – Consider event rental equipment needs like audio/visual, tents, chairs, tables, linens, stages, dance floors, disco balls, and other party needs. If you have secured entertainment, ask if they are well equipped to meet the needs of the space. A word of caution to not leave this piece to the last minute. Demand can be high during certain seasons making some items hard to find.

Invitations – Time to send out notification to your guests that an event is planned. Will you send formal invites, email notifications, or plan a promotion for ticket sales? Now is the time to get this ready and make sure people are aware of your gathering.

Venue – You selected a location. If you have not yet reserved it, do this piece now. If you have, check in with the venue to make sure everything is on track, the area is still secured and follow up on any expectations set.

Vendors – Secure all food vendors, equipment set up suppliers, security teams, servers and any other 3<sup>rd</sup> party companies that may be providing services to your gathering. Make sure you read the details in the contracts to avoid any surprises, like supply shortages, timelines and rain or shine policies.

### **One To Two Weeks Prior To Event**

Confirmations – Confirm all vendors and locations are on track for all of your needs. A confirmation for guests planning to attend can also be a great idea, especially if food and beverage are involved to reduce waste and equally ensure you have enough for all.

Logistics – Walk through either in your mind or at the location how the event will occur. Include entrances, exits, parking, food displays, entertainment set up, seating charts, coat checks, and

traffic flow. Imagining how your guests will enjoy the gathering will help create that extra special feeling when they arrive, allowing you to think through every detail.

### **One Day Prior To Event**

**Set Up Venue** – As soon as you can access the venue, begin your set up. Place furniture, décor, entertainment stations, stages, etc. so you can take last minute stock on any missing items.

**Safety Check** – Walk the room imagining you are your guests. Are there any safety hazards, like electrical cords or misplaced rugs where people could trip? Check internet services if they are a part of the program. Test sound equipment, microphones, projectors and video cameras for proper functionality.

### **Day Of Event**

**Final set up check** – Walk the room one last time to ensure all is set up and placed correctly.

**Greet vendors** – As vendors arrive, greet them (or have a team member in place) to share where they will be located and make sure they have all that they need to be successful.

**Door management** – Make sure the welcome table, ticketing booth or general entrances are manned with a greeter to take tickets, answer questions, hand out name tags and any other touches you have added to greet your guests.

**Photos/Videos** – Ask one of your team members or hire a professional to take pictures and/or video recordings during the event. Sharing memories after the event with your guests can entice them to return the next time you host a gathering!

### **Day After Event**

**Clean Up** – If you are hiring setup/tear down crews, make sure all clean up expectations have been met. You and your team should pick up trash, return furniture to original placements, take down lighting and decorations and in general, return the venue to its original state.

**Send thank you notes** – Thanking your guests for coming, thanking vendors and thanking the venue is always a nice touch.

The above list can be expanded but should get you thinking about planning your next event with the details in mind. Wright Group Event Services has been helping equip and staff personal celebrations, community festivals and corporate events for over three decades. If you need someone to review the details, [contact us!](#)