

Anniversary Party Planning Checklist

A practical guide for milestone anniversaries, vow-renewal celebrations, family gatherings, and special anniversary parties.

Couple: _____	Anniversary: _____ Years
Date: _____	Estimated Guests: _____
Venue: _____	Start Time: _____

8-12 Weeks Before

- Choose the date, time, and approximate party length.
- Set the overall budget.
- Create the guest list.
- Reserve the venue if the celebration will not be held at home.
- Book key vendors: DJ/entertainment, caterer, photographer, photo booth, rentals, or decorator.
- Decide whether the event will be casual, formal, themed, dinner-focused, or dance-focused.
- Choose whether a vow renewal, blessing, or short ceremony will be part of the event.
- Select a color palette or theme that fits the couple and milestone.

6-8 Weeks Before

- Send invitations or save-the-dates.
- Confirm food and beverage plans.
- Order cake or desserts.
- Begin gathering old photographs, wedding pictures, family photos, and meaningful keepsakes.
- Decide whether to create a slideshow or memory video.
- Choose special songs, including the couple's original first-dance song if known.
- Plan speeches, toasts, or family tributes.
- Arrange tables, chairs, linens, and other rentals if needed.

3-4 Weeks Before

- Review RSVPs and follow up with guests who have not responded.
- Finalize the menu.
- Confirm decorations, centerpieces, flowers, balloons, signage, or backdrop.
- Decide how photographs and memories will be displayed.
- Choose the couple's entrance song, anniversary dance song, and any family-dance songs.
- Prepare a must-play and do-not-play list for the DJ.
- Choose who will give speeches or toasts.
- Plan a group family photo while most guests are still present.

1-2 Weeks Before

- Give the venue and vendors an updated guest count.
- Confirm vendor arrival, setup, performance, and breakdown times.
- Finalize the event timeline.
- Finish and test any slideshow or video presentation.
- Prepare speeches, readings, trivia, or anniversary games.
- Confirm cake delivery or pickup.
- Prepare framed photographs, memory-table items, guest book, and card box.
- Create a list of final balances, gratuities, or payments due.

Special Anniversary Moments to Consider

- Recreate the couple's original first dance.
- Play the couple's wedding song or songs from the year they were married.
- Invite children or grandchildren to give a short tribute.
- Display the original wedding photo, invitation, or wedding-day keepsakes.
- Create a 'Then & Now' photo display.
- Show a slideshow of the couple's life together.
- Have guests write favorite memories or advice in a memory book.
- Hold an anniversary dance recognizing the longest-married couples in attendance.

2-3 Days Before

- Confirm the final headcount.
- Check the weather if any part of the event is outdoors.
- Organize all decorations, signs, photos, keepsakes, favors, and supplies.
- Charge phones, cameras, speakers, or other personal electronics.
- Confirm who is transporting the cake, gifts, decor, photo displays, and special items.
- Share the final timeline with family members and vendors who need it.
- Prepare a small event-day emergency kit.

Party Day - Before Guests Arrive

- Allow enough time for setup without rushing.
- Set up the welcome area, guest book, card box, and photo displays.
- Check tables, linens, centerpieces, decorations, and signage.
- Prepare the cake and dessert area.
- Test slideshow or video equipment.
- Confirm microphones, music, speeches, and announcements with the DJ/MC.
- Make sure the couple knows the approximate timing of special moments.
- Keep walkways, exits, and the dance floor clear.

During the Celebration

- Welcome the couple or introduce them formally if desired.
- Allow time for guests to socialize before formal activities begin.
- Coordinate meal service, speeches, cake, photos, and entertainment.
- Keep speeches and formalities meaningful but not overly long.
- Take the group family photo before guests start leaving.
- Invite the couple to share a special dance.
- Recognize children, grandchildren, close friends, or family if appropriate.
- Leave plenty of open time for conversation, dancing, and enjoying the celebration.

Before the Event Ends

- Make any final announcement, last dance, or anniversary send-off.
- Collect gifts, cards, photographs, guest books, and keepsakes.
- Confirm cleanup responsibilities with the venue.
- Check for phones, coats, chargers, decorations, and personal items.
- Pack remaining cake or food if permitted.
- Make sure all rented decor or equipment is accounted for.

Quick Anniversary Party Timeline

Time	Activity / Moment	Person Responsible
_____	Guest arrival / social time	_____
_____	Couple entrance / welcome	_____
_____	Meal / refreshments	_____
_____	Speeches / family tributes	_____
_____	Slideshow / memory presentation	_____
_____	Cake / anniversary toast	_____
_____	Special dance / dancing	_____
_____	Final announcement / last dance	_____

Planning Tip: The most memorable anniversary parties focus less on filling every minute and more on telling the couple's story. Photos, music, family memories, a few meaningful speeches, and time together often make the strongest impression.