

THANKSGIVING PREP CHECKLIST

1-2 Weeks Before

- Decide guest list & send arrival time + any parking/entry tips.
- Inventory seating: chairs, tables, cushions for comfort.
- Browse the menu and highlight items you'll make vs delegate vs buy.
- Check serving dishes/platters/utensils — are they clean? Enough? Borrow or buy what's missing.
- Buy non-perishables: napkins, paper towels, foil pans, extra trash bags, containers for leftovers.
- Clean and declutter guest spaces: living area, bathrooms, guest room, entryway.
- Pull out table linens, set the table layout (chairs, centerpiece, serving station).
- For the kitchen: clear fridge/freezer/pantry space for extras + set aside containers for leftovers.

1-3 Days Before

- Thaw turkey (or main meat) and check cooking time.
- Chop veggies, dry bread for stuffing, make any early sides.
- Make desserts or at least prepare the base (pies, cookies).
- Set up drink station: ice, cooler, cups/glasses, pitcher, napkins.
- Set "helper" jobs: trash duty, coat rack + guest drinks, last-minute store run if needed.
- Quick house check: vacuum/sweep main areas, wipe high-traffic surfaces, restock guest bathroom (toilet paper, hand soap, towels).
- Pull out serving dishes and label them: "Stuffing," "Green Beans," "Mashed Potatoes" so you'll drop things in the right place.

Morning of

- Preheat oven(s), remove any racks you don't need.
- Set up buffet or serving layout if you're doing self-serve.
- Place apps/snacks out for early visitors (keeps guests happy while you finish main course).
- Shower/dress early — you want to be ready when guests arrive, not still scrambling in the kitchen.
- Refresh/clean bathrooms again, empty trash, wipe surfaces, ensure guest towels are present.
- Put the turkey (or main meat) in the oven or roaster; label what dish goes where; set timers.
- Set music (low-level background) or queue a playlist to keep the vibe warm (and you out of panic mode).
- Check that drink station is stocked and extras (ice, trays, utensils) are ready.

During & After Dinner

- Carve/serve main dish with confidence; delegate someone to refill drinks or clear plates.
- After dinner: move leftovers into containers promptly, label, and store or offer guests to take away.
- Change out trash bags, rinse used serving bowls/pans, start cleanup when guests transition to relaxing.
- Take a breath! Sit down with your guests, enjoy the moment you created.



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