6 MONTHS OR MORE BEFORE THE GRADUATION PARTY:

_____ choose a place and book it (home, outside, restaurant, recreational facility)
_____ choose a date (same day as graduation ceremony, weekday, weekend)
_____ choose a time
_____ send save the date cards after you pick a date
_____ decide on how long you want the graduation party – 2 hours or all evening
_____ decide on how big of a graduation party; how many guests to invite
_____ decide if you want to combine graduation party with another friend/relative
_____ start making an invitation list (you can start with your holiday list)
_____ look for pictures to make a photo board and slideshow
_____ start collecting memorabilia (certificates, awards, newspaper clippings)
_____ start assembling scrapbooks and photo boards
_____ look for songs to add to the graduation slideshow
_____ decide on what type of food
_____ contact caterers
_____ get house repairs done
_____ decide how much you want to spend; set a budget
_____ decide if you want music or a band
6–8 WEEKS BEFORE THE PARTY:

_____ start purchasing food & beverages, water, pop, liquor, beer
_____ purchase decorations and other supplies
_____ purchase paper plates, plastic silverware, napkins
_____ rent tables, chairs, tents, linens
_____ order invitations
_____ order or make directional cards
_____ make a hotel list for out of town guests
_____ decide who to invite to graduation party and graduation ceremony
_____ finish guest list and addresses
_____ ask a friend to help
_____ pick out music – iPod
_____ order thank you notes
_____ buy stamps
_____ buy return address labels
_____ buy cards and gifts for your graduate and friends
_____ find a place for your pet
_____ finish scrapbooks and photo boards

3-4 WEEKS BEFORE THE PARTY:

_____ mail invitations

_____ if you want an RSVP, include your phone number and email address
_____ order cake
_____ clean house
_____ get lawn ready
_____ find party outfit for you

WEEK OF THE PARTY:
_____ order flowers to pick up the day of
_____ make sure camera is ready; buy extra batteries
_____ shop for last minute supplies
_____ gather crock pots, coolers and supplies to get ready
_____ instruct helpers
_____ pick up food and beverages
_____ wrap gifts for your graduate and friends
_____ confirm delivery of rental equipment
_____ talk to your graduate about your expectations during the party
_____ ask friend if they will take pictures throughout the party so that you can visit

1 DAY PRIOR:
_____ decorate
_____ set up tables for decorations
_____ start getting coolers ready
_____ sweep the front entryway, driveway and garage, if you are using it
DAY OF THE PARTY:

_____ pick up cake
_____ pick up flowers
_____ pick up balloons
_____ get ice
_____ get coolers ready
_____ hang balloons outside
_____ put sign outside
_____ hang banner outside
_____ take your pet to a friend/kennel
_____ set out trash and recycling boxes
_____ set up tables and chairs
_____ give your graduate a big hug and let the celebration begin
_____ take pictures of everyone as they come in the door with the graduate

AFTER THE PARTY:

_____ clean up – have plenty of large trash bags
_____ pay caterer and rentals
_____ send thank you cards within 2 weeks
_____ collect photos and save in photo album for good memories