



The Ultimate Party Planner

A collection of tips & tricks to make it happen - stress free





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Decorate or die?



Love the look of parties but hate the set up?

Decorations are one of those party features that either leave you twirling joyfully in the middle of the Kmart party aisle for weeks or leave you cursing your luck as you do the Kmart dash at 11pm the night before (or morning of!)

Funscape tips for decorating

Kmart - In case you've been living under a rock the last few years this is the place to be! Kmart stocks an incredible range of partyware at ridiculously cheap prices. Try theming your napkin colours to your plates and cups. Voila - a practical solution that contributes to your party theme.

KISS - Ever heard of the KISS principle? Keep. It. Simple. Stupid. I live by this theory! Choose one area and focus on making that the highlight of the party. Stick to a theme or colour. If you're easily overwhelmed by decorating this will help you keep focus.

A **colour theme** is a simple way to bring all elements of decorations together simply and cheaply! Play with more than one colour though - one solid block colour makes it a little too strong on the eye. Having multiple colours that work well will look great and - added bonus, give you more options!



Plastic or paper?



Plastic...not so fantastic!

These days we have so much choice and the opportunity to do better for our environment

Let's bring that into our party decor! Balloons: big no no. Glitter - ugh!

Paper decorations, hell yes! There are some fantastic party sites that specialise in paper decorations. My absolute favourite at the moment is Paper Playground. Their range is divine! Another alternative is fabric. Don't dismiss Spotlight too soon. I love buying some cheap fabric and using and reusing it for parties. A nice double layered tablecloth in your colour choice is so effective, cheap and easy to do.

Fail to plan, plan to fail

Do not spend your weeks wondering what you should do and then turn up the night before and blow your budget. Create a budget (check page 6 or the ultimate party budget) and stick to it. It's so easy to go on a decoration frenzy and throw it all in. A limited budget means you don't end up with a leftover party decoration cupboard (which I may or may not be the not so proud owner of.)

Decorating a party can be simple and budget friendly or it can be elaborate and cost the earth. Either way if you know where to look, what your options are and you make a plan for the event you'll be left with guests who are wowed by the small touches and a feeling of shameful satisfaction!



The Guest List

Who not to offend this year

We know how it goes. Your child wants to invite the whole grade, you want a handful from his class and your entire extended family is waiting on their invite.

So how do you narrow it down?

Choosing guests

Here's where your budget helps! Take a look at your budget and work out how much each guest will cost you. That is the number you give your child.

It's easy to think one or two extra doesn't add up but when you see all the bits that add to the cost of each person you can see how quickly it can blow up.

Avoid add-ons

We all know those parents who like to throw in the younger siblings on the invite.

Avoid these extra guests who can add costs to your catering, prizes and party giveaways by being clear on your invitations.

Outline that invited guests are welcome to be dropped off if guardians don't have suitable care for other siblings (avoid this for Under 4 parties though or you'll have 20 2 yr olds needing you to take them to the toilet!)

Stay firm

Put the weapons down and take off the adult in charge hat for a while. I like to give my child a list with the numbers down the side of the guests attending. They can then write down the names of who they want to invite.

Make sure you don't give this to them too early or there'll be time for negotiations, pleading and begging!

[There's a downloadable template at the end of this document!](#)

Family or Friends

We love our family members. But when you have many of them it's hard to limit numbers or tell your child they have less friends because of more family.

Are they the same age as your child? If yes, tell your child that you get to pick 25% of their list and get your family in. Are they older or younger? They'll understand that they can sit this one out (in fact they might be grateful!)

Your Budget

So why a budget?

A budget ensures your child's party doesn't become the next Oscars.

Use this fully customisable budget to plan out your party. Delete what you like and add what you need.

Don't forget to use it to work out the individual cost of each guest.

[CLICK HERE](#)
[TO MAKE YOUR OWN](#)
[BUDGET AND GET](#)
[STARTED](#)



EVENT NAME					
Categories		Details	\$ Estimated	\$ Actual	\$ Difference
Expenses: Venue					
	Venue Rental				
	Entertainment				
	Equipment Rental				
	Decorations				
	Cleaning				
	Other				
Subtotal					
Expenses: Catering					
	Hot Food				
	Snacks				
	Beverages				
	Cake				
	Plates & Cups				
	Serviettes				
	Other				
Subtotal					
Expenses: Miscellaneous					
	Gift Bags				
	Invitations				
	Prizes				
	Photographer				
	Other				
Subtotal					
Grand Total					

Venue Choice

At home or...

not at home?

PROS

1. You can set everything up at your own pace. Start the day or week before.
2. You know the venue really well so you know what you can do with it
3. It's easy to get to! There are no drives with a car packed, a cake balanced and the balloons shoed into the boot.
4. You have access to your own kitchen for food prep. This can be a huge bonus when serving hot food or having lots of fiddly dishes.
5. Decorating can take on a world of its own!
6. Space! If you do have a super large entertainers yard and a great indoor space you'll be able to rearrange it to suit your needs for the party.
7. Collapse straight at home after it's all done! There's no need to drive back from anywhere and unpack.

CONS

1. Hours of cleaning and preparing the house beforehand
2. Hours of cleaning and packing down after the party
3. Damages - How many times have you seen a toy go through a wall, a lawn become demolished by kids, soft drink and juice poured into the pot plants? The list goes on!
4. You will be serving and hosting so no time to sit and enjoy the party
5. Decorating takes on a world of its own!
6. Space! If you don't have a great space for entertaining you will be spending a huge amount of time rearranging furniture and trying to fit everyone in comfortably.
7. Bathrooms. Not enough. The mess. The mirror! Enough said.
8. Parking. Please tell me you have enough parking for everyone or your front yard is going to get a great workout!

7 Easy Party Foods

What's more fun than party food???

The name speaks for itself! When kids see a party invite they start guessing at what party foods they're going to be getting (it's as if they've been starved for years!)

When trying to plan party foods here are some things to take into consideration:

- **Access** - Do you have a hot kitchen that will allow you to serve hot food?
- **Allergies** - Are there any significant (i.e. read, life threatening) allergies that you have to cater for?
- **Variety**. Remember not everyone wants to pump their kids with 10 versions of sugar. Mixing in some healthy and fun options is a great solution.

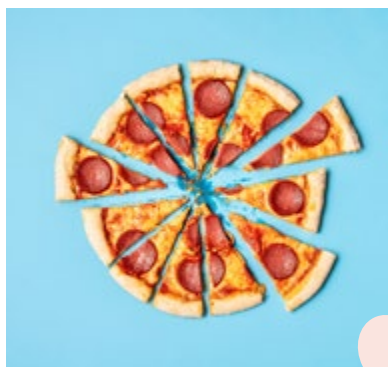


7 Easy Party Foods

Pizza!

Serve it up by the slice or make some pinwheels.

You can also have a pizza making party!



Fairy Bread!

Can this ever go wrong?

Use a sandwich cutter and cut your bread to theme it to your party!



Party Pies (or sausage rolls!)

If you have an oven you have a pie. Simple, easy and loved by all.

Party Popcorn!

Use melted candy to make colourful popcorn.

Perfect to suit any colour theme!



Muffin tin lasagna!

Simple, can be made ahead and oh so good!

Who says no to pasta and cheese?



Hot dogs!

Give them the sausage and tell them to get creative.

You can even theme toppings!



D.I.Y Burger bar!

Get the toppings into some cool plates and get them to make their own.



Fruit Kebabs!

Easy to prep and simple to eat.

Just make sure you get rid of sharp ends for younger kids!

Party Checklist

☐ Budget

- ☐ Download our template and lay out your budget
- ☐ Work out what each guest will cost you

☐ Guest List

- ☐ Use your budget to work out numbers & give your child the Guest List template
- ☐ Confirm all names 4 weeks before party date

☐ Invitations

- ☐ Purchase your invitations online or in store
- ☐ Write out invitations and send 4 weeks before the party. Have a list of RSVPs ready to enter confirmed numbers into
- ☐ Make sure everyone has responded 7 days before the party

☐ Decorations

- ☐ Plan your theme
- ☐ Purchase any decorations at least 1 month before the party. Figure out how you're going to hang them!
- ☐ Purchase fishing wire, blu tack, sticky tape or hooks for the wall.
- ☐ If it's at home - put them up the day before
- ☐ If it's in venue - check to see when you can decorate

☐ Food

- ☐ Create your grocery list
- ☐ Order birthday cake
- ☐ Chop all fruit and veg the day before
- ☐ Make any hot food the day prior and just reheat on the day
- ☐ Purchase all snacks one week prior
- ☐ Purchase cutlery, utensils and serving platters for food
- ☐ Purchase any food cutters that you will use for cutting food and fruit shapes
- ☐ Check and allow for allergies

Party Checklist

☐ Venue

Outside

- ☐ Confirm a venue
- ☐ Check seating and tables
- ☐ Confirm guest numbers 1 week prior

Outside

- ☐ Hire entertainment equipment - jumping castles etc one month prior
- ☐ Clean and tidy all room and bathrooms
- ☐ Mow lawns
- ☐ Rearrange furniture the day before
- ☐ Set up decorations the day before
- ☐ Set out seating
- ☐ Make fridge space
- ☐ Hide the valuables (even items that are only of value to you)
- ☐ Make sure bins are empty and ready

☐ Extras

- ☐ Organise party games
- ☐ Calculate and purchase all prizes for children
- ☐ Purchase items for party bags to gift to attendees
- ☐ Create an agenda for the party
- ☐ Organise music and speaker

Guest List

Downloadable

Enjoy the interactive guest list.

You can...

- Make the list
- Tick off when invites are sent
- Mark out when RSVP's return individual cost of each guest.

It's an easy and simple way to keep track of your numbers.

[CLICK HERE
TO GET YOUR GUEST
LIST TEMPLATE](#)



Guest List				0/4 completed
Invitation		GUEST NAME		RSVPs
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Tick off guest name in Column A once invite has been written		<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Change Guest Name in Column C		<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Sort items using the drop-down arrows next to the heading name (on the web)		<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Use Column D to mark off RSVP's		<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	5			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	6			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	7			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	8			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	9			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	10			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	11			<input type="checkbox"/>