



THE ULTIMATE BABY SHOWER PLANNING GUIDE

7 Steps to a Sweet, Successful Shower

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1. Who, Where, & When

Who is hosting?

Typically a close friend, sister, or relative of the mother-to-be hosts the baby shower. If multiple people want to be a part of the planning process, the host can assign each person a specific detail to organize (decorations, invitations, food, baby shower favors).

A surprise baby shower is a fun idea, but it makes the planning process a little more complicated. The shower should be a joyous event for the mom-to-be and you want to assure she will be happy. There is only one way to know that for sure—you ask her!

If you are determined to throw a surprise baby shower, here are some helpful planning tips:



1. **Find your “go-to” person**— Find the person who is closest to the mom-to-be (i.e. husband, sister, relative, or friend) and let them know what you are planning to do. Make sure they are willing to assist you throughout the planning process.
2. **Choose a date**— Find a time when the mom-to-be will least expect it, but make sure she does not have a prior engagement on that date.
 - Tip: Ask the husband or close friend of the mom-to-be to schedule a lunch date with her on the day you choose—at the location of the shower—which will guarantee the availability of the mom-to-be, and her arrival, without her suspecting a thing!
3. **Create a guest list**— Consult your “go-to” person before creating the guest list and determine who should—or shouldn’t—be invited.
4. **Invitations**— Rather than mailing out written invitations, that might easily be seen by the mom-to-be, call the guests to inform them of the surprise baby shower—this will also make the RSVP much quicker and easier!
5. **Baby Registry**— Ask your “go-to” person to fill out a baby registry online, or at a local baby store, to make it easier for guests to select the proper gift for the mom-to-be.
 - See our list of ‘Top 10 Creative Baby Shower Gifts’ for ideas and inspiration.

6. **Location**— Be sure to tell all of the guests to arrive at least ten minutes early and to park away from the location of the shower—to deter suspicion from the mom-to-be!

Who is Invited? Will the shower be co-ed?



This is a decision that must be made ahead of time—at the discretion of the mother-to-be. Co-ed showers are growing in popularity as baby showers become more family-oriented. The expectant father, soon-to-be grandfathers, uncles, brothers, and male friends will all play an important role in the baby's life, so why shouldn't they be invited to the baby shower? The shower is a joyous occasion that should be seen as a great opportunity to bring friends and family (who probably do not see each other often) together to honor the soon-to-be parents, and celebrate the upcoming birth.

Considerations for your co-ed baby shower:

1. Keep the number of male and female guests as even as possible—you do not want the father to be the only man there.
2. Provide plenty of food and drinks—we all know men love to eat!
3. Choose a “co-ed” theme and keep the décor simple—no frilly stuff!
4. Make sure the couple knows to open the gifts together—which is a good way to bring the men and women together.

Where and When?

Typically the host holds the shower in her own home, but a clubhouse, dining hall, or restaurant can be a great alternative—with an added bonus of no cleanup! Be sure to call your desired location in advance to find out more information on reservations for groups or large parties.



It is best to schedule the baby shower one or two months prior to the expected due date. At that point, the parents-to-be are in need of support from friends and family in the face of the oncoming birth, yet it is early enough to ensure against a surprise delivery in the middle of the shower!

2. Planning the Theme

A baby shower theme is a great way to make the shower extra special! The theme can be anything from a color—signaling the gender of the baby— a special element of the baby’s nursery, an interest or hobby of the mother-to-be, or simply a unique and whimsical idea. Incorporate the theme in every aspect of the shower—including the invitations, decorations, food, and favors!

Sample theme ideas:

- **Baby Ducky Theme**— Coordinate around the color yellow and display fish bowls filled with water and floating rubber ducks along a blue table runner. Set out [baby duck mint party favors](#) for guests to enjoy!
- **Jungle Theme**—Coordinate around colors of the jungle, or use jungle-themed plates, cups, and napkins. Display stuffed jungle animals, as well as big leafy house plants such as ferns or topiary trees.
- **Beach Baby Theme**—Scatter seashells or starfish along a table runner and use sea-themed plates and napkins. Display cylinder vases filled with sand, seashells, tumbled rocks, and colorful gems.
- **Garden Party**—Use floral plates and napkins and display baskets filled with fresh cut flowers tied with colorful ribbon. Set out [plantable baby shower favors](#) for guests to take home to start a garden of their own!



3. The Guest List

Be sure to consult the mother-to-be before finalizing the guest list—unless the baby shower is going to be a surprise. Invitations should include the time and date of the baby shower, the registry information, and any additional information (such as if the shower is going to be a surprise, or if the guests should bring a food or dessert item to the shower). Invitations should be mailed out at least 2 weeks in advance to give the guests ample time to RSVP and buy a baby gift.

Look for affordable [invitations](#) to purchase online, or get creative and make your own baby shower invitations!

Download a free baby shower [invitation template](#) and print out multiple copies on cardstock and decorate the invitations to match your baby shower theme.

- Tip: Print the invitations back to back and cut them in half to create a traditional style folded card.

DIY Baby Shower Invitation Decorating Ideas:

Simple and Easy

- Supplies—8 1/2" by 11" white cardstock or paper, decorative scrapbooking paper, scissors, glue stick, ribbon, stamps or paper punch (optional).
- **Step 1:** Cut out squares of the decorative paper to attach to the front of the invitations. Use the glue stick to apply the square cut-out onto the invitation.
- **Step 2:** Cut a length of ribbon just a little longer than the front of the invitation. Use a glue stick to apply glue to the back of the ribbon and press the ribbon firmly onto the front of the invitation.
- **Step 3:** Use some of the same ribbon to create a little bow. Snip off extra long ends. Apply glue to the back of the bow and attach it to the middle of the piece of ribbon already attached to the invitation.

Tip: Decorate the front of the invitation by adding stamps or paper punches!



“Real” Baby Footprint

- Supplies—8 1/2" by 11" white cardstock or paper, glue, glue runner, glitter, paper plates.
- Step 1: Pour some glue out into the middle of a paper plate. Let it spread out into a puddle.
- Step 2: Take your hand and make a loose fist. Dip the outside edge (opposite of your thumb) into the puddle of glue so you have a semi-

- thin coating on the side of your hand. Now make an imprint of the glue onto your paper. Use your pinky finger to make little toe imprints.
- Step 3: Pour on glitter and dump the excess onto another paper plate to use for next invitation.
 - Tip: Use this same technique with paint or ink pads.

4. Party-Time

People rarely get a chance to indulge in their creative side and inner child, so crafts and games can be a big hit at showers. Consider preparing a special craft to go along with your theme and kick off the shower with a fun game like [Baby Word Search](#) or the [Dirty Diaper Game](#).



Another fun activity is to have each guest address an envelope when they arrive and drop it in a box to register to win a gift basket. At the end of the shower, draw one envelope out of the box and announce the winner of the gift basket. Give the box of pre-addressed envelopes to the grateful mom-to-be as a head start on her thank you cards!

List of Top 10 Baby Shower Games:

1. **Empty the Bottle**— Fill as many 4 oz. baby bottles as you will need with a drink of your choice (water, milk, juice, etc). Give each participant a bottle and time them to see who can “empty the bottle” the fastest!
 - Tip: If you are having a co-ed shower, consider having only the men participate!



2. **The Name Game**—Give the participants a time limit and ask them to write down as many names they can think of that end with a certain combination of letters (such as y, ie, an, nie, mie, etc.) After time is up, have one person stand up and read their list of names aloud. Participants receive 5 points for each name written, unless the name has already been said. The winner with the most points at the end receives a prize.

3. **Baby Food Flavor**— Buy a variety of baby food flavors and put a sample of each flavor on a paper plate with a number written beside it. Give each participant their own plate to test each sample and try to guess the flavor.



Whoever guesses the most flavors correctly wins.

4. **Guess who?**—Collect baby photos of each guest attending the shower (request to have the pictures mailed with the RSVP). Arrange all of the photos onto a board and assign each picture a number. Give each participant a pencil and paper and ask them to write who they think is in each of the pictures. The person with the most correct matches wins.
 - Tip: Use the baby photos as name tags for your guests after the game!
5. **Song Titles, Baby**—Have each participant write down all the songs they can think of that have “baby” in the title. Whoever comes up with the most songs wins.
 - Tip: Make it harder by having a time constraint or state that each participant must also list the name of the person who wrote the song.
6. **Don’t Say Baby**—When the guests arrive, give each of them a beaded necklace and tell them that no-one is allowed to say the word “baby” throughout the duration of the shower. If you hear another guest say “baby”, you get to take their beads. Whoever collects the most beads by the end of the shower receives a prize.
7. **Vertical Name Game**—Ask each participant to write the mother-to-be and father-to-be’s name vertically down a piece of paper. Have them write words that are baby-related, beginning with the letters in each of their names. Whoever has the most words that are the same as what the mom-to-be has written down wins.
8. **Baby Word Scrambler**—Choose a list of baby related items and scramble the spelling of each word. Give each participant a copy of the list of scrambled words and see who can unscramble the most words the fastest.
9. **Guess How Many?**—Fill a baby bottle with small candies like m&m’s or skittles—Don’t forget to count how many you put in! Ask each guest to write down how many candies they think are in the bottle. Whoever guesses closest to the actual number wins—and gets to keep the bottle of candy!
10. **Nursery Rhymes**— Make copies of a list of nursery rhyme titles and have each participant write down the words to each rhyme. Whoever finishes first—with all the correct answers—wins.



5. The Menu

This largely depends on what time of the day you have the baby shower. It is not necessary to serve a meal at the shower, but finger food and cake is to be expected. If you provide light snacks you can splurge on dessert—order a cake from your local bakery and having it decorated to go along your theme!

Another option is for each guest to bring a side item and/or dessert—this is a great idea if the party is going to be co-ed. Be sure to notify the guests of what they should bring in the invitations.

Quick and Easy Finger Food Favorites:

Deviled Eggs

12 hard-boiled eggs
1/2 cup mayonnaise
2 tsp Dijon mustard
2 tbsp scallions, finely chopped
1 tbsp chives, finely chopped
Paprika

Cut the cooked eggs in half, lengthwise. Scoop out yolks and place them in a bowl. Mash the egg yolks with a fork; add mayonnaise, mustard and scallions. Mix well. Spoon yolk mixture into egg halves. If you have a pastry bag with a star-shaped tip, you can pipe the yolks into the whites. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use. Sprinkle with a little paprika before serving.

Cucumber Sandwiches

1 pound of cucumbers
1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
1 1/2 teaspoon mayonnaise
1/8 tsp seasoned salt
1 loaf of bread
parsley sprigs



Cut cucumber in half horizontally. Peel, seed and shred one half of the cucumber. Measure a 1/3 cup of shredded cucumber. Slice the remaining cucumber for garnish. Cut slices in half and set aside. Combine cream cheese, mayonnaise and seasoned salt, mixing until blended. Stir in shredded cucumber. Cut two 2-inch rounds from each bread slice. Spread each bread slice with 1 teaspoon of the cucumber spread. Garnish each sandwich with a thin slice of cucumber and a sprig of parsley. Recipe makes 48 sandwiches.

Smoked Salmon Roll-Ups

4 ounces thinly sliced smoked salmon
4 ounces cream cheese

Bag of Watercress or Arugula
Black pepper
Lemon wedges

Spread cream cheese onto each slice of smoked salmon. Sprinkle with pepper (if desired). Carefully roll up each slice like a jelly roll. Cut rolls into 1/2-inch slices. Chill until ready to serve. Place rolls on a platter with watercress or arugula and lemon wedges.

Delicious Dessert Recipes:

No-Bake Cookies

1 3/4 cups white sugar
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup butter
4 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 cup crunchy peanut butter
3 cups quick-cooking oats
1 teaspoon vanilla extract



In a medium saucepan, combine sugar, milk, butter, and cocoa. Bring to a boil, and cook for 1 1/2 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in peanut butter, oats, and vanilla. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto wax paper. Let cool until hardened.

Butter Cake

1 package yellow cake mix
2 sticks of butter (separately melted)
4 eggs
1 16oz box of confectioner's sugar
1 8oz pkg. cream cheese (softened)
1 tsp. vanilla extract

Preheat Oven to 350. You will need two bowls to mix the cake and the topping. In one bowl, beat the cake mix, 1 stick of melted butter and 2 eggs until well blended and fairly stiff. Press into a 9x13 cake pan.

In another bowl, beat the other stick of melted butter, 2 eggs, sugar, softened cream cheese and vanilla extract until well blended. Pour this mixture over the bottom layer and bake for 40 minutes (or until golden brown top). Let it cool and decorate the top of the cake with frosting, if desired.

Cinnamon Apple Crisp

1 cup firmly packed golden brown sugar
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
3 1/2 pounds Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, sliced
1 cup all purpose flour

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup (2 sticks) chilled unsalted butter, cut into pieces

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Butter 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Combine brown sugar and cinnamon in large bowl. Add apples and toss to coat. Transfer apple mixture to prepared dish. Combine flour, 1 cup sugar, and butter in medium bowl. Using pastry blender (or fingertips), blend ingredients until coarse meal forms. Spread flour mixture evenly over apples. Bake crisp for 20 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350 degrees. Bake crisp until apples are tender and topping is golden brown (about 30 minutes). Let stand 15 minutes before serving.

Baby Shower Punch Recipes:

Raspberry Sorbet Punch

- 4 2-liter bottles of Sprite or 7-Up
- 2 half-gallon containers of rainbow sorbet

Empty first half gallon of sorbet into a punch bowl. Add one two liter bottle of Sprite to the bowl and stir as sorbet melts. Add additional sorbet and Sprite, as needed.



Sweet Punch

- 1 2-liter bottle of Sprite or 7-Up
- 1 64 oz white cranberry juice
- 8 scoops plain vanilla ice-cream
- 1 cup sugar (if desired)

Combine all ingredients in large punch bowl. Add 1 package of blue flavored/colored drink mix for a baby boy and red or pink mix for a baby girl.

Banana Punch

- 1 lg. can pineapple juice
- 1 lg. can frozen orange juice, made according to can directions
- 6 cups water
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 4 cups sugar
- 6 bananas (blended w/part of pineapple juice)
- 3 quarts Ginger Ale

Heat water and sugar until dissolved. Cool. Mix all ingredients except ginger ale. Freeze. Take out 3 hours before serving and combine with Ginger Ale in large punch bowl. (Makes 2 1/2 gallons)

6. Fabulous Favors

Baby shower favors are a great way to show appreciation to your guests for their love and support. Practical party favors are always appreciated, but personalized baby shower favors add a special touch!

Homemade baby shower favors are a great option if you have extra time and are looking to save a little money. Guests will certainly be grateful for the thought you put into your homemade favors— All it takes is a little time and creativity!

A sweet and easy DIY favor idea is to give each guest a plant to take home and grow for themselves. Attach a sweet note like, “keep this plant and nourish me in honor of the soon-to-be baby”!

More homemade favor and craft ideas:

Baby Food Jar Candles

- Supplies: baby powder scented oil, candle wax, pink or blue food wax coloring, candle wicks, empty baby food jars
- Step 1: Melt candle wax—in an old pan.
- Step 2: Add the scented oil and food coloring.
- Step 3: Insert wick in the middle of baby food jar and spoon the hot wax into the jar—Let cool.
- Step 4: Trim wick to appropriate length and put on lid.
 - Tip: Glue a piece of fabric—that goes along with your baby shower theme—on top of the lid for a decorative touch!

Paper Baby Rattles

- Supplies: paper, balloons, water, glue, paint, wooden sticks, candy.
- Step 1: Mix glue and water.
- Step 2: Paint glue onto balloon and stick on paper—let it dry.
- Step 3: Pop balloon and stuff paper ball with candy.
- Step 4: Hot glue a wooden stick on as a handle and patch hole using glue and remaining paper.

Spoon Candy

- Supplies: plastic spoons, cellophane wrap, ribbon, scissors, candy.
- Step 1: Take a plastic spoon and place a small, wrapped piece of candy on the spoon.
- Step 2: Wrap a square piece of cellophane around the top of the spoon, covering the candy, and secure with a piece of ribbon.
 - Tip: Decorate the spoon handle with stickers or glitter glue.

Baby Sock Rose Bouquet

- Supplies: 6 pairs of pastel-colored baby socks, 12 green pipe cleaners, green floral tape, pastel ribbon.
- Step 1: Roll the sock from toe to top cuff (one at a time)
- Step 2: Fold the cuff around one half of the rolled sock to form a petal.
- Step 3: Place a pipe cleaner into the bottom of the flower and wrap tightly with floral tape to hold in place.
- Step 4: Repeat for each baby sock and tie bouquet together with ribbon.

Peas-in-a-Pod—perfect for twins!

- Supplies: green cellophane, small bath bombs (2 per guest), light green ribbon, cardstock.
- Step 1: Roll two bath bombs in a large rectangular piece of cellophane.
- Step 2: Tie each end with green ribbon and attach a small note written on cardstock that says, “Two little peas in a pod”.
 - Tip: Use bath oil beads for a miniature version.

[Shop Baby Shower Favors at Favor Affair](#)



7. The Wrap Up

- Arrange the favors and gifts on a table near the door for guests to pick up on their way out.
- Remind guests to pick up their kitchenware if they brought food.
- Do not hesitate to ask for help with cleaning up—although some guests may graciously volunteer.
- If you find any lost items place them on a table near the door.
- Give the mom-to-be the option of leaving her gifts at your house to be picked up at her discretion, or volunteer to help bring the gifts to her house.

Top 10 Creative Baby Shower Gift Ideas

1. **Professional Photography Session**— Give the new mother a gift certificate for a professional photography session with her newborn—Look for a photographer that offers to take portraits in her home!
2. **Dinner and a Movie**— Put together a gift basket filled with popcorn, candy and a movie— Include a gift certificate to a nearby restaurant that delivers!
3. **Homemade Meals**— Cook and freeze a few of your favorite homemade meals as a quick and easy way for the busy, new mother to provide a nutritious meal for her family to enjoy.
4. **Maid Service**— Lighten the load for the new mom by pre-paying a cleaning service to go and tidy up her home once a week (for a month or two) while she is busy caring for the new baby.
5. **Baby Savings**— Open a savings account for the newborn baby and give the new parents a head start in saving for the baby's future.
6. **Baby Book**— Give the new mom a special baby scrapbook and provide all of the scrapbooking essentials such as craft scissors, double-sided photo tape, glue, and a variety of decorative scrapbooking backgrounds.
7. **Spa Day**— A spa gift certificate (massage, pedicure, manicure, facial, etc) will provide much needed relief and relaxation for the new mom—Include a lovely basket filled with some of her favorite bath products!
8. **Personalized Gifts**— Give the new mom a picture frame with the baby's name engraved, or a frame of the baby's birth announcement, as a sentimental keepsake.
9. **Diapers**— Provide the new mom with a few weeks worth of diapers or give her an adorable [baby shower diaper cake](#). Save a little money on a diaper cake by making your own. [View video on how to make your own.](#)
10. **Baby clothes**— Compile an assortment of baby clothes for each growth phase of the newborn (rather than just the newborn size). Babies grow so quickly and mom will really appreciate this gift in the upcoming months!