



Thanksgiving Planning Checklist Perfect for the First Time Host

Four – Five Weeks Before

- Send out invitations.

Two Weeks Before

- Plan your menu. Consider guests dietary restrictions so that you have options available for everyone to enjoy.
- Decide what type of turkey you wish to serve. If you are going for a fresh or heritage bird, you will need to order in advance and arrange for pickup or delivery the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.
- Enlist guests to bring an item. A potluck is a great option!
- Create a cooking plan. Determine which dishes cook at the same temperature, what will cook longest, etc.

One Week Before

- Do inventory on pantry items that you already have to avoid purchasing un-needed duplicates.
- Make lists – lots of lists! If you are shopping at several stores, make a one for each store. Evernote is one of our favorite apps for lists that allow you to edit on the go. It also ensures that you don't wind up at the store while your list is on the counter where you accidentally left it - we've all done it!
- Plan your table setting. Iron your linens, place your rental order, or go out and buy new if you are in the market.
- Create a seating chart and place cards.
- Prepare your kitchen by cleaning out the fridge to make room for all of the groceries and dishes that Thanksgiving will bring.
- Clean your house and prepare for guests. Have extra toilet paper in all bathrooms, fresh towels, full soap dispensers, etc.
- Decorate for the occasion if you haven't already. Add festive thanksgiving touches throughout your home to really set the tone for your guests. (See [Pinterest](#) for awesome inspiration, free printables, and more.)

The Monday Before

- Purchase all of your nonperishable groceries
- If you went the frozen turkey route, now is the time to defrost that bird.
- Clean wine glasses.
- Polish silverware.
- If possible set the table and arrange centerpiece, place cards, and any other décor items. If you are using the primary dinner table in your household and think you are unable to set in advance, get creative. Have a picnic, eat on the couch just this once, etc.

The Tuesday Before

- Make your pie dough – it will stay fresh.
- Make the cranberry sauce.
- Cut bread into cubes for homemade stuffing. (Seriously, homemade is so much better than the box, and it's easy!)

The Wednesday Before

- Pick up the turkey if it wasn't delivered.
- Get chopping! Chop all vegetables and refrigerate.
- Peel potatoes and store them in water in the fridge.
- Finish making and bake the pies.
- Prep all sides and appetizers. Put all prepped ingredients together, in Ziploc bags, labeled for each dish so that all you have to do come Thursday is pull the bag out for each dish and go to town.
- Reach out to guests for any last minute items or ingredients that may have been overlooked.

Thanksgiving Day

- Allow turkey to come to room temperature and get the bird in the oven! Depending on the size, it will take around 5 hours to cook so be prepared.
- Chill the wine and signature cocktail mixes.
- Make your sides and appetizers.
- Have a fabulous Thanksgiving and let us know how it went!