

# Baby Shower Checklist

This checklist presupposes a two-month lead in time. You can host a lovely baby shower with a six-week lead in if you must. If your new mom comes to you at the end of her pregnancy with her shower request, this can present a problem. You may not have adequate time to plan. If this happens to you, consider having a "new baby shower" in the days after the mom has given birth..

## Two Months Out

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Mom-to-be's ideal party. Talk to the new mom about what she would most enjoy. After all, it is her shower. Does she want something intimate in a friend's home? Would she rather have a night out?

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Make a guest list. Get a list of desired guests from the Mom along with email or physical addresses.

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Set the Date. Talk to the mom, but also consult some of the mom's closest friends and family members. Make sure that everyone has time to travel to the shower.

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Find the gift registry. Find out where the mom is registered for baby gifts so that guests know what baby needs and what Mom already owns.

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Send out "Save the Date" notices. You can use either physical post cards or digital e-cards. Both can be effective. Note any that come back to you. This also gives you a chance to check the addresses to make sure that all are correct.

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Set a budget. It may be a huge honor to host the shower, but your checking account may not feel so honored. Decide how much to spend and who will be paying for the party. You may ask other family members or friends to help foot the bill for food, prizes or even the cost of the venue.

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Choose a venue. With the mom's hopes and the number of guests in mind, choose a site to have the party.

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Set the Theme. Sure, there are lots of baby shower themes out there, but think about your new mom. Is she a Doctor Who fan? Does she follow the Royal family with a passion? Has she missed wearing high heeled shoes with her ever-growing tummy? All can be fun and thoughtful themes.



# Six Weeks Out

- ☐ Design the invitations. Be sure to include all the pertinent information: Mom, time, place and where the Mom is registered. Whether you go with prepared, commercial invitations or make your own, be sure to think ahead. Go ahead and get the thank you notes that match. Fill out the Mom's information or prepare the envelopes with the guest's name and address.
- ☐ Send out the invitations. If you got any of the save the date notes back, make sure that you have the corrected address.
- ☐ Plan the menu. Consider whether you want to spend the days ahead of the party cooking, or whether you want to spend more and have the party catered. You can also keep the food simple, with a couple of fruit and veggie platters, cheese and crackers or other finger foods. Since alcohol is discouraged for pregnant moms, keep the drinks simple.
- ☐ Get games together. There are lots of fun baby shower games on the internet. Think about printing out a sheet asking what different baby animals are called. For example, a baby llama is called a cria. You can also think about prizes for each game. In most cases, the prizes are designed to go home with the winning guest. However, in some cases, the prizes are things that the mom might need, like books. The winner is then encouraged to sign the book and give it to the new baby as an additional gift.





# A Month Out

☐ Send out the call for help. Hosting a baby shower is a big job. Make sure that you have people to help you. Assign people for set up and clean up. You may want to ask someone else to pick up the cake or snacks. You may even want to enlist some help in cleaning the house in preparation. Remember, you don't have to do this alone. This party should be fun for everyone, including you!

☐ Set up a photographer. You might consider hiring a professional that will get shots of the mom and all the guests. But most showers are fully covered by asking a guest or family member to shoot the party. Make sure that whoever is taking pictures gets a shot of each guest with the gift given. This makes it easy to send out thank you notes.

☐ Set up a way to get the gifts home. This is especially important if you live in an urban setting where many guests will use public transportation. But even if everyone drives, your mom-to-be might receive large gifts such as a car seat, stroller or even a crib. This might be too big to fit in the family sedan. It makes sense to set up help with this little task when you are asking for help with other aspects of the shower.

☐ Order food. If you are planning on serving a special cake or catering the party, this is the time to get the food settled. Make sure that the food will be ready for pick up or delivered the day of the shower.



# A Week Out

☐ Prepare the venue. If you are having the shower at a restaurant or party facility, talk to the manager and make sure that the space set aside will accommodate all the guests. Find out what serving pieces are on site and what you will need to bring. If you are having the shower in your home, give the house a thorough cleaning. Consider hiring a service to do a deep clean and free up your time. Clean out your refrigerator to make sure you have room for the food.

☐ Check on guests. If you haven't heard from an invited guest, send them a quick message or email, or give them a call. We have all had things slip through the cracks. Make sure that you have a thank you note envelope addressed for each guest attending.

☐ Gather your party supplies. Make sure you have anything you might need to play games, including pens or pencils. Check your serving dishes, plates, cups and silverware. If you need more, this is the time to add to your supply. Also, be sure to pack a pad of sticky notes and a notepad to record gifts and givers.

☐ Prepare the party favors. Fill little gift bags or boxes with simple gifts that show how much you appreciate everyone's company. Consider special favors for those who have helped you throw the shower.

☐ Shop. Purchase any dry goods you need for the shower such as decorations, crackers, chips, etc. Add any items you might be missing from your party supplies.





# The Day Before

- ☐ Set up. If you are having the shower in a venue, you may need to wait until the day of the shower. However, if you are having the shower in your home, you have the opportunity to set everything up the day before. This includes decorations, tables, chairs and tablecloths. You also have the opportunity to o some last minute changes if you suddenly discover that great-aunt Edna's tablecloth has a stain, or that your sister has borrowed your folding table.
- ☐ Clean up the area. Make sure that the area is neat and that any extra items are stowed away.
- ☐ Set up someone to pick up the Mom. You will have enough to do dealing with last minute shower issues. Let someone else pick up and deliver the mom-to-be.
- ☐ Do last minute cooking and food prep. Cut fresh fruits and veggies and either pack them in storage containers or plate and cover them, depending on the space in your refrigerator.



# The Day of

Pick up last minute items. This might include the cake or catered items. You might also want to pick up your balloons the day of so that they are fresh for the party. You should pick up the flowers or have them delivered on the day of the shower so that they are at their best.

## During

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Give the Mom her own "Lady in waiting." Ask someone to make sure that Mom has easy access to food drink and fun.

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Record gifts. Sit next to the Mom as she opens her gifts. Ask one guest to record each gift on a single sheet of paper. Meanwhile, pull out the envelopes you addressed earlier. As each giver is announced, pull out the correct envelope. Write the name of the giver and the item on a sticky note. Place the note on a blank thank you card and place the card in the correct envelope for the giver.

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Enjoy. Don't get so wrapped up in the perfect party that you forget to have fun yourself.

## After the Party

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Pack up the gifts. Help the new mom load the gift into your designated vehicle to get her new items home. If there is extra food, it might be nice to send some home with Mom so that she has less need to prepare a meal.

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Pack up Thank You notes. Show the new Mom the thank you notes you have ready for her to simply fill out. Make sure to put a stamp on each envelope to make things even easier for your honoree.

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Clean up. Ask your designated clean up crew to help put the space back to normal.

## A Day or Two After

Offer help. Check with the mom and make sure that she is fully rested. Offer to help wash any new clothing she received to make it ready for baby. If you are handy, feel free to offer to put together items such as cribs, strollers or swings.

