



EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST

For Starters

- ❑ **DATE/TIME** Have a few options in mind.
- ❑ **HEAD COUNT** Have a rough estimate of how many attendees you're planning to host.

Location

- ❑ **COMPARE** Have a couple of locations in mind to compare benefits, amenities and pricing.
- ❑ **SETUP** Decide how your event room should be arranged. **Click here** to see examples of configurations. Are there any special accessibility needs?
- ❑ **STAYING OVERNIGHT** Note whether you'll need sleeping rooms. If so, how many rooms and for how many nights?

Food & Beverages

- ❑ **STYLE OF FOOD/SERVICE** Decide what type of food you want to serve and in what style (e.g., banquet, buffet, waiter service). Looking to reduce food waste and provide healthier options?
Learn more about Hilton Worldwide's Mindful Eating options.
- ❑ **QUANTITY OF MEALS** How many meals will you provide? Breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack, reception, networking event, etc.?
- ❑ **RESTRICTIONS** Do guests have special dietary requirements? Vegetarian, gluten-free, etc.?
- ❑ **ALCOHOL** Decide what type of alcohol you want to serve, if any, and in what style (e.g., open bar, cash bar or waiter service).
- ❑ **DÉCOR** Do you need flowers, special linens or other decorations? The hotel may obtain these for you, but first, find out about the hotel's decoration guidelines (e.g., decorations often cannot be hung or taped to hotel walls). The hotel also should have a list of preapproved vendors that understand their guidelines.

Technology

- AUDIO/VISUAL** Will you need a conference phone, DVD player, projector or screen?
- WIFI** What degree of WiFi will you need? Enough to check email and surf the web? Or enough to stream videos and movies? Do you need one connection or several for all attendees?

Before You Book

- REFERENCES** Request at least two references from the hotel and check them out before signing a contract.
- SITE VISIT** If possible, do a site inspection. If you're planning from out of town, ask the hotel to send you pictures or video of the venue.
- BUDGET** Revisit your budget to make sure that the details of your event are covered. Is there anything you need to add before you book?
- CONTACT NAME** Establish your assigned hotel contact for the day of your event.

Understanding the Contract

- POLICIES** Understand the cancellation, guarantee and attrition policies.
 - **Cancellation** The last day that you can cancel your event and the date at which a penalty can be charged.
 - **Guarantee** The exact count of attendees to be served food and beverages.
 - **Attrition** If the amount of sleeping rooms or catering turns out to be less than what you reserved, the hotel may charge liquidated damages for nonperformance.
- GRATUITY/SERVICE CHARGE** Review the hotel's gratuity and service charge policy and factor that into your budget.
- FORMS** Be sure you've read the BEO (Banquet Event Order) in detail. Ask questions about anything that's unclear, as this is a legal document.

Need help with unfamiliar hotel terminology? Check out our [Glossary](#).