



Barbecue Prep List

The Grill

If you didn't clean it after your last barbecue, give yourself plenty of time to clean it before your guests arrive. Make sure you have plenty of charcoal briquettes or propane. Remember it takes about 30 minutes for charcoal to get to the best cooking temperature so set up your grill and get the charcoals hot before your guests arrive.

Make sure you have all of the necessary barbecuing utensils, and remember to include a tall cup of water in case you have "flare-ups" and a meat thermometer. Use separate utensils for raw and cooked meats.

Practice food safety and don't leave food out of the refrigerator for longer than half an hour, and don't leave food in the sun. Keep things cold or hot with proper methods (ice, cold packs, warmers to keep food hot, etc.).

The Menu

Planning ahead means a single trip to the market to get all the items for your BBQ menu. Remember to consider allergies and vegetarian food options when you're making your menu. Here are some food allergy printables you might like to use. Include plenty of drink options. It's always a good idea to have a selection of non-alcoholic, alcoholic beverages, and plenty of cold water to drink. Put out a cooler or bucket with ice, and let guests serve themselves.

The day before you will want to prepare your marinades, salads, sauces, and cook your desserts. Desserts don't have to be fancy. Serving ice cream and fresh fruit platters bought from the store are always a nice treat. Of course, you could serve your best loved dessert, or grilled fruit (with whipped topping) too (smile).

Comfort

Make sure you have enough seating, or areas to sit comfortably and enjoy the meal. Create as many shaded areas as possible to accommodate your guests. Make sure you have trash and recycle receptacles easy to find, but keep them away from your eating areas. Set up a buffet/drinks table to let guests help themselves. My favorite thing is to set up a burger bar stocked with traditional and not so traditional burger condiment options, it's an easy way to satisfy all of your guests favorites.

Decorate

Fresh flowers and festive lighting are always helpful for setting the mood if your barbecue will continue into the evening. Citronella plants and/or bug off spray are essential for evening barbecues too.

Music and Entertainment

If you plan to have music playing be considerate of your neighbors with volume and evening in mind. Plan fun games for your guest, charades and drawing games are fun for all ages.

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