

# Hosting Gatherings or Cook-Outs During the COVID-19 Pandemic

[Recommendations from the CDC](#)



## Remind guests to stay home if they are sick

- Remind invited guests to stay home if they have been exposed to COVID-19 in the last 14 days or are showing COVID-19 symptoms. Anyone who has had close contact with a person who has COVID-19 should also stay home and monitor their health. Invited guests who live with those at higher risk should also consider the potential risk to their loved ones.
- Consider keeping a list of guests who attended for potential future contact tracing needs.

## Encourage social distancing

- Host your gathering outdoors, when possible. If this is not feasible, make sure the room or space is well-ventilated (for example, open a window).
- Arrange tables and chairs to allow for social distancing. People from the same household can be in groups together and don't need to be 6 feet apart – just 6 feet away from other families.
- If planning activities for adults and/or kids, consider those where social distancing can be maintained, like sidewalk chalk art or frisbee.
- When guests arrive, minimize gestures that promote close contact. For example, don't shake hands, do elbow bumps, or give hugs. Instead wave and verbally greet them.

## Wear cloth face coverings

- Wear cloth face coverings when less than 6 feet apart from people or indoors.
- Consider providing face coverings for guests or asking them to bring their own.

## Clean hands often

- Consider providing hand sanitizer in addition to clearly marked hand washing areas.

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds when entering and exiting social gatherings. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Make sure there is adequate soap or hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol available in the restrooms and encourage guests not to form a line at the door. Consider also providing cleaning supplies that allow guests to wipe down surfaces before they leave.
- Remind guests to wash their hands before serving or eating food.
- Use single-use hand towels or paper towels for drying hands so guests do not share a towel.

### Limit the number of people handling or serving food

- Encourage guests to bring their own food and drinks.
- Limit people going in and out of the areas where food is being prepared or handled, such as in the kitchen or around the grill, if possible.
- If serving any food, consider identifying one person to serve all food so that multiple people are not handling the serving utensils.
- Use single-use options or identify one person to serve sharable items, like salad dressings, food containers, and condiments, so that multiple people are not handling the items.

### Limit contact with commonly touched surfaces or shared items

- Use touchless garbage cans or pails.
- Use gloves when removing garbage bags or handling and disposing of trash. Wash hands after removing gloves.
- Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and any shared items between use when feasible.
- If you choose to use any shared items that are reusable (e.g., seating covers, tablecloths, linen napkins), wash, clean, and sanitize them after the event.

**SOURCE:** "Personal and Social Activities." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/personal-social-activities.html>. Accessed on July 13, 2020.

For up-to-date information on the Coronavirus/COVID-19 visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).