

## Easy Recipe for Throwing a Block Party

*By Bryn, former Cupertino Block Leader*

### Before you start:

I am not the block party throwing type. If you are, skip this section. I assumed throwing a block party would be hard and that no one would show up. First, decide what the worst thing is that could happen. For me, it was that only 3 houses showed up and they all brought dessert. Then come up with a contingency plan. Mine was that we all go out to dinner together and eat dessert at my house afterwards. Now you know the worst case and have a plan anyway. Anything else should be considered success!

### Gather:

Decide on the following. Input from the neighborhood is nice, but since you are the one throwing the party, choose what is convenient for you.

- Date
- Time / lunch or dinner
- Location

### Ingredients:

Minimally, people need to bring food, drinks, paper items, and enough tables to put this stuff on. Here is one simple way of dividing the responsibilities:

- A main dish plus a bottle of soda
- An appetizer or salad plus a bottle of soda
- A dessert plus a bottle of soda
- (100) plates and napkins
- (100) cups and silverware
- A cooler of ice

I also asked people to bring tables. Chairs are nice, but not necessary. Trash bags are also very valuable. I grabbed a couple on my way out the door.

### Steps:

#### **Three-four weeks before**

1. Choose date, time, and location, and get permission from the neighbors whose homes will be impacted.
2. Determine number of paper items needed. I used the following equation:  
(60% Number of houses x 4 people per house)
3. Send email telling people to save the date and to start thinking about what they want to bring.

#### **One-Two weeks before**

4. Flyer the neighborhood. Ask people to begin to RSVP and tell them how (phone, email, etc.).
5. Collect RSVPs. (I posted house number and item to a web page so neighbors themselves could decide what else needed to be brought. That was lower-maintenance for me, but may not be for everyone.)

#### **Week before**

6. Send reminder email. Suggest people bring chairs to sit on.

#### **On the day**

7. Bring a sign-in sheet and pen if you keep track of neighborhood watch numbers for the Sheriff's department. (And something so they won't blow away.) Bring some trash bags, too. I also brought nametags so neighbors could get to know one another.

\*Note: For an extremely low-maintenance block party, just do steps 1, 2, and first half of 4.

Enjoy:

Sit back and relax and watch the party take care of itself!

**Serves 2-2000.**

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