

HOLIDAY

PLANNING CHECKLIST

Holiday Cards

- Book a photographer (November is best) OR
- Select candid family photos for a DIY approach.
- Set a deadline for mailing cards.
- Order photo cards online. (Allow at least a week for turnaround.)
- Stamp, address and mail cards OR
- Send a digital-only note/card.
- Create a display for cards you receive.

Decorations

- Pull out Christmas decorations to clean and check for broken/nonfunctioning items.
- Make a list of new items you'd like to purchase.
- Set aside time to decorate — hire out if time is an issue.
- Set up your faux tree — or take a family trip to cut a fresh one.
- Schedule family time to trim the tree.
- Create a tablescape for dinner parties/entertaining.
- Donate any extra decorations/ornaments you won't use.

Holiday Shopping

- Set a budget. Don't forget postage, teacher gifts and food items.
- Make a list of gifts you'd appreciate and ones family members enjoy.
- Set a shipping deadline for gifts to any out-of-town family members.
- Make a list of any holiday discounts/deals you're trying to find.
- Plan a dedicated time to shop in stores and online. Early is best!
- Pick up gifts to donate to charity or a family in need.
- Organize any gift exchanges you plan with coworkers/family.
- Buy wrapping paper and small items for stockings.
- Set aside an afternoon to wrap presents.

Food Planning

- Create a meal plan for any days you'll have holiday guests.
- Cook any meals that can be frozen in early December.
- Invite friends for a cooking or baking party for holiday food prep.
- Package and gift any baked goods to neighbors, coworkers and friends.
- Pick up convenience foods like frozen pizza and muffin mix at least a week early.
- Buy perishables several days beforehand to avoid holiday panic.
- Write down a cooking timeline for Christmas Eve and Christmas.

Hosting and/or Traveling

- Confirm your guest list and length of stay.
- Make a list of any items you need to purchase/borrow.
- Straighten up the house and put down sidewalk salt if snow is expected.
- Purchase light snacks/bottled water for guests.
- Stock your guest bath with extra linens/travel-size toiletries.
- Get an oil change/tuneup for your vehicle if traveling by car.
- Communicate air travel plans to your host if flying to destination.
- Check the weather forecast along your driving route and at destination.
- Pack clothing items based on destination and activities.

Events and Traditions

- Place events on your December calendar as each invitation arrives.
- Send invites as early as November if you're planning a December gathering.
- Plan a wardrobe for each occasion (and for all family members).
- Shop early if an ugly Christmas sweater party is on your list.
- Schedule traditions, such as caroling, cookie exchanges and gingerbread house decorating.
- Plan for rest/relaxation — don't get run down during the holidays.



SignUpGenius provides free online sign up sheets that make it easy to organize holiday parties, potlucks and events.