

Thanksgiving Planning Guide:

Karen's Hosting Notes

Leftovers kit:

Set out take-home containers with lids, a roll of labels or blue tape, and a marker. Keep foil and zip bags nearby so packing goes fast. A thoughtfully assembled leftovers kit also makes a wonderful host or hostess gift.

Serving game plan:

Match each platter with its utensil now and keep platters in service order. Small sticky notes save time.

Water and ice:

Fill a few pitchers and chill sparkling water. If fridge space is tight, use a cooler with [gel packs](#).

Allergies and preferences:

Set a small card by any dish that's gluten-free, nut-free, or dairy-free.

Trash and recycling:

Empty bins before guests arrive and line with extra bags at the bottom for quick changes.

Kids and pets:

Keep breakables out of reach and set a simple kid plate (rolls, veggies, fruit) so parents can relax.

Music and lights:

Start a short playlist and dim the lights 15 minutes before serving to set the mood.

Timing cushion:

Plan a 15-minute buffer before serving. Light candles, turn on music, and take a breath.

Accept help:

When someone offers, say yes and give a clear, small task like slicing bread, pouring water, or carrying plates. It lightens the load and keeps the day moving.

