



Tips for Planning Your Next Team Party

You've Decided to Have a Team Party... Now What?

Your team's season is over, so it's time to celebrate. Before the festivities, a few things need to be set...

- Budget – Remember to include the cost of food, venue and awards. Collecting the money from the rest of the team earlier in the season will help you set your budget.
- Venue – Outdoor parks, a teammate's house, pizza parlors or other local restaurants are all great locations for a party. Remember that restaurants get booked, so reserve your spot early!
- Date and time – Most parties are held at the end of the season to celebrate your team's accomplishments. Talk to the coaches about their preferences. Communicate the date of the event to other parents as soon as possible.
- Order Awards – Make sure to order age appropriate awards depending on the skill level of your players. Don't forget special awards for coaches and team parents as well.

Ensure a Fun Time for the Team

Parties are for fun and in celebration of the team's accomplishments. A great way to do that is to make sure each team member receives a personalized trophy, medal, or award. Order these awards at least two weeks prior to your party. Recognize everyone on the team – everyone contributes something – time, energy, and/or enthusiasm. Find at least one positive contribution from each team member and recognize the individual appropriately.

Coaches, assistants and team parents also deserve recognition. Picture plaques, coach's bobblehead trophies, or engraved mugs are available from Issaquah Trophy & Awards. Gift certificates, signed team balls, or hats also make great coaches' gifts.

It's not a party unless there's plenty to eat and drink. The food can be as simple or as fancy as you like. Many teams will hold a potluck at the park after their last game. Have everyone contribute by bringing cookies, brownies, napkins, or beverages. Alternatively, pizza at your local parlor is a popular option. You're only limited by your imagination.

Avoiding Common Party Problems

- Provide plenty of time to order and receive the awards. A little planning will help you stay within your budget and minimize stress. You'll also save on shipping and rush order fees. Please allow at least **two to three weeks** for your order to be completed.
- Remember to create appropriate, personalized text for the awards before placing your order. Confirm the spelling of each player's name. You don't want to order an award for "John Smith" when his name is "Jon Smith."
- Reserve your venue early: Many popular party spots, such as the neighborhood pizza parlor, get booked quickly with team parties. Check the calendar and call ahead to reserve your team's space at the beginning of the season.

Planning for the team party should be fun, because after all, the point of the party is to celebrate the team and its accomplishments!

I am thankful for the mess to clean after a party because it means I have been surrounded by friends. ~Nancie J. Carmody