Birthday Party Checklist for a 3-Year-Old Girl

Three is the age of big imagination and very little patience. She can join in a song, love a theme and still need a cuddle halfway through. This guide is for the parent planning a short, happy party that fits a three-year-old's day.

👧 Age 3 | 📍 Woking | ⏱️ 90 minutes | ✅ Tick-off checklist

Updated October 2026. Prices and details were read from each business's own website on 24 October 2026. Always confirm before you book.

PICTURE THIS

A Saturday morning in a Woking hall. A rug, a parachute, a box of dressing-up clothes, and four three-year-olds who have all chosen to be a fairy, a lion or both. The birthday girl is wearing her wings back to front and won't be told. A parent is quietly lining up cups of squash. When the cake comes out she covers her ears for the singing and then asks for it again. At three, a party is a big feeling in a small body.

START HERE

What's different about a 3-year-old's party

A three-year-old is a small person with big feelings and a short supply of patience. Build the party to her size.

Three is a great age for a first party with friends. Three-year-olds love a theme and a song, can join in simple games, and still need a grown-up close by. Here's what we'd want another parent to tell us.

- **Keep it short.** HealthyChildren.org, from the American Academy of Pediatrics, suggests keeping parties for toddlers under 90 minutes, with about 10 to 15 minutes per game or activity.
- **Keep it small.** Its rule of thumb is the child's age plus one, so about four guests for a three-year-old. It's fine to invite fewer than you think you “should”. Some venues set higher minimums (Chobham Adventure Farm's packages start at 10 children), so choose the venue first.

- **Parents stay.** Most three-year-olds want a familiar grown-up nearby, so you'll be hosting the adults too.
- **Choose games without winners.** At three, losing a game can feel like the end of the world. Pick games where everyone gets something.
- **Toilet trips are frequent.** Some guests may still be toilet training, so know where the toilets are and pack spare clothes.
- **Plan around nap and meal times.** A tired or hungry three-year-old is the biggest risk to any party. Late morning or early afternoon usually works best.

THE PLAN

Countdown checklist

Good parties are made quietly, weeks before, by people who write things down.

Start about eight weeks before the party. Weekend slots and popular entertainers go first, and booking calmly beats scrambling. Work through these in order and tick them off as you go. Your ticks are saved on this device.

8 weeks before

- [ ] Set a budget covering the venue or entertainer, food, cake, party bags and decorations. Write the total down before you start looking.
- [ ] Ask her to choose a theme, offering two options (ideas below).
- [ ] Draft the guest list, then check it against venue minimums and maximums.
- [ ] Choose the type: a venue, an entertainer at home or in a hall, or a party at home.
- [ ] Pick two or three possible dates. Weekends book up first.

6-8 weeks before

- [ ] Shortlist 2-3 options and ask each the questions below.
- [ ] Book any entertainer early. My Little Princess Parties, for example, advises booking at least two months ahead.
- [ ] Pay any deposit and save the confirmation email.
- [ ] Send the **Save the Date** (text in the invitation section below).
- [ ] Check the age limit on every activity.

4-6 weeks before

- [ ] Send the invitations, including the **dietary question**.
- [ ] Set an RSVP date about two weeks before the party.
- [ ] Order or plan the cake. Our directory lists local cake makers under Cakes & bakers.
- [ ] Book any extras: a face painter, balloon artist or bouncy castle.

- [ ] Plan the schedule (samples below).

2-3 weeks before

- [ ] Chase RSVPs with a friendly text. Most parents are relieved to be asked.
- [ ] Collect allergies and dietary needs, and pass them on to the venue, caterer or entertainer.
- [ ] Confirm numbers and the food order.
- [ ] Plan party bags, or skip them if the venue includes them.
- [ ] Buy decorations, candles and a lighter.
- [ ] Line up helpers: one for food, one for photos and one for toilet trips. You can't do all three yourself.

Party week

- [ ] Confirm the time, address and arrival time with the venue or entertainer.
- [ ] Check the weather and have a wet-weather plan.
- [ ] Pack the party kit.
- [ ] Tell her what to expect and who is coming, so she feels excited rather than overwhelmed.
- [ ] Print the guest list with parent phone numbers and allergies.
- [ ] Charge your phone and power bank.

Questions to ask every venue or entertainer

These are the questions that tend to matter once you're in the room with a group of excited children.

- [ ] Is it suitable for 3-year-olds? Are there age limits on any activity?
- [ ] What are the minimum and maximum numbers of children?
- [ ] Is the space exclusive to you, or shared with other parties or the public?
- [ ] How long are the play time and the food time?
- [ ] What's included: food, drinks, party bags, a host, invitations?
- [ ] Do adults pay, and how many can stay?
- [ ] Can you bring your own cake or food, and where can you light the candles?
- [ ] How do they handle allergies and dietary needs?
- [ ] What are the deposit and cancellation terms?
- [ ] Is there parking, and is it free?

IDEAS

Themes and party ideas she might love

The best theme is the one she's still talking about at bedtime.

Popular choices at three include unicorns, princesses, fairies, farm animals, mermaids and superheroes. Plenty of three-year-old girls would rather have dinosaurs or diggers, and that's a great party too. Offer two options and be ready for a change of mind.

Shop by theme: Unicorn · Princess · Fairy · Farm · Mermaid · Superhero. Our shop pages link to Amazon UK, and we may earn a small commission if you buy.

Party ideas near Woking

Each name links to its Playtrail listing, with contact details and a map.

- **Soft play and farms.** Munchkins Play Cafe's soft play parties are for under-5s, Mazzy Bees has a Party Corner, and Chobham Adventure Farm's weekday package is for ages 1+ (all prices below). Oasis Play Woking is another local soft play.
- **Coach-led games.** Sporty Kidz runs an Animal Adventure party for 3-4 year olds, with running and parachute games, at your venue (prices below).
- **Role play.** Little Street in West Byfleet and Little Street Frimley are miniature role-play towns, and Imagination Children's Role Play is in Camberley.
- **Ponies.** My Little Unicorn at Ash Green runs rescue-pony meet and greets, popular with under-5s, and says it can bring a “real life unicorn” to your party. Call for a quote.
- **Dance.** Boogie Pumps Woking runs pre-school dance classes and dance parties.
- **Cake.** Our directory lists local cake makers under Cakes & bakers.

THEME PLAYBOOK

4 themes with games, food and a cake for a three-year-old girl

Pick one and you have the games, the menu and the cake sorted. Each idea has three games you can run without a host, plus local people who can run it for you where we have found them.

Unicorn Magic

At three, a unicorn can be a whole personality. Pastel colours, paper horns and star stickers give a sparkly feel without a spill of loose glitter.

- Find the horn: hide paper unicorn horns round the room, and every child who finds one wears it for the rest of the party.
- Rainbow dance: give each child a scarf, call out a colour and let those with that colour wave it high.
- Wishing wands: each child decorates a card wand with stickers, then makes a wish and waves it.

Food and cake: Rainbow fruit plates, pink-iced biscuits and cheese sandwiches. For cake, a pastel sponge with a gold paper horn on top.

Party bag: A felt unicorn-horn headband or a sticker sheet.

Tip: If you can't book a pony visit, a local unicorn-themed pony party is listed below.

Local help: My Little Unicorn.

Browse unicorn magic supplies in the shop

Little Princess Party

A princess party can be as simple as a crown for the birthday girl and a throne she can sit on, or a visiting character if you want a host. The dressing-up is the main event at three.

- Royal procession: the princesses walk round the room to music with the birthday girl leading in her crown.
- Pass the crown: pass a crown round a circle while the music plays, and whoever holds it when it stops gives a royal wave.
- Castle colouring: a table of crayons and castle pictures for quieter moments.

Food and cake: A royal tea of sandwiches, strawberries and mini cupcakes with crown toppers. For cake, a pink castle made from a sponge and icing.

Party bag: A paper crown and a sticker, or a small wand.

Tip: A character host usually takes over the whole party, so check their age range for under-fives.

Local help: My Little Princess Parties.

Browse little princess party supplies in the shop

Mermaid Splash

Turquoise, pearly pink and a few shells make a clean theme for a three-year-old, and it's a good fit if she has just learned to love bath time.

- Mermaid freeze: dance like mermaids, with slow arm waves like seaweed, and freeze when the music stops.
- Shell fishing: lay paper shells on the floor and let the mermaids scoop them up with a net.
- Tail shuffle: tuck a scarf or a length of blue fabric round each child's legs for a gentle mermaid shuffle, with grown-ups nearby for trips.

Food and cake: 'Seaweed' cucumber ribbons, fish-shaped sandwiches and fruit. For cake, a turquoise sponge with a fish-scale pattern in icing.

Party bag: A bath-time toy or a small bottle of bubbles.

Tip: Blue streamers hung in the doorway make a quick 'under the sea' entrance.

Browse mermaid splash supplies in the shop

Fairy Garden

A fairy garden works in a garden or a hall with fairy lights. Soft greens, pale pink and paper wings suit a gentle party for three-year-olds.

- Fairy door hunt: hide paper fairy doors round the room and hunt for them with a grown-up.
- Wing parade: decorate paper wings with stickers, then flutter round the room to music.
- Story circle: sit in a ring and pass a 'wand' while telling a simple story that each child adds a word to.

Food and cake: Mini sandwiches, mushroom-shaped cupcakes and fruit. For cake, a pale-green sponge with sugar-paper flowers.

Party bag: A pair of paper wings or a sticker sheet.

Tip: Keep decoration low and soft: fabric and paper rather than hanging balloons.

Browse fairy garden supplies in the shop

Planning for a boy instead? See the 3-year-old boys' party checklist, which has different themes.

THE AFTERNOON

Schedules, games and party bags

Short games, clear rules and a prize for everyone.

The best way to calm party nerves is to have a plan for the time. Venues and entertainers will set their own timings, so fit the rest around them.

A 90-minute party

Two or three short activities and a sit-down tea fill 90 minutes nicely. Venue parties set their own timings: Chobham Adventure Farm's is 1 hour 15 minutes of play, then 45 minutes in the party room.

TIME	WHAT HAPPENS
0:00	Guests arrive: free play or a sticker and colouring table
0:10	Welcome and an action song or musical statues
0:25	Main activity: entertainer, soft play or a treasure hunt for toy animals (10-15 minutes each)
0:55	Wash hands and sit down for food
1:15	Cake and singing
1:25	Party bags, goodbyes and hand-over to parents

- [ ] Have at least two helpers, so one adult can take a child to the toilet without stopping the party.

- [ ] Keep a spare activity (bubbles, colouring sheets) in case a game flops.
- [ ] Set up a quiet corner before the party starts.
- [ ] Check how long your venue slot is before you plan the rest.

Easy games for 3-year-olds

You don't need clever games. Simple and silly works best, and nobody should be “out”.

- [ ] Musical statues or musical bumps, where nobody is out.
- [ ] Pass the parcel with a small gift in every layer, so everyone wins.
- [ ] Bubbles or a bubble machine.
- [ ] Follow the leader or a cushion obstacle course.
- [ ] A treasure hunt for toy animals.
- [ ] Parachute games.
- [ ] Stickers and colouring as a calm break.

Party bags

Keep them small: bubbles, stickers, crayons, a mini animal figure or a slice of cake in a napkin. Check the age labels on toys, because small parts aren't suitable for under-3s, and younger siblings may be there. There are more ideas in the party shop.

LOOK AFTER THEM

Food, drink and safety

At a party, love mostly looks like paying attention.

Food and drink

- [ ] Keep it simple: sandwiches, mini pizzas, wraps, fruit, vegetable sticks, crisps or breadsticks.
- [ ] Label food clearly and plan for the allergies and dietary needs on your RSVPs.
- [ ] Cut grapes, cherries, berries, strawberries and cherry tomatoes into quarters (NHS).
- [ ] Don't give whole nuts or popcorn to children under 5 (NHS), and keep raw jelly cubes away from little ones (NHS).
- [ ] Seat children to eat and keep an eye on them while they do. The NHS advises always supervising young children while they eat.
- [ ] Offer water or diluted squash, in cups with lids if you can.
- [ ] The NHS advises avoiding food and drink with added sugar or sweeteners for children aged 4 and under (NHS), so keep sweets small and let the cake be the treat.
- [ ] Have food and drink for the adults too. You'll be glad of a cup of tea.

Safety

- [ ] Be careful with balloons. St. Louis Children's Hospital advises that latex balloons aren't recommended for children under 8, and that broken pieces should be collected immediately and kept out of reach.
- [ ] Face paint and glitter: ask on the RSVP about eczema or sensitive skin, book a face painter who uses paints made for skin, and use cosmetic glitter, not craft glitter.
- [ ] Never leave children unsupervised around inflatables, water, animals or outdoor areas.
- [ ] Ask parents before you share photos of their children, and say on the invitation that you'll be taking some.
- [ ] Keep a list of parents' phone numbers, allergies and medications.
- [ ] Note where the first-aid kit and emergency exits are.

THE DAY ITSELF

Party kit, the day itself and afterwards

Pack the night before. The morning belongs to the birthday girl.

The day goes better when the bag is already by the door. Here's what's worth having with you.

Party kit to pack

- [ ] Cake, candles, lighter, knife, plates and napkins (if you're bringing your own).
- [ ] Decorations and tape.
- [ ] Party bags.
- [ ] Craft table supplies: crowns or wands to decorate, stickers and crayons.
- [ ] A hairbrush and hair bobbles, for the birthday girl and anyone whose plaits come loose.
- [ ] Spare clothes for the birthday girl (cake happens), plus a few spares for accidents.
- [ ] Grip socks if you're at a soft play venue.
- [ ] Wet wipes, tissues and a small first-aid kit.
- [ ] Printed guest list with parent phone numbers and allergies.
- [ ] Camera or phone, and a power bank.
- [ ] Bin bags for the tidy-up.
- [ ] Small prizes for pass the parcel.

On the day

Try to enjoy it. The children won't remember whether the napkins matched.

- [ ] Arrive 15-30 minutes early to set up, and ask what the venue allows.
- [ ] Meet the party host and confirm the timings.
- [ ] Tick every child off the guest list as they arrive.
- [ ] Keep a calm corner for any child who needs a break.

- [ ] Put one adult on photos, so you're in some of them too.
- [ ] Check food against allergies before serving.
- [ ] Hand each child to a parent with their party bag.

After the party

When the last guest has gone, the room will look as if a small storm passed through. That's how you'll know it went well.

- [ ] Pay any balance and check for unexpected charges.
- [ ] Open presents calmly at home, and keep a note of who gave what.
- [ ] Send a quick thank-you to parents and guests.
- [ ] Back up the photos.
- [ ] Write down what worked for next year.

📍 NEAR YOU

Four Woking-area options compared

A price is only the beginning of the sentence.

The headline price is only part of the story. What matters is what's included and what you'll still have to organise. As a rough guide for about 10 children: a 2-hour party room at Munchkins is £200 at a weekend, plus food from £5 a head; Chobham Adventure Farm's weekday package is £290; and Mazzy Bees' Party Corner is £195-£225. Details below were read on the dates at the top of this page. They change, so confirm before you book.

OPTION	AGE FIT	PRICE AND WHAT'S INCLUDED
Munchkins Play Cafe, Byfleet	Soft play parties for under-5s. Party rooms for ages 1-8	**Party room:** 2 hours' private hire for up to 15 children, £100 midweek or £200 at weekends (£90 or £160 with an entertainer, whose fee is extra). Food from £5 per head. **Soft play (under-5s):** £295 for 2 hours' exclusive use for up to 25 children at weekends, with a £100 deposit, or £18 per child on weekdays for 5-10 children during a normal session, including a lunchbox and drink each and one free adult per child. No outside food except the birthday cake.

OPTION	AGE FIT	PRICE AND WHAT'S INCLUDED
Chobham Adventure Farm, Chobham	Bronze package from age 1 (term-time weekdays only). Weekend packages are for ages 4+	Minimum 10 children. **£29 per child** (Bronze, term-time weekdays 3pm-5.30pm), £35 (Silver, weekends) or £39 (Gold, weekends, with a 30-minute Animal Barn meet and greet). Includes 1 hour 15 minutes of indoor and outdoor play, 45 minutes in a private party room, homemade pizza, carrot and cucumber sticks, an ice cream pot, squash, a party host, a party bag for each guest and one free adult per child invited. Bring your own cake and candles (sparklers aren't allowed).
Mazzy Bees Soft Play, Sheerwater	Soft play designed for ages 0-8	**Party Corner:** up to 10 children, £225 peak (weekends and half term) or £195 off-peak. A 90-minute slot during public play: 45 minutes play, 15 minutes food, 30 minutes disco and karaoke or play. Includes sandwiches, unlimited squash and crisps. **Exclusive hire:** £490 for up to 15 children, then £12.99 per extra child, up to 40. Party bags £3 per child; pizza and chips £4.50 per child.
Sporty Kidz (coaches come to your venue)	Animal Adventure party for ages 3-4	**£200** for up to 12 children with one coach, £225 for up to 20, £250 for up to 30 or £300 for up to 40. Parties run 2 hours, with coaches leading the first 90 minutes. Includes a Sporty Kidz T-shirt and a trophy for the birthday child. Medals £1 each. You provide the venue and food. Travel is £20 if you're more than 15 miles from Chobham, or £30 over 25 miles.

What stands out from a parent's seat

- **Munchkins Play Cafe:** Two very different parties under one roof: a private room you fill with your own entertainer, or soft play for the under-5s. No outside food apart from the cake, so budget for their menu.

- **Chobham Adventure Farm:** The most complete package: food, party bags and a host are included. For under-4s it's the weekday package only, the minimum is 10 children, and two parties can run at once on the party floor.
- **Mazzy Bees:** The Party Corner runs during public play, so other families will be around. Food and squash are included. The page doesn't list deposit or cancellation terms, so ask.
- **Sporty Kidz:** Coaches run the games, so you can focus on food and guests. You'll need a hall or garden big enough to run around in.

Browse all Woking party venues

ASKED AT TEN AT NIGHT

Questions parents ask

How many children should I invite to a 3-year-old's party?

About four is the rule of thumb (age plus one), from HealthyChildren.org, which uses exactly that example for a child turning three. Venue minimums can push the number higher, so choose the venue first.

How long should the party last?

Under 90 minutes, with 10 to 15 minutes per activity. Venue slots are similar: Chobham Adventure Farm gives 1 hour 15 minutes of play, then 45 minutes in the party room.

Should parents stay?

Yes, at three. Say so on the invitation, and plan food and seats for the grown-ups.

Do I have to invite the whole nursery room?

No. A few close friends is plenty at three. If you're not inviting everyone, give invitations out privately rather than at nursery.

Do I need an entertainer?

Not necessarily. Bubbles, a parachute and simple games are often enough. If you book one, choose a short session designed for under-5s, like Sporty Kidz's Animal Adventure party for 3-4 year olds.

Is it safe to give grapes and nuts at a party?

Cut grapes and cherry tomatoes into quarters, and don't give whole nuts or popcorn to children under 5, as the NHS advises. Always supervise children while they eat.

SAY IT KINDLY

Save the date, invitation and RSVP wording

An invitation is a small promise that you'll look after someone's child. Make it easy to say yes.

1. Save the date (6-8 weeks before)

Save the date! [Child's name] is turning 3 and we're having a little birthday party.

Date: [day, date, month]
Time: [start - end]
Place: [venue or area]

Full invitation to follow. We hope you can come!
[Your name and number]

2. Invitation with the dietary question (4-6 weeks before)

You're invited! Come and celebrate [Child's name]'s 3rd birthday with us.

Date: [day, date, month]
Time: [start - end]
Venue: [venue name and address]
Parking: [where to park]
Parents: [please stay with your child / drop-off is fine]

Food: please tell us about any allergies, dietary requirements or special needs, so we can look after every guest. Just reply with the details below.

RSVP by [date] to [your name, number or email].

We can't wait to see you!

3. RSVP reply for guests to copy and fill in

Child's name:
Parent / carer name and phone:
Coming? Yes / No
Adults staying:
Siblings coming:
Allergies (nuts, dairy, egg, gluten, sesame, other):
Dietary needs (vegetarian, vegan, halal, kosher, other):
Details, such as how severe and what to avoid:
Anything else we should know (shy, needs a quiet space, toilet help):

4. Reminder for anyone who hasn't replied (about 3 weeks before)

Hi [name], just checking whether [guest's name] can make [birthday girl's name]'s party on [date]. No pressure at all! Could you let me know by [date], and tell me about any allergies or dietary needs? Thank you!

5. Thank-you message (the week after)

Thank you so much for coming to [Child's name]'s party, and for the lovely [present]. She had the best time and hasn't stopped talking about it. Love, [Child's name] and [your name]

Handling the replies

You're holding other families' information, so treat it with care.

- [ ] Keep a simple list of each child's allergies and dietary needs.
- [ ] Send it to the venue, caterer or entertainer with your final numbers.
- [ ] Tell the party host about any serious allergy on the day.
- [ ] Use the information only to plan the party, and delete the list afterwards.

Sources

- HealthyChildren.org (American Academy of Pediatrics), Playful birthday party ideas and tips for young children
- My Little Princess Parties, Prices and booking

- My Little Unicorn, home page
- Chobham Adventure Farm, Parties
- NHS, Preparing food safely (Start for Life)
- St. Louis Children's Hospital, Why are latex balloons dangerous for children?
- NHS, Foods to avoid giving babies and young children
- Munchkins Play Cafe, Parties
- Mazzy Bees Soft Play, Parties
- Sporty Kidz, Birthday parties in Surrey

Playtrail · Woking's party venue & entertainer finder · real local listings, no booking fees, no middleman.

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