

Banquet Planning Checklist

6 Months or More in Advance

- Set budget for event
- Choose theme or purpose for event _____
- Select venue _____
- Sign contract for venue (and associated vendors if applicable); deposit paid _____
- Make sure that you have tables, chairs, table cloths, and dinnerware
- Plan for all AV equipment needed
 - Microphone
 - Podium
 - Speakers
 - Slideshow projector
 - Other
- Plan for food
 - Appetizers _____
 - Main Course(s) _____
 - Sides _____
 - Dessert _____
 - Buffet _____
 - Drinks _____
 - Bar _____
- Attend tastings if you're hiring a caterer
- Choose and contract caterer
- Order invitations

4 to 6 Months in Advance

- Plan decorations
- Delegate decorating responsibilities
- Plan a program for the evening
- Find a florist if needed
- Choose any other services that are unique to your event

3 to 4 Months in Advance

- Order flowers if needed
- Order any awards or plaques if needed
- Order decorations that you might be
- Finalize program
- Approve one printed program before it goes to the copier
- Finalize menu with caterer
- Find MC

2 to 3 Months in Advance

- Make a blueprint of the banquet hall; use this blueprint the day of to show your vendors or the helpers where everything goes
- Shop for supplies as needed – including decorations, non-perishable food, etc.
- Finalize any details, contracts or other loose ends that aren't accounted for.

6 Weeks in Advance

- Send out invitations
- Spend time talking to each of the people to whom you have delegated responsibilities. Make sure they are clear on what to do and have what they need.
- Confirm with any vendors arrival times, clean up, set up, etc. Make sure that your contracts are in order.

3 Weeks in Advance

- Meet with your food person or caterer and confirm the amount of people who are coming. Always plan for a few extras.
- Pay any money that is due in advance of the event.
- Prepare checks for vendors that you will pay the night of
- Confirm with the venue any changes you are going to make to the décor, and confirm the time that you are going to arrive to set up, as well as the plan for cleaning up.
- Delegate people to pick up flowers and food if necessary.

1 Week in Advance

- Touch base with anyone to whom you have delegated responsibilities. Do they have everything they need? Do they have any questions? Solve those problems for them.
- Attend to any details and questions that come up.
- Confirm with the MC and go over the program with him. Ensure that he understands your audience.
- Enjoy and relax! The bulk of your work is done.