



Westmorland Block Party Checklist

A simple guide for bringing neighbors together

Block parties are about building connections, not putting on a show. Keep yours simple, welcoming and easy to repeat.

1. Get Started

- ☐ Find a neighbor to co-host.
- ☐ Pick a date, start time and end time.
- ☐ Choose a location, such as a driveway, front yard, garage, or, if permitted, a closed residential street.
- ☐ Make a weather backup plan.
- ☐ Choose an easy format: potluck, bring-your-own food and chairs, coffee and donuts, ice cream, a cookout or lawn games.

2. Decide Whether You Need a City Permit

You need a City of Madison Neighborhood Block Party Permit if you plan to close a city street and all of the following are true:

- ☐ The closure covers no more than two blocks.
- ☐ The street's speed limit is 25 mph or less.
- ☐ The street is not on a Metro bus route.
- ☐ The street is not in the Mall/Concourse area.
- ☐ Fewer than 100 people are expected.
- ☐ Most attendees will be residents or guests of the block being closed.
- ☐ The event will not be publicly advertised or promoted.
- ☐ There will be no vending or sales.
- ☐ There will be no temporary structures, including tents, inflatables, or stages; only easily movable items may be used so emergency access remains open.
- ☐ Noise will be kept to a minimum, with no loud amplified sound.

If the event does not meet these criteria, for example, it includes sales, live music, or public advertising, check the City's Street Use Permit requirements instead. If you are not closing a city street, the neighborhood block party street-closure permit is not required.

3. Apply for the Madison Permit

Start early. The application and resident petition are due at least 14 days before the block party, and the City asks applicants to allow 14 days for processing and issuance.

- ☐ Complete the City's Resident Petition.
- ☐ Collect signatures from an adult resident or occupant of at least 75% of all residential and non-residential units on the street or streets to be closed.
- ☐ Save the completed petition as a PDF.
- ☐ Apply online, or complete the PDF Block Party Permit Application.
- ☐ Attach the completed Resident Petition.
- ☐ Pay the \$50 nonrefundable application fee.
- ☐ Submit the application online, or email the PDF application and petition to parks@cityofmadison.com. Paper applications may also be sent or delivered to Parks Division, 330 E. Lakeside Street, Madison, WI 53715.
- ☐ Keep the City's issued permit and proof of payment.

Barricades and optional No Parking signs

- ☐ Arrange weekday pickup of the required Type II barricades before the party.
- ☐ Up to eight barricades are included with the permit at no charge; additional barricades cost \$5 each.
- ☐ If you need vehicles cleared from the block, request optional No Parking signs for \$2 each.
- ☐ Pick up and post any No Parking signs, then call them in as directed for enforcement.
- ☐ Follow the pickup instructions provided on the issued permit.

4. Invite the Block (Example Invites Attached)

- ☐ Invite at least the eight nearest households, or as much of the block as possible.
- ☐ Create a simple flyer or handwritten invitation.
- ☐ Include the date, time, location, host's name and contact information, what guests should bring, whether the party is a come-and-go, and RSVP details if food will be provided.
- ☐ Hand-deliver invitations when possible.
- ☐ Send a friendly reminder shortly before the party.

5. Plan the Basics

- ☐ Arrange seating and tables as needed.
- ☐ Gather trash and recycling containers.
- ☐ Plan simple food and nonalcoholic beverages, and consider food allergies.

- ☐ Set up a few easy activities, such as cornhole, sidewalk chalk, bubbles, or yard games.
- ☐ Prepare name tags and a voluntary sign-in sheet if you want to help neighbors stay connected.
- ☐ Check the weather and activate the backup plan if needed.

Food and supply sign-up

Use a shared online sign-up, group email or text, or a paper list, whichever neighbors are most likely to check.

- ☐ Ask one person to coordinate the list and send a reminder.
- ☐ Use simple categories: main dishes, sides, kid-friendly food, desserts, drinks and ice, and paper supplies.
- ☐ Have each household list what it will bring, the approximate quantity and any important allergy or dietary information.
- ☐ Review the list a few days before the party and fill any gaps.

Activity ideas for all ages

Choose a few optional activities and provide shade and accessible seating.

For children

- ☐ Sidewalk chalk, bubbles, hula hoops, or jump ropes.
- ☐ A simple scavenger hunt, craft table, or coloring station.
- ☐ Easy lawn games such as beanbag toss, ring toss, or oversized blocks.

For older adults and all ages

- ☐ A shaded conversation area with comfortable chairs.
- ☐ Cards, board games, bingo, trivia, puzzles, or seated lawn games.
- ☐ A neighborhood-history table where longtime residents can share stories or photos.
- ☐ Name-tag conversation prompts or simple activities that pair children and adults.

Need to borrow something?

WNA does not yet have a formal borrowing system, but the board may be able to help with a one-time request. Contact the WNA board early if you need tables, chairs, games, coolers, or other supplies. Availability is not guaranteed.

6. During the Party

- ☐ Welcome neighbors and introduce people who have not met.

- ☐ Invite guests to use name tags and voluntarily share contact information.
- ☐ Keep the schedule relaxed and flexible.
- ☐ Use conversation starters if helpful: How long have you lived here? What brought you to Westmorland? What is your favorite thing about the neighborhood? What hobby or skill would you enjoy sharing?
- ☐ Take photos only with permission.
- ☐ Ask whether anyone would like to help with or host the next gathering.
- ☐ Encourage everyone to [Follow Westmorland](#), for neighborhood updates and ability to choose interests and volunteer preferences.

7. After the Party

- ☐ Clean up the gathering area and remove signs or other materials.
- ☐ Thank your co-hosts and neighbors.
- ☐ Share contact information only with permission.
- ☐ Save notes about what worked and what you would change next time.
- ☐ Consider a tentative idea or date for the next gathering.

8. WNA \$50 Permit Reimbursement

Westmorland Neighborhood Association will reimburse the City of Madison's \$50 Neighborhood Block Party Permit application fee.

- ☐ Save the City's invoice or receipt showing payment of the \$50 permit fee.
- ☐ Include your name, contact information, block party date, and location.
- ☐ Email the documentation to WNA1941@gmail.com.

City Resources

Neighborhood Block Party Permit
Resident Petition
Online Permit Application
PDF Block Party Permit Application
Street Use Permit information
City questions: MadisonEvents@cityofmadison.com



WESTMORLAND BLOCK PARTY

YOU'RE INVITED!

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location: _____

Come meet your neighbors for food, conversation and family-friendly fun!

Please bring: _____

RSVP / food sign-up: _____

Hosted by: _____

Questions? _____

Bring a chair and stop by, even if you can only stay a few minutes.

✂ ————— CUT HERE ————— ✂



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