

Your Outdoor Event Planning Checklist

Find the perfect outdoor venue

Tour the venue prior to the event and plan accordingly!

- Photo ops
- Landscaping elements,
- Topography (hills, low areas, etc.)
- Ask the location manager for tips on layout

Get the right permits

Research required permits from the town or city. These may include:

- Food & beverage
- Zoning
- Gathering

Consider accessibility

Your outdoor event should be as accessible as possible for everyone present, including those with disabilities.

- Ensure adequate parking with extra space
- Accessible pathways for people with mobility issues
- Clear lighting and signage
- ADA-compliant portable restrooms

Source the right equipment

Equipment needs depend on your planned activities, but common needs include:

- A/V equipment
- Access to appropriate outlets
- Tables & chairs
- Tents
- Ambient lighting

With warmer weather right around the corner, you may be considering taking your next event outdoors. To ensure you are always set up for success, we've made an easy to reference outdoor event planning checklist.

Be smart about catering

Outdoor events create some challenges for catering, so be sure to consult with your caterer!

- Opt for buffet or stations over plated entrees
- Ensure food will be easy to eat if guests are standing and mingling
- Be prepared to maintain food temperatures
- Choose menu items that are weather appropriate
- Don't allow food to sit out for long periods of time

Ensure your attendees can be comfortable

With an outdoor event, you need to account for bathrooms early in the process.

- Plan where portable toilets should be placed
- Determine how many you need based on number of guests
- For indoor bathrooms, plan for wayfinding

Plan for weather

Unfortunately, no matter how meticulous you plan, inclement weather is always a possibility.

- Consider reserving a backup indoor location
- Set up tents for sun and rain protection
- Assess the terrain and ground & advise on dress code
- Provide fans or portable heaters for extreme temperatures

Don't forget, we're here to help!

If this outdoor event planning checklist seems like a lot of responsibility, that's because it is! But St. Bonaventure is here to help!