



WINNING TIPS for **Entertaining Outdoors** with Utmost Style



The sun is shining bright and the temperatures are steadily rising. Summer is here — bringing with it the opportunity to achieve the title of “Best Host Ever”, effortlessly! Invite your nearest and dearest and enjoy the outdoors in comfort and style. Check out these simple and winning tips on how to transform your backyard, patio or deck into a memorable and fun summer soiree. Your guests will be left wondering if they will be invited back next summer...

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Deep in the heart of Texas, summer is upon us. The sun’s brilliant rays are painting us with warmth and a promise of the season to come. Invite your closest friends and enjoy the outdoors in comfort and style. Discover some simple and winning tips on how to transform the goods in your backyard into a memorable and fun summer soiree, without breaking the bank or spending an abundance of time.

Create a relaxing and comfortable oasis

Close your eyes and picture how your outdoor getaway should look ... and feel. Make the space yours and glorify it. Perhaps it’s a private affair, away from the peering eyes of your neighbors. Most importantly, ensure that your guests will be comfortable and relaxed in your backyard, and having loads of fun. Your backyard should reflect your style and become a welcoming extension of the rest of your beautiful home. Vibrant chair cushions in colors that cool you down, such as blues and greens, provide comfort to those who want to relax and kick back. Your goal is to make the word “hot” never come to mind while you’re entertaining your guests.



Shade brings relief from the heat and sun

Splash your backyard with color and cheer, while at the same time, arming your backyard with necessary shade. A pretty umbrella provides much-needed shade and defines your outdoor space. Beautiful outdoor curtains are a great and inexpensive way to add some privacy and shade, and combined with sunshades or canopy designs create spectacular and cozy outdoor rooms for dining and entertaining. Homemade sunshades and canopy designs can be made in square, circle, oval, rectangle or triangle shapes. Just add grommets or D-rings to curtains, sunshades and canopy designs for mounting them to wood structures, fences or trees.



Six patio chairs...is that enough? You may find yourself scratching your head and panicking if you realize you invited 25 guests and you only own six patio chairs. Don't fret. Do you have any poufs, bean bags or ottomans lying around the house? Place one outside for that guest who likes

to laze. Folding chairs can be purchased quite cheaply and you can also spread some nice quilts under a tree to create that picnic-style effect.



Don't let bugs crash your party

Don't forget to snub mosquitos and bugs by getting a bug-repellent gadget for your yard, offering guests bug wipes and using a wire-mesh colander to cover and protect bowls and platters of food. Drop by your local hardware store and invest in a bug lantern, which attracts bugs and zaps them dead. Try Tiki torches as another fabulous option. Geraniol and citronella candles add ambiance, and they're affordable, effective and have a lovely, pleasant scent.



Keep your drinks cold and refreshing

How about color-coded drink buckets? Put red wine in red buckets and white wine in white buckets to avoid confusion. Keep soft drinks and water bottles crisp and cold in coolers, and that cooler doesn't have to be enormous in size either. You know what your guests will love? A big pitcher filled with something tasty and completely refreshing. For something sweet and tasty...try [bubbly strawberry mojitos](#) for the ideal summer cocktail. It's easy to prepare before your guests arrive. Do you like the idea of a Bloody Mary on a warm day? Yes, please. Effortlessly create an incredible smoky and spicy mix, and don't forget savory garnishes like pepperoni, olives and baby dill pickles, to name a few. Learn [here](#) how to make this amazing Bloody Mary cocktail for a complete sensory experience. You may be reading this and already coming up with some more great drink ideas, but did you think about where all the drinks should go during your fabulous party? Think mobile drink station! Set up an appetizer cart filled with your favorite cocktails and nibbles like chips and dip, roasted nuts and edamame.



Crowd feeders that completely satisfy

Keep it simple, but go beyond hamburgers and hot dogs unless kids are coming to enjoy the party, too. The summer beckons color, so go for a Caprese salad...everyone will love the fresh herbs and the juicy heirloom tomatoes. It can be the perfect and complementary dish for your BBQ. Need a quick and healthy appetizer idea? Whip up an avocado-corn salsa in minutes. This bright salad mixes some of summer's favorites — corn, avocado, and tomatoes — for a tasty dip that's always a huge success. Who likes the sound of Brazilian grilled flank steak? Most everyone will, unless they're a vegetarian. [Try this simple recipe](#) for a healthy way to prepare steak. Then comes dessert. Popsicles are some of the best things about summer. [Check out these easy recipes](#).



Music lovers!

Your smartphone can become the ultimate party DJ when partnered with the right portable speaker and a rockin' playlist. And encourage all your guests to play DJ, young or old.



Beautify your table

Table clothes can blow in the wind. Use table mats. There are ample options to choose from — lace to inexpensive bamboo place mats to add some luxury. Keep centerpieces low key and you can even use clippings from your yard to make a casual garland.



Have fun!

We encourage you to try some of these tips when you're planning your next outdoor party. We believe at least one of your guests, if not all, will think you're the best host ever! The sun is a burst of magic, so get out there and enjoy the summer and entertaining outdoors.