

HOW TO THROW A BLOCK PARTY

Block parties are great opportunities for neighbors to interact with one another and welcome new neighborhood residents. These social gatherings usually take place on the street or in a nearby park where adults and kids can enjoy food, games, and conversations with their neighbors.

1. **CHOOSE A DATE.** Before party planning begins, get together with other interested neighbors to discuss possible dates that work for everyone. As a general rule, plan around holidays and other big events to avoid conflicts with other commitments. Plan the party far enough in advance so people can put it on their calendars and you have enough time to organize a successful event. It is also important to plan a rain date in case of bad weather.
2. **CHOOSE A LOCATION.** This step may seem obvious since block parties are typically held in the street. Remember, you want an area safe for children to play. Select an area near grass and away from busy streets so adults can relax, socialize, and enjoy the block party experience.
3. **CONTACT STREET 'N' GREET.** Consider reserving the Street 'N' Greet Block Party Trailer by submitting a reservation request at www.cityofames.org/trailer. Here you will find additional information regarding the reservation process, trailer guidelines, and more.
4. **WHAT TO BRING.** The group organizing the block party should also discuss what each household should bring and what your party-planning group will provide. This will be made easier should you decide to utilize the Street 'N' Greet Block Party Trailer filled with tables, chairs, games, and more. Encourage families to bring their own games and activities, such as badminton/volleyball set, a croquet set, or anything that can be enjoyed by a large group of friends. When it comes to food, a potluck meal may be the best choice. Have each family bring their own grill food or sandwiches and a salad, casserole, or dessert to be shared with others. To avoid double dishes, ask each household to choose a dish when they RSVP.
5. **INVITATIONS.** An invitation/flyer template for you to customize for your event is available at www.cityofames.org/trailer. If you create your invitations/flyers, make sure to include the following information: who (neighborhood contact for RSVP), what (to bring), where (street or park location), and when (date and time). Also provide the name and phone number or email of the contact person for the event, and a rain date in case of inclement weather. Not sure who to invite? Go to www.cityofames.org, select the Living tab, and select Neighborhoods to find a map of neighborhood associations. Use the neighborhood boundaries as a general guide for your invitation list. Deliver the invitations to each household a month in advance so residents can put the date on their calendars. This face-to-face interaction will also help make the invitation more personal and effective, rather than receiving a random flyer.
6. **DAY OF THE EVENT.** Set up your decorations, grills, etc., about an hour ahead of time so when neighbors show up you can welcome them to the event.