

# Graduation Party Timeline & Checklist

## Weeks 6-10

### 8–10 WEEKS BEFORE THE PARTY

- SET PARTY DATE AND TIME
- DECIDE ON PARTY STYLE (OPEN HOUSE, FORMAL, BACKYARD, VENUE)
- CREATE A PRELIMINARY BUDGET
- CHOOSE A THEME OR COLOR SCHEME (SCHOOL COLORS, NEUTRAL, THEMED)
- RESERVE VENUE OR CONFIRM HOME LOCATION
- CHECK SCHOOL CALENDAR TO AVOID CONFLICTS
- BOOK MAJOR RENTALS (TABLES, CHAIRS, TENT, BOUNCE HOUSE, ETC.)
- ARRANGE CATERING OR DECIDE ON SELF-CATERING
- BOOK PHOTOGRAPHER (OPTIONAL)
- START COMPILING GUEST LIST

### 6–8 WEEKS BEFORE

- ORDER OR CREATE GRADUATION INVITATIONS
- PURCHASE ENVELOPES AND POSTAGE (IF MAILING)
- PLAN MENU (FOOD, DRINKS, DESSERTS)
- RESERVE SPECIALTY FOOD VENDORS OR BAKERY
- PLAN ENTERTAINMENT (MUSIC, GAMES, SLIDESHOW, DJ)
- ARRANGE PARKING PLAN IF HOSTING AT HOME
- ORDER CUSTOM PARTY SUPPLIES (NAPKINS, BANNERS, SIGNAGE)
- BEGIN COLLECTING PHOTOS FOR DISPLAYS OR SLIDESHOW

# Weeks 1-5

## 4–5 WEEKS BEFORE

- SEND INVITATIONS (EARLIER FOR OUT-OF-TOWN GUESTS)
- ORDER CAKE OR DESSERT TABLE ITEMS
- CONFIRM RENTAL ORDERS
- PURCHASE OR ORDER DÉCOR ITEMS
- PLAN SEATING LAYOUT AND TABLE SETUP
- DECIDE ON PARTY FAVORS (OPTIONAL)
- PURCHASE GUEST BOOK OR MEMORY CARDS
- CREATE PLAYLIST OR CONFIRM DJ DETAILS
- ARRANGE BEVERAGE NEEDS (COOLERS, DISPENSERS, ETC.)

## 2–3 WEEKS BEFORE

- TRACK RSVPS AND FOLLOW UP WITH NON-RESPONDERS
- FINALIZE HEADCOUNT FOR FOOD PLANNING
- ORDER BALLOONS (IF HELIUM REQUIRED)
- PURCHASE SERVING SUPPLIES (PLATES, CUPS, UTENSILS, NAPKINS)
- PLAN SIGNAGE (WELCOME SIGN, DIRECTIONAL SIGNS, FOOD LABELS)
- PREPARE DISPLAY BOARDS FOR PHOTOS AND ACHIEVEMENTS
- CONFIRM VOLUNTEERS OR HELPERS
- ARRANGE EXTRA TRASH CANS AND RECYCLING BINS

## 1 WEEK BEFORE

- CONFIRM ALL VENDOR BOOKINGS AND DELIVERY TIMES
- SHOP FOR NON-PERISHABLE FOOD AND DRINKS
- PURCHASE ICE CHESTS AND SERVING TRAYS IF NEEDED
- CLEAN AND PREPARE PARTY AREA
- SET UP SLIDESHOW OR TEST AUDIO EQUIPMENT
- ASSEMBLE PARTY FAVORS
- PREPARE EMERGENCY SUPPLIES (TAPE, SCISSORS, EXTENSION CORDS)
- PLAN WEATHER BACKUP (IF OUTDOORS)

# Final Preparations

## 2–3 DAYS BEFORE

- BUY FRESH GROCERIES AND PERISHABLE ITEMS
- BEGIN DECORATING LARGE AREAS
- SET UP TABLES AND CHAIRS (IF POSSIBLE)
- PREPARE FOOD THAT CAN BE MADE IN ADVANCE
- CONFIRM HELPERS' ARRIVAL TIMES
- CHARGE CAMERAS AND PHONES
- PREPARE CASH FOR TIPS OR LAST-MINUTE PURCHASES

## DAY BEFORE

- FINISH DECORATING
- SET UP PHOTO DISPLAYS AND MEMORY TABLE
- ARRANGE SERVING STATIONS
- PREPARE COOLERS WITH DRINKS
- PICK UP CAKE OR DESSERTS
- REVIEW TIMELINE FOR PARTY DAY
- SET OUT TRASH BAGS AND RECYCLING BINS
- GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

## PARTY DAY

- SET OUT FOOD AND BEVERAGES
- FILL ICE BINS
- PUT UP BALLOONS AND FINAL DÉCOR
- PLACE GUEST BOOK AND PENS
- START MUSIC OR SLIDESHOW
- WELCOME GUESTS
- TAKE PHOTOS THROUGHOUT THE EVENT
- ENJOY CELEBRATING YOUR GRADUATE

## AFTER THE PARTY

- STORE LEFTOVER FOOD SAFELY
- BEGIN CLEANUP
- RETURN RENTALS
- SEND THANK-YOU NOTES
- BACK UP PHOTOS
- PACK KEEPSAKES AND CARDS