PARTY DAY

Run of show

Fill in the times the night before. Hand a copy to every helper.

TIME	WHAT HAPPENS	WHO	NOTES
	Setup begins		
	Food prep done, labels on every dish		
	Food out: start the timer		
	Doors open		
	Welcome and first activity		
	Food served		
	Second activity		
	Cake, candles or toast		
	Gifts (if any), with a helper writing the list		
	Goodbyes and favors		
	Leftovers into the fridge		
	Cleanup and returns		

Food timer

FOOD OUT AT _____

TOSS BY _____

Throw out perishable food after two hours, or after one hour when it is above 90°F. Keep cold food at 40°F or below and hot food at 140°F or above.

Safe temperatures

Fridge: 40 °F or below
Danger zone: 40 to 140 °F
Hot food: 140 °F or above
Leftovers in the fridge within two hours

Source: FDA, Food Safety for Moms-to-Be.

NOTES FOR HELPERS

Hosting checklist

Tick each box as you go.

Space and setup

- [ ] Chairs and tables match the headcount, with a few extra
- [ ] The path from parking to the door is clear and step-free, or there is a signed alternative
- [ ] Restroom stocked, and the way to it is lit
- [ ] A spot for coats, bags and strollers
- [ ] Trash and recycling bins in two places, with spare bags
- [ ] Rain plan, shade or heat plan ready
- [ ] Signs for the restroom, the gift table and the food

Food and drink

- [ ] Fridge reads 40°F or below, and there is room for the party food
- [ ] Cold food on ice or in the fridge until it is time to serve
- [ ] Hot food held at 140°F or above
- [ ] A timer started when food goes out: two hours, or one hour above 90°F
- [ ] A label by every dish with its name, ingredients and major allergens
- [ ] A separate serving spoon for each dish, to limit cross-contact
- [ ] Heated deli meats and hot dogs, pasteurized cheeses and cooked eggs for pregnant guests
- [ ] Alcohol-free drinks that look as good as the rest, plus water
- [ ] Decaf and herbal options next to the coffee and tea
- [ ] Plates, napkins, cups, cake knife and a lighter for candles

Guest comfort

- [ ] Name tags if the guests come from different circles
- [ ] A few chairs at standard height, even if the theme calls for the floor
- [ ] A quiet corner for anyone who needs a break
- [ ] A kids' corner with something to do, if children are coming
- [ ] Music at a level where people can still talk
- [ ] A plan for early and late arrivals

Activities

- [ ] Games and activity sheets printed, with extra copies
- [ ] Pens or pencils, and a small basket of prizes
- [ ] One person in charge of explaining each activity
- [ ] A backup activity in case one flops, plus an easy way to skip any game

Gifts, photos and thank-yous

- [ ] A gift table and a box for cards
- [ ] A pad of paper for the gift list
- [ ] A photo spot with good light, and a helper who is not the host
- [ ] Thank-you notes, stamps and a list of addresses ready for the next day

Cleanup and after

- [ ] Containers for leftovers, and leftovers in the fridge within two hours
- [ ] A list of borrowed and rented items, with who gets each one back
- [ ] A thank-you for every helper, said out loud before they leave
- [ ] Receipts in one envelope for the budget

Food-safety checks follow public guidance from the FDA, CDC and ACOG. Sources and links: partygamebook.com/baby-shower-themes-and-party-planning/

CUT APART

Food label cards

One card per dish. Fold on the dotted line to make a tent.

DISH

MAIN INGREDIENTS

CONTAINS

- ☐ Milk ☐ Eggs ☐ Fish
- ☐ Shellfish ☐ Tree nuts ☐ Peanuts
- ☐ Wheat ☐ Soy ☐ Sesame
- ☐ Pasteurized dairy ☐ Served hot ☐ Cooked through

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AFTER THE PARTY

Thank-you note starters

A good note names the gift, says what you will do with it, and names the giver.

The three-part note

1. Thank them, and name the gift or the help.
2. Say what you will do with it, or what it meant.
3. Mention the person: seeing them, something they said, a memory.

For a gift

Dear ____, thank you for the ____. We have already ____, and it is perfect. It was so good to see you on Saturday.

For a gift card or money

Dear ____, thank you for your generous gift. We are putting it toward ____. Your note made us laugh.

For a co-host or helper

Dear ____, I could not have pulled this off without you. Thank you for ____. I owe you a coffee.

For a guest who traveled

Dear ____, thank you for making the trip. It meant a great deal to have you there, and we loved ____.

For a guest who sent a gift but could not come

Dear ____, thank you for the ____. We missed you and would love to see you soon.

For a guest who came and brought no gift

Dear ____, thank you for celebrating with us. Having you there was the best part of the day.

Write each note by hand if you can, and avoid one generic message for everyone, which is the Emily Post Institute's advice. A note written a few days late is still worth sending.

MY OWN NOTES