

BABY SHOWER PLANNING CHECKLIST

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TIMING: Hold shower 4-6 weeks before due date. Invitations: 4-6 weeks out. Cake order: 3-4 weeks out. All drinks non-alcoholic (guest of honor cannot drink). 2-3 games for 3-hr shower. Label all foods.

■ 6-8 Weeks Before

- Confirm host and co-host responsibilities
- Check with mom-to-be — date, guest list, wishes
- Set the date — 4-6 weeks before due date
Avoid within 4 weeks — attendance becomes uncertain
- Set and split the budget among co-hosts
- Choose venue — home, restaurant, event space
- Choose theme or color palette
- Draft guest list with mom-to-be — confirm addresses
- Order invitations — mail 4-6 weeks before shower
Physical invites feel more special for a baby shower
- Check baby registry — align gift table setup
- Assign co-host roles — decor, food, games, gifts

■ 3-4 Weeks Before

- Track RSVPs — follow up non-responders
- Order the cake — custom cakes need 2-3 weeks
Do not leave this until the week before
- Order or buy all decorations
- Plan menu — use calculator for quantities
- Decide: homemade vs catered vs store-bought
- Plan games — 2-3 games for a 3-hour shower
2-3 is the sweet spot. More feels regimented.
- Buy wrapped game prizes — 1 per winner
Small candles, bath sets, or \$10-15 gift cards
- Plan party favors for guests
- Create simple event timeline
- Arrange photographer — friend or hire

■ 1-2 Weeks Before

- Finalize guest count — final RSVP check
- Buy all non-perishable food and drink ingredients
- Buy tableware — plates, napkins, cups in theme colors
- Confirm cake order — call bakery to verify
- Print or prepare game sheets
- Prepare guest book or keepsake activity
- Assemble and package party favors
- Make homemade decorations if any
- Print menu cards for the food table
- Confirm venue — access time, parking, restrictions

■ Day Before

- Set up venue and decorate if allowed
Use foil balloons — helium balloons deflate overnight
- Prepare all make-ahead food — fillings, dips, fruit
- Plan dessert table layout — decide placement
- Chill all beverages overnight
- Prepare punch base — add carbonation day-of only
Pre-adding carbonation = flat punch before guests arrive
- Set up gift table — bags and tissue paper ready
- Charge cameras and any slideshow devices
- Confirm task assignments with co-hosts for day-of
- Prepare guest book supplies
- Confirm cake pickup time and logistics

■ Day Of — Setup

- Arrive 90 min early — set up if not done
- Inflate and arrange balloons
- Set out tableware at place settings or buffet
- Arrange food table with height variation
Cake stands and risers create a layered, photo-worthy spread
- Add carbonation to punch 30 min before guests arrive
- Set up drink station — labels, ice, garnishes
- Set up game station — sheets, pens, prizes
- Put out party favors
- Pick up cake — transport level, in air conditioning
Never transport in a hot car — buttercream melts at ~85°F
- Final walkthrough — take a 'before' photo
- Greet guests — assign someone to introduce strangers
- Follow event timeline loosely — don't rush the honoree

■ Food & Drink Setup

- Label every food item — allergen transparency
Common allergens: nuts in baked goods, dairy, gluten
- Keep cold foods on ice throughout
- Separate savory and sweets tables
- Use height variation — tiered stands and risers
- Include a non-alcoholic signature drink
- Refill platters before they reach half-empty
Replace full platter — don't top off a half-empty one
- Assign someone to monitor and refill table
- Mix finger foods and fork foods
- Keep cake covered until 30 min before cutting
Buttercream dries and cracks if exposed to air too long
- Set up a coffee and tea station

■ Games & Activities

- Baby Bingo — keeps guests engaged during gift opening
- Baby Food Taste Test — entertaining, competitive
Announce flavors in advance for any guests with allergies
- Advice cards for parents — activity + keepsake
- Measure the Bump — string + belly circumference guess
- Baby Photo Match — guests match baby photos
- Prizes wrapped and ready — 1 per winner
- Gift opening — allow 45-60 minutes
Assign someone to record gifts and givers for thank-you cards

■ PRO BABY SHOWER TIPS

- All drinks must be non-alcoholic — the guest of honor cannot drink, and the event should reflect that.
- Add carbonation to punch within 30 minutes of guests arriving — never ahead of time.
- Transport the cake level and in air conditioning. Buttercream melts around 85°F.
- Assign one person to record every gift and who it's from — this makes thank-you cards possible.
- 2-3 games for a 3-hour shower. Too many feels regimented. Baby Bingo is universally liked.

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