

A Housewarming Party

From Donna Pilato, Your Guide to Entertaining.
Part 1: Hosting the Grand Tour During Your Party

Moving into a new home ranks among the more exciting events in life. It's definitely time to break out the bubbly and celebrate. It can also be stressful if you're moving away from friends and family. In either case, holding a housewarming party is a good way to welcome new and old friends to your home.

Some people host a housewarming to show off their new, or newly renovated, home to old friends. In the case where the move is to a distant location, a housewarming can be used as a way to meet the new community. Finally, in some cases, family or neighbors bring the housewarming party to the new homeowner as a way of welcoming him.

If you're hosting your own party, you don't need to wait until your home is in perfect shape or until everything is unpacked. People understand that it takes a long time to get settled, and they're more curious to see what the house looks like than critical of the naked windows that don't have custom curtains hung yet.

The good news is that despite all the busyness of your move, a housewarming can be a relatively informal and simple event. Your home is the main attraction so you don't need to plan lots of activities to keep your guests amused. They will be far more interested in touring your house than in playing party games at this time. The only game that might be useful is a simple icebreaker to introduce old friends to new neighbors. In fact, housewarmings are sometimes the only way old neighbors get to see each other with the hectic schedules we all live.

Tips for a Successful Housewarming

Invitations

When you issue invitations to this party, [giving good directions](#) will be very important. After all, this is the first time many of your family and friends will be visiting your new home.

Housewarmings are often casual events. You can issue an "open house" invitation stating a date with a range of hours that guests are invited to drop by. Formal invitations are unnecessary.

Tours

As I mentioned earlier, tours of your new home are the main event. Therefore, you should have a plan for handling them.

- If you plan to conduct the tours, you'll need someone to act as host, answering the door, welcoming your guests, and making them comfortable until the next tour begins.

- You can assign a close friend or family member to act as tour guide for you.
- You can allow guests to give self-guided tours. In that case, you might want to give your guests a floor plan of your home. Label each room with its name, purpose and any interesting details you'd like to show off.
- If you've made extensive renovations to your home, post a "before" picture outside each room. You could also post pictures taken of the rooms while under construction. People love to see the magical transformation.
- This is one occasion where, if cleaning is one of your priorities, you should clean all of your rooms. Ignore this suggestion if your party is taking place while your boxes are still packed. Then anything goes!

Part 2 - Other Details for Your Party and The Menu

Food

Since guests will be walking about and inspecting your home during your housewarming party, this is an ideal situation for casual, finger foods. Serve different choices in each room. Then, as they discover your rooms, there will be edible surprises as well.

Gifts

Do not expect gifts. Although gifts are customary, they should never be expected. The good wishes of your friends should be enough.

On the other hand, if you will be a guest at a housewarming and are looking for gift ideas, visit Interior Decorating Guide Glenna Morton for [gift suggestions](#).

Decorations

Special party decorations are unnecessary. You don't want to detract from the features of your new home. A few cheery floral arrangements will be more than enough to gild the lily.