Birthday Party Checklist for a 5-Year-Old Girl

Five is the age of firm opinions, best friends who change by the week, and a very clear idea of what the cake should look like. This guide is for the parent doing the planning: what to book, when to book it, and how to keep the afternoon on the happy side of overwhelming.

👧 Age 5 · 📍 Woking · ⏱️ 90 minutes or 2 hours · ✅ Tick-off checklist

Updated October 2026. Prices and details were read from each business's own website on 24 October 2026, except The Creative Brick Company, read from its printed flyer on 18 October 2026. Always confirm before you book.

PICTURE THIS

A Saturday afternoon in Woking. A hall with paper crowns waiting on a long table, a speaker playing the same song for the fourth time, and a dozen five-year-olds who have been looking forward to this for weeks. One is in a princess dress, one is in a dinosaur costume, and the birthday girl has changed her mind about the theme twice since breakfast. Near the kitchen, a parent is quartering grapes and checking a list of allergies. None of the children will remember the napkins. All of them will remember whether they were included.

START HERE

What's different about a 5-year-old's party

At five, friendship is serious business, and the rules of musical statues are a matter of honour.

Five is a lovely age for a party. Most five-year-olds can follow simple rules, take turns, sit for a craft and throw themselves into a theme. They still tire quickly, and losing a game can still end in tears. Here's what we'd want another parent to tell us.

- **The guest list is the big decision.** Most children turning five are in Reception, so the question is often whole class or a few close friends. A whole class is a big party: infant classes (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) can have up to 30 pupils per teacher. For a small party, the age-plus-one rule of thumb that HealthyChildren.org gives for younger children is a useful starting point: about six guests. Neither is wrong. Choose what you can host comfortably, then pick the venue to fit.
- **Aim for 90 minutes to 2 hours.** HealthyChildren.org, from the American Academy of Pediatrics, suggests keeping parties under 90 minutes for toddlers and says school-aged children can manage about 2 to 3 hours. Five sits in between. Plan about 10 to 15 minutes per game or activity, as the same source suggests.
- **Some guests will still be four.** Reception classes mix fours and fives, so pitch games and food at the younger end. It matters for food safety too (see below).
- **Drop-off often starts at five.** Some parents will drop off and others will stay. Say on the invitation which works for you, and collect a phone number for every child who's dropped off.
- **Check age limits early.** Some popular parties start older than you'd expect. GlitterPop lists its spa party for ages 7+, and its slime party page says 5+ in one place and 6+ in another, so ask before you promise anything.
- **Let her choose, from a short list.** Offer two or three themes rather than an open question, and be ready for a change of mind.
- **Expect big feelings.** Excitement, shyness and a wobble at cake time are all normal. A quiet corner helps everyone, including the birthday girl.

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 from two or three options (ideas below).
- [ ] Decide: whole class or a smaller group. If you plan to hand invitations out at school, check the school's policy first.
- [ ] Choose the type: a venue, an entertainer at home or in a hall, an outdoor party, or something creative.
- [ ] Pick two or three possible dates. Weekends book up first, and it's worth checking you won't clash with a classmate's party.

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, especially pamper parties and riding.

4-6 weeks before

- [ ] Send the invitations, including the **dietary question** and a line on whether parents stay or drop off.
- [ ] 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 disco.
- [ ] Plan the schedule (samples below).

2-3 weeks before

- [ ] Chase RSVPs with a friendly text. Most parents are relieved to be asked.
- [ ] Collect allergies, dietary needs and any sensitive skin (for face paint or glitter), and pass them on to the venue, caterer or entertainer.
- [ ] Confirm numbers and the food order.
- [ ] Plan party bags, or skip 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. Outdoor and pony parties need a wet-weather plan.
- [ ] Pack the party kit.
- [ ] Talk her through the day: who's coming, what will happen, and that presents get opened at home afterwards.
- [ ] Print the guest list with parent phone numbers, allergies and who is collecting each child.
- [ ] 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 dozen excited children.

- [ ] Is it suitable for 5-year-olds? Are there age, height or weight 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 does it run, and 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?
- [ ] How do they handle allergies and dietary needs?
- [ ] Is it indoors or outdoors, and what happens if it rains?
- [ ] For face painting, pamper treatments or crafts: which products do they use, and are they suitable for young skin?
- [ ] 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 five include unicorns, mermaids, princesses, fairies, ponies, puppies and kittens, a tea party, rainbows and pop stars. Plenty of five-year-old girls would rather have dinosaurs, space, superheroes or football, and that makes a great party too. A simple theme (a colour scheme, one activity and a matching cake) costs less than theming everything, and it's easier on you.

Shop by theme: Unicorn · Mermaid · Princess · Fairy · Pony · Puppies & kittens · Tea party · Pop star · Art · Dinosaur · 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.

- **Pony parties.** Holly Bush Stables in West Byfleet runs pony parties with grooming and lead-rein rides (prices below). My Little Unicorn at Ash Green runs rescue-pony meet and greets and says it can bring a "real life unicorn" to your party. Call for a quote.
- **Princess and character parties** at home or in a hall: My Little Princess Parties (prices below) and Magic Star Parties in Frimley, which runs character, superhero and UV glow parties. You'll need a space, such as a local hall like Mayford Village Hall.
- **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.
- **Dance and disco.** Boogie Pumps Woking runs dance parties. Kids' discos that come to you include Matt's Entertainments, Lucky Dip Disco, Crazy Hazy and Playhouse Parties.
- **Something creative.** Fired Frog Pottery Café in St John's lists parties on its website, so ask about ages and timings. The Creative Brick Company runs LEGO® brick building parties. Call to check where it holds them.
- **Extras.** Face painters such as Funky Faces, Sparkleface, Suz Sunshine and Rainbow Cat, plus balloon artists and cake makers.

A note on pamper parties. They're popular, but the ones we checked are designed for older girls. For a five-year-old, a "getting ready" corner at home (dress-up clothes, a mirror, glitter tattoos and a photo spot) gives the same feeling with none of the age limits.

THEME PLAYBOOK

4 themes with games, food and a cake for a five-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.

Mini Spa Party

A mini spa works for five-year-olds when it's playful. Dressing gowns, a few fairy lights and a nail-painting table give her a treat.

- Nail table: peel-off polish or stick-on nails, with a grown-up helping.
- Face glow: soft brushes and a dab of face glitter or stickers.
- Fashion show: guests walk the runway in their robes.

Food and cake: Sandwiches, fruit and juice in plastic glasses. For cake, a pink sponge with a spa-themed topper.

Party bag: A pair of fluffy socks or a mini hairband.

Tip: If you book a host, check their age range and whether the products suit sensitive skin.

Browse mini spa party supplies in the shop

Pop Star Party

A pop star party is the one for a five-year-old with a hairbrush microphone. A stage of cushions, a playlist and a few props are all it takes.

- Karaoke: a toy microphone and a few songs with simple words.
- Dance-off: a group routine you teach at the start.
- Autograph table: a pen and a poster each for 'star' autographs.

Food and cake: Pizza slices, popcorn and fruit. For cake, a sponge with a microphone topper.

Party bag: A star sticker or a sparkly headband.

Tip: A phone video of the performance becomes a keepsake.

Local help: LuckyDipDisco.com.

Browse pop star party supplies in the shop

Gym Party

Five-year-olds can do a lot with a few mats: rolls, jumps and balances. An instructor keeps it safe, or you can use a hall with soft play equipment.

- Rolls and jumps: forward rolls on a mat and jumps from a low step.
- Balance beam: walk along a line of tape or a low bench with a grown-up spotting.
- Parachute fun: lift and lower a large sheet with everyone holding the edge.

Food and cake: Fruit, sandwiches and cheesy bites. For cake, a simple sponge with a ribbon.

Party bag: A medal or a sticker for everyone.

Tip: Ask about the instructor-to-child ratio for five-year-olds.

Local help: The Little Gym Godalming (Chiddingfold, near Godalming).

Browse gym party supplies in the shop

Wizards and Witches

A wizard-school party suits a five-year-old who loves a story. A hat, a wand and a bit of magic from a children's magician set the scene.

- Potion making: mix coloured water in clear cups with a drop of food colouring and a spoon of glitter.
- Spell class: practise a spell and a wand wave, then try a simple magic trick.
- Broomstick race: a short race on a toy broom.

Food and cake: Pumpkin-shaped sandwiches, 'potion' juice and fruit. For cake, a purple sponge with a wizard hat on top.

Party bag: A wand, a hat or a sticker sheet.

Tip: A magician running the show lets you serve food and take photos.

Local help: Mr Silly.

Browse wizards and witches supplies in the shop

Planning for a boy instead? See the 5-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. Two or three short activities and a sit-down tea fill 90 minutes nicely. Venues and entertainers will set their own timings, so fit the rest around them.

A 90-minute party

TIME	WHAT HAPPENS
0:00	Guests arrive. A craft table keeps early arrivals busy (crown, wand or tiara decorating)
0:10	Welcome and a quick, lively game (musical statues or freeze dance)
0:20	Main activity: entertainer, ponies, role play, disco or treasure hunt (about 30 minutes, broken into short games)
0:55	Wash hands and sit down for food
1:15	Birthday cake and singing
1:25	Party bags, goodbyes and hand-over to parents

A 2-hour party

Two hours suits a home or hall party where arrivals and goodbyes take up part of the time. Build in one calm break, and make the second hour gentler than the first.

TIME	WHAT HAPPENS
0:00	Guests arrive, craft table or dress-up corner (arrivals are staggered, so keep this relaxed)
0:15	Welcome and a circle game, such as a name game or pass the parcel
0:25	Active block: entertainer, disco or two games of about 15 minutes each
0:55	Calm break: story or colouring, a drink of water and toilet trips
1:05	Second activity: treasure hunt, parachute games or a dance-off where everyone gets a turn
1:30	Wash hands and sit down for food
1:45	Birthday cake and singing
1:52	Party bags and goodbyes

- [ ] 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. Little Street's sessions, for example, run 85 minutes.

Easy games for 5-year-olds

At five, most children understand winning and losing, but not all of them enjoy it yet. Games where everyone gets something keep the afternoon happy.

- [ ] Musical statues or musical bumps, with nobody "out" (or anyone who's out becomes a judge).
- [ ] Pass the parcel with a small prize in every layer.
- [ ] Sleeping lions (or sleeping unicorns), a calm game to play between busy ones.
- [ ] A treasure hunt with picture clues.
- [ ] Pin the horn on the unicorn, with eyes closed rather than a tight blindfold.
- [ ] Freeze dance, or a dance-off where everyone gets a turn in the middle.
- [ ] Parachute games, if your entertainer brings a parachute.
- [ ] A craft table: crowns, wands, or threading chunky beads. Keep small beads away from younger siblings.

Party bags

Keep them small: bubbles, stickers, a hair bobble or clip, a mini notebook and crayons, a bookmark, or a slice of cake in a napkin. One small picture book makes a lovely alternative to plastic bits. Check the age labels on toys if younger siblings will be at the party. 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).
- [ ] Some Reception guests will still be four, so follow the NHS advice not to give whole nuts or popcorn to children under 5 (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.
- [ ] Keep sweets small: a treat plus the cake is plenty.
- [ ] 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.
- [ ] Pony parties: ask what children should wear and whether riding hats are provided. Closed shoes are sensible around animals.
- [ ] 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, and note who is collecting each child.
- [ ] 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, allergies and collection details.
- [ ] 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, with their party bag, to the adult you expect to collect them.

After the party

When the last guest has gone, the room will look as if a small, sparkly 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 thank-yous. At five she can draw a picture or write her name on each card, which is good practice, and other parents love it.
- [ ] 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. For 10 children, a pony party with lunch at Holly Bush Stables is £400, exclusive hire of Little Street is £295 (or £225 on a Friday afternoon), and a 90-minute princess party is £214 before you add a venue and food. 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
Holly Bush Stables, West Byfleet (pony party)	No age range stated. No riding experience needed	**£40 per child** (minimum 10 children) for 2 hours with the ponies, including lunch (pizza, jelly and ice cream, juice, tea and coffee). Or **£35 per child** for 1.5 hours without food. Includes a decorated party area, grooming and handling the ponies, and a lead-rein ride with games in the sand school. Cake and party bags aren't included.

OPTION	AGE FIT	PRICE AND WHAT'S INCLUDED
Little Street, West Byfleet (role-play town)	Rooms scaled for young children. No upper age stated	**Exclusive hire £295** for an 85-minute session, for up to 60 people including adults. A Friday offer (3.45-5.15pm) is **£225**, for Friday bookings to the end of December 2026. Includes unlimited squash and water for the children, £25 of café drinks for the adults, a PDF invitation and a free return visit for one child and one adult. Food isn't mentioned, so ask.
My Little Princess Parties (comes to your home or hall)	90-minute and 2-hour parties listed for ages 4+	One entertainer for up to 25 children: **£214 for 90 minutes**, £234 for 2 hours or £189 for 1 hour. Includes a meet and greet, fairy dust, a birthday present, photo opportunities, games, balloon modelling and parachute games. Food and drinks aren't provided, and you'll need a venue. A deposit secures the booking, and the balance is paid in cash on the day.
The Creative Brick Company (LEGO® building party)	No age range on the flyer	**£300 for up to 20 children**, then £7 per extra child. 90 minutes of themed LEGO® brick builds with two party hosts, plus invitation and thank-you cards, a gift for the birthday child and a badge for each guest. Read from the company's printed flyer. It has no Google reviews yet.

What stands out from a parent's seat

- **Holly Bush Stables:** the most complete package, because lunch is included in the 2-hour option. It's outdoors with animals, so have a wet-weather plan, and ask about riding hats and what to wear, as the page doesn't say.
- **Little Street:** one price for up to 60 people, so it works well for a whole-class party. You'll need to sort food and cake.
- **My Little Princess Parties:** the entertainer runs the games, but you supply the venue, food and drink, so add hall hire to the cost. Have the balance ready in cash.
- **The Creative Brick Company:** a calmer, creative option for children who love building. We couldn't check its website, so call to confirm the details.

Pamper parties are worth saving for a later birthday. GlitterPop's Glitzy Spa Party is from £295 for 8 children (£25 per extra child, 12 maximum) but is designed for ages 7+.

Browse all Woking party venues

ASKED AT TEN AT NIGHT

Questions parents ask

Should I invite the whole class?

If you can host it, a whole-class party means nobody feels left out, but it's a big party: an infant class can have up to 30 children. A smaller party is just as good, and about six guests (the age-plus-one rule of thumb) is a sensible starting point. If you're not inviting everyone, hand invitations out privately or send them by message rather than through school bags.

How long should a 5-year-old's party last?

90 minutes to 2 hours. HealthyChildren.org suggests under 90 minutes for toddlers and about 2 to 3 hours for school-aged children, and five sits in between. Keep each game to 10-15 minutes, and use the 2-hour schedule with its calm break if you go longer.

Can parents drop off, or should they stay?

Either can work at five. Say clearly on the invitation which you'd like, collect a phone number for every child who's dropped off, and make sure you have enough adults to help. Ask any venue or entertainer whether they need a set number of adults.

Is five too young for a pamper party?

Usually, yes. GlitterPop lists its spa party for ages 7+, and its slime party page gives both 5+ and 6+, so ask before you book. A dress-up and glitter-tattoo corner at home works well for this age.

Are pony parties OK for five-year-olds?

They can be lovely. Holly Bush Stables says no riding experience is needed and its rides are on a lead rein. Ask about age limits, riding hats and what to wear, and keep a close eye on children around the animals.

What should I say about presents?

Whatever suits your family. Some parents write "no presents, please". Others suggest a small, clearly optional contribution towards one bigger gift, sometimes called a "fiver party". Keep the wording gentle so nobody feels awkward.

Is it safe to serve grapes and nuts?

Cut grapes, cherry tomatoes and other small round foods into quarters, and don't give whole nuts or popcorn to children under 5, as the NHS advises. Some of your guests may still be four. 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 5 and we're having a 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 (4-6 weeks before)

You're invited! Come and celebrate [Child's name]'s 5th birthday with us.

Date: [day, date, month]
Time: [start - end]
Venue: [venue name and address]
Parking: [where to park]
Grown-ups: [welcome to stay / drop-off is fine. Please leave a number we can reach you on]
Wear: [party clothes / dress-up welcome / clothes that can get messy]

Food: please tell us about any allergies, dietary needs or sensitive skin, so we can look after every guest.

Photos: we'll take a few photos on the day. Let us know if you'd rather we didn't share any that include your child.

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
Staying or dropping off:
Who's collecting (name and phone):
Siblings coming:
Allergies (nuts, dairy, egg, gluten, sesame, other):
Dietary needs (vegetarian, vegan, halal, kosher, other):
Sensitive skin or eczema (for face paint or glitter):
OK to share photos that include your child? Yes / No
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, dietary needs and photo preference.
- [ ] Send the allergy details 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
- NHS, Preparing food safely (Start for Life)
- Lancashire County Council, Infant class sizes (the limit of 30 pupils per teacher in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2)
- St. Louis Children's Hospital, Why are latex balloons dangerous for children?
- Holly Bush Stables, Pony parties
- Little Street, West Byfleet and Parties and groups
- My Little Princess Parties, Prices and booking
- GlitterPop Parties, Glitzy Spa Party and Sassy Slime Party
- My Little Unicorn, home page
- The Creative Brick Company, printed party flyer (seen 18 October 2026)

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