

Prom Planning Checklist

A practical planning guide for high school proms, formal dances, junior-senior events, and other school celebrations.

School: _____	Prom Date: _____
Venue: _____	Expected Students: ____
Theme: _____	Ticket Price: \$ _____
Event Lead: _____	Prom Time: _____

4-6 Months Before

- Set the date, start time, end time, and target attendance.
- Choose and reserve the venue; confirm capacity, parking, accessibility, restrooms, and loading access.
- Set the overall budget and ticket-price target.
- Book the DJ/MC and confirm school-appropriate music expectations.
- Choose the prom theme, color palette, and design direction.
- Book photography, photo booth, catering, decor, rentals, and transportation if needed.
- Confirm school rules for guests, dress guidance, bags, re-entry, behavior, and prohibited items.
- Identify the staff member or committee with final event-day authority.

2-3 Months Before

- Begin student promotion and announce ticket-sale dates.
- Finalize food and beverage plans.
- Choose decorations, centerpieces, backdrops, signage, and lighting.
- Plan the prom court, king/queen, or recognition process if applicable.
- Set guest-pass rules and deadlines for non-school guests.
- Create the initial event timeline.
- Determine chaperone staffing and supervision zones.
- Confirm transportation, parking, drop-off, and pickup procedures.

6-8 Weeks Before

- Open ticket sales and track attendance.
- Collect guest forms, permission forms, or identification information if required.
- Give the DJ the event theme, age range, special announcements, and music rules.
- Decide whether students may make song requests directly to the DJ.
- Plan court introduction, crowning, senior recognition, or last dance.
- Finalize the photo backdrop and photography schedule.
- Confirm tables, chairs, linens, dance-floor placement, and venue layout.
- Review first-aid, security, and emergency communication procedures.

3-4 Weeks Before

- Review ticket sales and update the venue, caterer, and vendors.
- Prepare a must-play and do-not-play list if the school uses one.
- Confirm clean edits and standards for questionable lyrics or requests.
- Finalize the court or recognition list and exact name pronunciations.
- Choose walk-up music or cue music for court presentations if desired.
- Finalize decorations and assign setup responsibilities.
- Prepare signage for check-in, coat area, restrooms, photo area, and pickup.
- Confirm raffles, games, giveaways, or special activities.

1 Week Before

- Confirm the final guest count and ticket list.
- Confirm vendor arrival, setup, performance, and breakdown times.
- Finalize the run-of-show and distribute it to staff and vendors.
- Prepare wristbands, stamps, check-in lists, guest lists, or other entry materials.
- Review chaperone assignments and arrival times.
- Confirm court items, crowns, sashes, awards, or presentation materials.
- Prepare an emergency contact sheet for staff and vendors.
- Review dismissal and parent pickup procedures with the event team.

Prom Music & Entertainment

- Use radio-clean or school-approved versions of songs.
- Tell the DJ the school's expectations for lyrical content and requests.
- Share traditions, special dances, court cues, or senior songs in advance.
- Keep participation activities optional and school-appropriate.
- Plan arrival or dinner music at a comfortable conversation level.
- Schedule major announcements so they do not interrupt peak dancing unnecessarily.
- Keep the final 10-15 minutes organized for a smooth ending.

Chaperone & Safety Checklist

- Assign adults to the entrance and check-in area.
- Monitor exits and follow the school's re-entry policy.
- Assign visible adult coverage around the dance floor.
- Monitor hallways, restrooms, stairways, and less-visible areas.
- Keep food and beverage areas supervised.
- Maintain clear walkways and emergency exits.
- Confirm first-aid and emergency-contact procedures.
- Coordinate dismissal so students are not gathering unsupervised outside.

Event Day - Setup

- Open the venue early enough for decor, photography, DJ, and vendor setup.
- Check tables, chairs, linens, lighting, decor, signs, and photo areas.
- Confirm the DJ has a safe setup area and appropriate power.
- Tape down or cover cords that cross walking areas.
- Set up check-in, guest-list, coat, and ticket areas.
- Confirm food and beverage service areas are ready.
- Walk exits, restrooms, hallways, and pickup areas with the chaperone team.
- Test microphones, announcements, music cues, and presentation equipment.

Prom Court / Special Recognition

- Confirm names and order of all students being introduced.
- Double-check name pronunciations with students or staff.
- Decide where students will line up before the presentation.
- Confirm who announces names and who presents crowns, sashes, or awards.
- Choose music cues for entrances or crowning.
- Make sure the photographer knows where the presentation will happen.
- Keep the presentation organized and reasonably brief.
- Take the main court or group photo immediately afterward if practical.

30 Minutes Before Doors Open

- Remove setup clutter, ladders, boxes, and tools.
- Confirm all chaperones are present and know their zones.
- Review emergency procedures and important phone numbers.
- Confirm ticket lists, guest lists, and check-in supplies.
- Check lighting at entrances, hallways, restrooms, and pickup areas.
- Confirm the dance floor and emergency exits are clear.
- Review court presentation and key announcements with the DJ/MC.
- Have one administrator or event lead ready to make final decisions.

During Prom & Dismissal

- Keep entrances and exits supervised.
- Monitor crowd density and address spills or blocked walkways quickly.
- Coordinate announcements through the DJ/MC.
- Keep court presentation and formalities on schedule.
- Take important group photos before students begin leaving.
- Begin pickup reminders early enough to prevent a chaotic ending.
- Make a clear closing announcement before the final song.
- Direct students toward the approved pickup or exit area.
- Keep chaperones in position until students have safely departed.
- Check for phones, coats, bags, gifts, and personal belongings.

Quick Prom Timeline

Time	Activity / Moment	Person Responsible
_____	Vendor / DJ arrival	_____
_____	Setup / sound check	_____
_____	Chaperone meeting	_____
_____	Doors open / check-in	_____
_____	Dinner / social time	_____
_____	Court presentation / crowning	_____
_____	Dancing / special activities	_____
_____	Pickup reminder / last song	_____
_____	Dismissal / cleanup begins	_____

Planning Tip: Prom should feel special without becoming over-programmed. Handle check-in, court presentation, photos, and announcements efficiently, then protect plenty of time for students to dance and enjoy the event.