Thanksgiving Hosting Countdown

A week-by-week plan that won't wear you out

Four Weeks Out | Oct. 29 – Nov. 4

- [ ] Settle the guest list and headcount
- [ ] Write a short menu
- [ ] Give guests specific dishes to bring
- [ ] Order a fresh turkey, turkey breast, or pre-cooked meal
- [ ] Count chairs and tables; borrow or rent extras

Three Weeks Out | Nov. 5 – 11

- [ ] Make two shopping lists: things that keep, and fresh items
- [ ] Check roasting pan, carving knife, gravy boat, meat thermometer
- [ ] Label a serving dish for every recipe with a sticky note
- [ ] Replace old spices and baking supplies

Two Weeks Out | Nov. 12 – 18

- [ ] Do the big shop for everything that keeps
- [ ] Buy a frozen turkey (1 lb per person, 1½ lb for leftovers)
- [ ] Freeze make-ahead items: pie crust, rolls, cranberry sauce, stock
- [ ] Clean only the rooms guests will use

Thanksgiving Week | Nov. 19 – 25

- [ ] Move turkey to the fridge to thaw (about 24 hours per 4–5 lb)
- [ ] Mon./Tue.: buy fresh groceries
- [ ] Tue.: chop vegetables and set the table
- [ ] Wed.: assemble casseroles, bake pies, thaw freezer items
- [ ] Wed. evening: easy dinner and an early night

Thanksgiving Day | Thursday, Nov. 26

- [ ] Write a timeline working backward from dinnertime
- [ ] Let the turkey rest 30 minutes while sides finish in the oven
- [ ] Hand out jobs: water glasses, carving, cleanup
- [ ] Sit down for 20 minutes once the turkey is in
- [ ] Enjoy the meal and the company

Buying the pie is not cheating.