

“Hard work is often the easy work you did not do at the proper time.”  
Bernard Meltzer

Preparing a holiday dinner can be a fun and rewarding (and stressful) event. A lot of work can go into figuring out the attendees, planning for the menu, purchasing the ingredients, decorating the house... the list goes on and on!

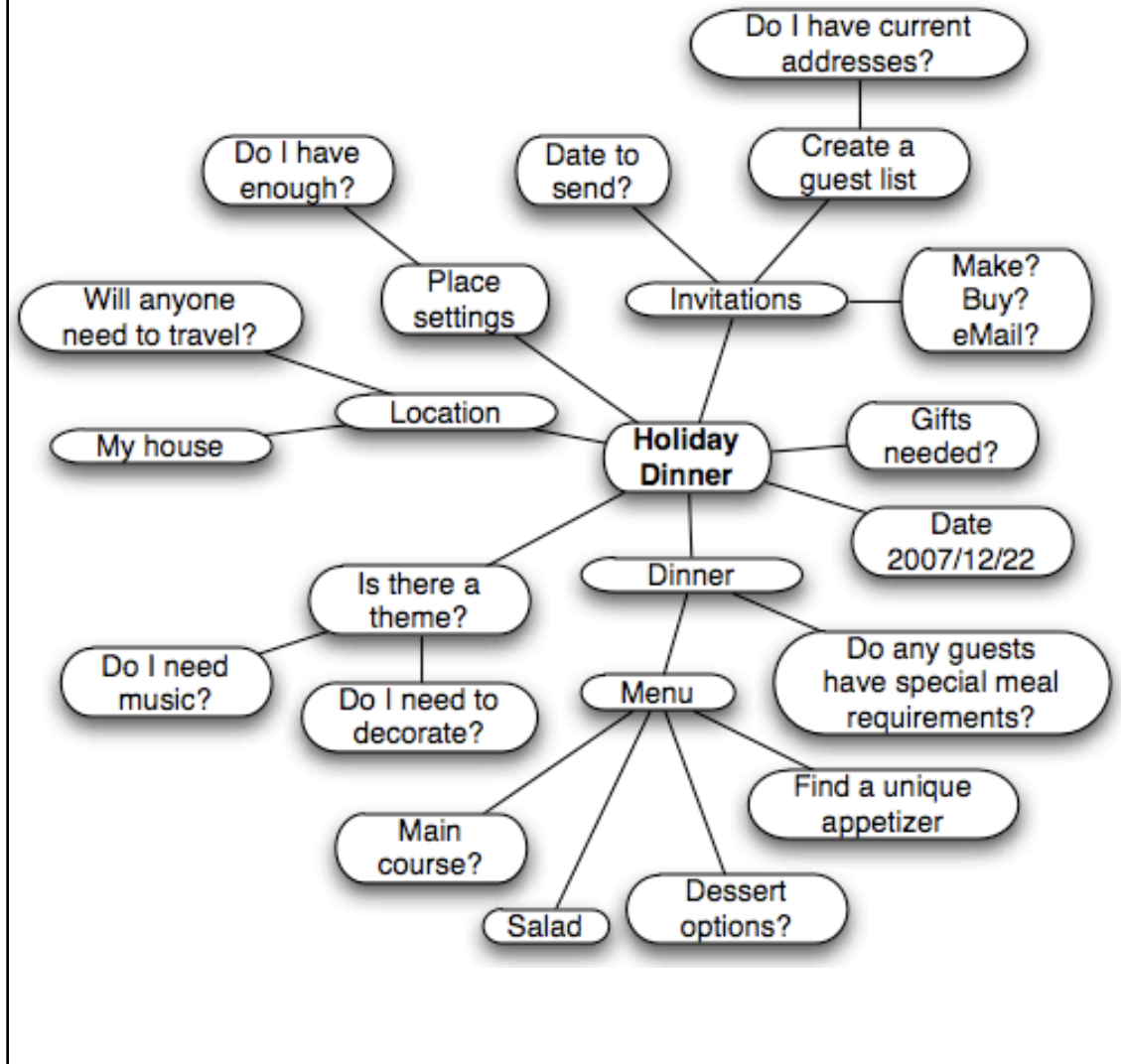
On the following page is a “Holiday Dinner Objective Worksheet” to show you one example of planning for a holiday dinner. This Objective Worksheet walks you through the “Brainstorm, Clarify, Sort” process, giving you a partially filled out template for you to look at and get ideas from.

The third page offers you several questions that you may then use to fill out your own Holiday Dinner Objective Worksheet.

Spending just a few minutes today could save you several minutes (and a little stress) during the holiday season in planning for and hosting your holiday dinner.

Enjoy.

**1. Brainstorm (about the objective):** Look at the objective from all angles. Think about the beginning, middle, and end. Write as fast as you can, knowing that you can add to the brainstorm at any time.



**2. Clarify (the final outcome):** Clarify the objective. Define “success”; what will be “true” when this objective is complete. Include a timeframe of six-months or less.

I will host a holiday dinner at my house on December 22, 2007. I will invite all of my family (a total of 14 people), sending invitations by the end of October. I will have the complete meal selected by the first week of December, and a shopping list prepared by the second week of December. I will prepare and cook the entire meal from scratch.

**3. Sort (into tasks):** List the tasks (that do not have dependencies) and where they can be completed. Limit the time needed to complete the task to 10-20 minutes.

- Home - Look through one recipe book to find a unique appetizer.
- Home - Look through China cabinet to make sure that I have 14 place settings.
- Call - Ask Bob what his son’s favorite dessert is.

Now that you have reviewed a pre-created template for hosting a holiday dinner, it's time for you to go through the process yourself. The following page has a blank Objective Worksheet for you to fill out.

Using the brainstorming trigger-list of questions below, fill out the "BRAINSTORM" section. Then, "CLARIFY" that goal so specifically that you have a crystal clear idea of just what it is you are working to complete.

Finally, "SORT" tasks that are do-able now, listing their location and specifying who is responsible.

## Step 1: BRAINSTORM

- Get all ideas out on paper, don't judge or over-think. Remember, *quantity* is desired.

Whose input do I need to host a successful holiday dinner?

To whom am I accountable?

What resources do I have available (what is my budget, how much space do I have)?

What resources do I need to host this dinner (who's help do I need, are there any cooking supplies that I need to borrow/purchase)?

What are some roadblocks that I will face (does anyone have food allergies)?

Who can I talk with to gain a little insight in hosting a large dinner?

Do I need any stemware, plates, or silverware?

How many people will be coming? How many should I invite?

Do travel plans need to be made?

## STEP 2: CLARIFY

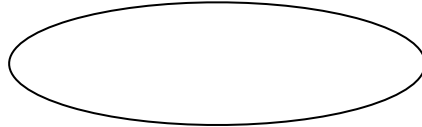
- Define what "done" really means.
- Explain what you want to have happen, and by when.
- Create a statement that defines exactly what you want to come out of your event.

## STEP 3: SORT

Identify do-able tasks.

- Gather the do-able tasks from the BRAINSTORM step and write them down.
- Select only the tasks that are not dependent on something else getting done.
- List the context (who, what, where) of the task.

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