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Bat/Bar Mitzvah Planning Checklist* and Timetable

Timing	Task
12-18 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss the framework /style for a celebration that suits your family.
10-15 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research providers for the key services you will need such as: entertainers, caterers, photographer/videographer and venues.
8-14 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secure providers of the key services you will need such as: entertainers, caterers, photographer and/or videographer and venues. Almost all will require non-refundable deposits.
6-10 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss themes for your reception, color schemes and a community service project that will be meaningful.• Discuss if you present your child with specific religious accessories.• Arrange for out-of-town guest accommodations.
4-8 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a guest list with current addresses.• Design and order invitations and thank you notes• Consider centerpieces for tables, other decorations, party favors, napkins, sign-in books/boards and candle lighting ceremony.• Discuss menus with caterers.• Consider transportation needs for out-of-town guests and unescorted minors to afternoon receptions.• Secure florist and secondary entertainment.
3-6 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalize decisions regarding: centerpieces, party favors, napkins, sign-in books/boards, candle lighting menus, decorations, religious accessories and transportation needs.• Announcements in synagogue bulletin, Jewish World.
6 wks-2 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mail invitations• Coordinate reception providers such as entertainers, caterers, etc. to ensure that all timetables match.• Develop a timetable for your reception that includes formalities, entertainment and food service.• Arrange for a "hotel" welcome for out-of-town guests that could include: itinerary, directions, brochure of things to do, treats.
3-4 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reconfirm all service providers.• Call guests who have not responded• Develop seating plan.
4-10 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm final guest count with caterer.• Adjust seating arrangements as necessary.• Pack an "emergency kit". Consider including thread & needle, refresher for make-up, hairbrush, stockings, etc.

*This checklist is meant to serve as a guide for the different elements you should consider (to include or exclude) as you plan your celebration.

Suggested reading: Putting God on the Guest List Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin