

steps to a smarter PARTY

This Smart Party Kit contains hints and tips for holding successful, enjoyable and safe parties for hosts and guests. It has been designed to be used for planning parties of all types. In particular, some information will be more useful for parents who are holding parties for young adults.

Regardless of why you are holding a party, you want your party to be remembered for all the right reasons. No one wants a party famous for its disasters!

Arranging a party, especially for young people, is a serious business. By working with your local Police, and using this kit, potential problems such as property damage, noise complaints and gatecrashers can be minimised, or avoided.

To maximise safety at your next party, read ALL of the ideas presented in this kit BEFORE YOUR PARTY. Then, register your party with the local Police. By doing this, they can undertake to patrol the vicinity of your party regularly throughout its duration, and give priority to any call to attend. Don't worry, they won't be intrusive.

Remember, **all** information is applicable to **all** parties, but tips marked with a ☺ are especially important for parents holding parties for young people.



before a party



The Venue

1. If your party is to be held in a public place, such as a hall or sports' club, visit the venue before the party, and inspect it. Check the inside, and identify how guests are going to get in and out.
2. For security reasons, it's a good idea to avoid buildings with multiple entrances.

The Invitations

3. Once the venue is decided, it's a good idea to send out invitations. Why? People love to receive them, and they enable you to have some control over your celebration. Invitations determine the number of guests and this will guide you in your preparations, especially if you've included an RSVP. Invitations also establish the standard of behaviour you expect from your guests. 😊 Importantly, invitations provide important details for other parents (e.g. is this a bring-your-own alcohol party?)
4. 😊 Personally hand out invitations to the guests, and discourage people from bringing extra friends. This ensures that your party involves only those guests that you know and want!
5. 😊 Include a start and finish time on the invitation.

Other Important Things

6. 😊 It sounds obvious, but parental supervision, or having other responsible adults present, will help keep trouble to a minimum. Ask other parents to help out with the supervision too.
7. Experiment with sound equipment before the party. Go outside and listen to get an idea of how the noise carries. This could save problems later.
8. If possible, locate speaker systems or other noise sources as far away from the neighbours as possible.
9. Advise the neighbours about the party, this may reduce concerns about parking and noise later.
10. Secure the dog, and make it comfortable!
11. Encourage guests to come by taxi, public transport or with someone who has agreed to be designated driver. If necessary, is it possible for guests to "sleep over"?
12. Ensure access to a phone, and have emergency service numbers ready just in case.

Being a host

13. It's your job to ensure the safety of your guests. It is not illegal to become intoxicated at a private function, but drunk people have less control, and pose dangers to themselves, and those around them.

14. It may be that you, the host, are legally liable, and could be charged with civil negligence if a drunken guest causes damage to property or another person. You can avoid this by exercising "reasonable care". In other words, take measures to ensure that excessive drinking does not occur, and if a guest does become intoxicated, act to minimise any possible harm.

15. If you're the host, it's your responsibility to ensure that you don't become intoxicated, either. You need to be clear-headed to manage the celebration. If you drink responsibly, it is less likely the guests will drink to excess. 😊 Your drinking behaviour could be the role model for young people. What sort of role model are you?

16. It is far easier to prevent your guests from getting intoxicated than it is to deal with the situation afterwards.

Party Layout

17. Decide where people will enter the party and where they are likely to congregate. Place non-alcoholic drinks at the entrance and the congregation areas.

18. Locate the bar or alcohol serving area as far as possible from the entrance, and place tables of food and snacks within easy reach of these areas.

19. Keep the bar, or alcohol serving area small, so that people will not congregate around it.

20. Make sure there is plenty of room for people to circulate– crowded areas and alcohol can lead to fights.

Drinks

21. 😊 If alcohol is to be permitted at the party, discouraging alcohol will have greater control over who is drinking, and how much.

22. Have a wide range and sufficient supply of non-alcoholic drinks.

23. Make a good selection of low alcoholic drinks and full strength alcoholic drinks.





...Drinks continued

24. Discourage people from going around serving alcoholic drinks or topping up glasses. This makes it hard for people to keep track of how much alcohol they're drinking.

25. Serve non-alcoholic drinks in larger containers (jugs) and make them easy to access.

26. Make low alcohol, or no alcohol, punch and "mocktails".

27. ☺ If you allow guests to bring their own alcohol, avoid providing open containers that can be "spiked" or used to disguise the volume of alcohol being consumed.

28. Serving alcohol in standard drink serves will help your guests keep track of how much alcohol they've had. If a person has more than one standard drink per hour, alcohol will accumulate in their bloodstream and intoxicate them.

29. If your party is large, you may be able to arrange for someone to be the "dedicated server". This gives you more time to look after your guests, and enables better monitoring of consumption and intoxication levels. The server can also establish the practice of only serving one or two drinks at a time, and promote alternatives to alcohol.

Food

30. Make sure food is readily available and accessible to your guests. This will help prevent and reduce the potential for excessive drinking. Whilst food does not prevent intoxication, it does slow down the rate at which alcohol is absorbed. Eating also slows down the pace at which you drink, and fills you up so you are less likely to drink.

31. Avoid salty foods, since they make people thirsty, and so liable to drink more.

32. Serve food throughout the party as this helps to break up continual drinking. Have someone who regularly takes food around to your guests.

the end of the party...

33. An hour before the end of the party, stop serving alcohol. Serve some food (e.g. desserts or cheeses) and tea and coffee.

34. If a guest's behaviour is of concern, talk to them in private, or a friend or partner who may be able to influence them. Offer them food, and do not serve them any more alcohol, but encourage them to drink something else.

35. Friends don't let friends drink and drive. If someone has had too much to drink, phone a taxi for them, or arrange for a sober driver to take them home. Otherwise, offer them the spare bed.

This information has been reproduced with approval from the Australian Drug Foundations booklet *Hosting Better Parties: Practical tips for managing alcohol at parties*. www.adf.org.au. @Australian Drug Foundation.

