

Thanksgiving Checklist

3-4 weeks ahead

- Invite guests (ask them to bring a dish to share)
- Choose a meal time
- Start menu planning (pull out favorite recipes, search Pinterest)
- Think about table decor (centerpiece, place cards, table linens)
- Think through seating. Kids' table? Extra chairs needed?
- Activities for the kids?
- Background music?
- Add seasonal decor to areas of the house guests will visit (candle in the bathroom)
- Make sure there is freezer space for pre-made food & turkey

1 week ahead

- Make sure there is extra refrigerator space
- Clean the house
- Create a timeline for prepping and cooking (work backward from meal time)
- Decide which appliances will be used for each dish (oven, stovetop, microwave, instant pot, slow cooker, grill, etc.)
- Think through cookware/bakeware/serving dishes needed for each item, pull out and label. Designate serving utensil for each dish.
- Grocery shop for non-perishable items
- Take turkey out of freezer to thaw in fridge

2 weeks ahead

- Decide on a menu
- Print copies of recipes (or save them all in one place)
- Make a grocery list from the recipes (don't forget about coffee, tea, creamer, butter, salt, pepper, and any other staple goods needed for the big day)
- Divide the grocery list into two shopping trips: non-perishable shopping that can be done a week in advance, and perishable shopping just before Thanksgiving
- Think about items that can be made ahead (gravy, pie, mashed potatoes). Food Network has a list of dishes you can make and freeze before your Thanksgiving feast (www.foodnetwork.com/thanksgiving/thanksgiving-how-tos/freeze-your-feast-the-ultimate-make-ahead-thanksgiving)
- Buy turkey
- Think about a plan for leftovers (single-use containers on hand to send leftovers home with your guests?)
- Decide on table decor
- Launder table linens if needed
- Think through tableware needed and add any necessary paper goods to grocery list

3-4 days ahead

- Grocery shop for perishable items
- Wash and chop vegetables

2 days ahead

- Spot clean floor
- Clear clutter
- Arrange tables and chairs as needed
- Set the table
- Read through cooking timeline in preparation for the big day
- Scan recipes to make sure all ingredients have been purchased

Day Before Thanksgiving

- Clean bathrooms
- Brine the turkey
- Buy ice if needed