

Celebrate Sustainably

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Email invitations or use social media to invite guests. For printed invitations, make your own or buy ones printed on recycled paper. Encourage RSVPs to help buy the right amount of food and materials to limit waste.

Keep decorations minimal or look for things that can be used again. Old glass jars with flowers make beautiful centerpieces and holiday string lights make any party festive. Use a hole-punch to make your own compostable confetti from flowers or leaves.

Purchase a white cotton fabric table cover and provide fabric markers for guests to sign. Use it every year to create and provide a lifetime of memories.

Opt for reusable cups, plates, napkins, and silverware. Don't have enough of your own? Borrow from family and friends or check out thrift stores and flea markets. Another creative option: ask guests to bring their own supplies.

Buy food with limited plastic packaging. Purchase locally sourced produce and make your own food and desserts to cut down on packaging waste.

Make your own lemonade or punch and serve it in glass pitchers or a punch bowl. Serve water flavored with lemons, oranges, limes, or cucumbers in a drink dispenser instead of single-use plastic water bottles. Remember to compost the fruit afterwards or freeze to use in smoothies.

Pack leftovers in reusable containers and have a plan to use them after the party or send leftovers home with your guests. Use tools like Save the Food's Guestimator (savethefood.com/guestimator) to plan for the right amount of food and to reduce food waste.

Consider useful party favors or prizes. Small jars of locally made honey or jams, reusable water bottles or straws, small plants, and glass jars filled with candy are good options. For a child's party, consider a small craft as an activity that can double as a party favor.

Wrap gifts in newspaper, fabric, or place in gifts bags that can be reused. Make your own gifts or buy from a local artists or business. Gift experiences instead of items.

Provide clearly labeled bins (landfill, recycling, and compost) so that your guests can place items directly where they belong, saving you time after the party. Consider asking someone to monitor the bins to make sure items are placed correctly or sort waste after the party.

