

# Corporate Event Planning Checklist

Everything your team needs to plan a flawless outdoor or off-site corporate event —  
from the first site visit to the final strike.

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Nashville's premier tent, furniture & event rental specialists

# How to Use This Checklist

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This checklist was built from years of producing corporate events across Nashville — from intimate executive retreats to 1,000-person galas. Work through each section in order, ideally 90–120 days before your event. Check off every item, note any open questions, and share the completed document with your rental partner, venue contact, and key vendors. The more information every party has up front, the smoother your event day will be.

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Venue specifics, truck access, portage, and crew requirements

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Surface assessment, staking vs. ballasting, and space clearance

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## SECTION 01

# 01 Site Access & Logistics

*Confirm the physical pathway from street to setup — before anything else is planned.*

## VENUE IDENTIFICATION

- Confirm exact venue location and specific area (e.g., Ballroom B, Pavilion Lawn, Rooftop Terrace)
- Request a venue diagram or site map showing the event footprint  
*Hand-drawn sketches and marked-up Google Maps screenshots are welcome.*
- Note whether GTE has previously installed at this venue  
*Prior experience means faster setup and fewer surprises.*
- Obtain all gate codes, key card access, or security check-in procedures

## TRUCK ACCESS & PARKING

- Identify designated parking for delivery trucks (standard box truck — similar to a FedEx/UPS vehicle)
- Confirm there are no height restrictions, low-hanging trees, or overhead obstructions along the route
- Note any tight turns, weight-restricted bridges, or narrow entries the driver must navigate
- Confirm loading dock availability: dock height, access hours, and distance to setup area
- Identify whether multiple vendor trucks will share loading at the same time  
*Stagger arrival windows to prevent gridlock and delays.*

## PORTAGE & INTERIOR ACCESS

- Measure the distance from parking/truck to the setup location  
*If over 50 feet, plan for additional crew time and equipment.*
- Confirm whether dollies, hand trucks, or forklifts can be used — or if hand-carry is required
- Document all stairs: number of flights, step dimensions, and weight limits
- Document all elevators: interior dimensions (W x D x H), weight capacity, and freight vs. passenger  
*Confirm moving blankets will be in place before crew arrives if protecting elevator walls.*
- Confirm 20-foot pole clearance for tent installation if applicable
- Note any surface protection requirements: hardwood floors, marble, cobblestone, turf  
*Specify whether pads, shims, or protective mats are needed under all legs and bases.*

## CREW WELFARE & SITE RESTRICTIONS

- Confirm restroom access for crew during installation and strike  
*For installs over 2 hours, restrooms must be accessible. If unavailable, we can source a port-o-potty.*
- Designate a crew break area away from the guest-facing event space
- Confirm drinking water access for crew on site
- Note any venue restrictions: no-smoking policy, noise curfews, work hour limits
- Confirm cell phone signal availability at the setup location  
*If signal is unreliable, establish a radio or walkie-talkie protocol.*

**PRO TIP | Document Everything Visually**

*Take photos from the street all the way to the setup location during your site visit. These images are invaluable for crew briefings and prevent costly surprises on event day.*

## SECTION 02

# 02 Ground Conditions & Tent Setup

*The ground tells the whole story. Know your surface before you spec your tent.*

## SPACE ASSESSMENT

- Confirm the setup footprint is clear of obstructions before crew arrives  
*Any furniture, landscaping, or stored items must be removed in advance.*
- Measure total area needed: tent size plus a minimum 10-foot perimeter on all sides for lifting
- Confirm ground is level — or note any grade/slope that requires leveling shims
- Identify ground surface: grass, asphalt, concrete, sand, gravel, decking, or rooftop
- Determine required leg height: standard 8-foot legs or 10-foot legs based on stage or terrain

## ANCHORING METHOD

- Confirm whether staking is permitted — this is always the safest anchoring option  
*Stakes penetrate 3–4 feet into the ground.*
- Call 811 (or local equivalent) to mark underground utilities before any digging  
*This is legally required in most municipalities. Check for power lines, water, irrigation, and coral.*
- If staking into asphalt: confirm whether ground patching is required post-event  
*Also confirm whether a compressor and stake puller must be brought on site.*
- If staking is NOT permitted: confirm water barrel ballasting is approved  
*Barrels must be filled in place. Identify the water source and confirm hose access.*
- If water barrels are not viable: confirm Block & Roll (B&R;) ballast is approved  
*B&R; dolly pathway must be accessible and wide enough for equipment transport.*
- For rooftops, piers, and decks: obtain and document the structural weight capacity**  
*Share this with GTE before finalizing the tent specification.*

## UNDER-TENT CONFIGURATION

- Confirm stage placement and dimensions — note any center poles that may affect layout
- Confirm dance floor placement and surface type beneath it  
*For outdoor dance floors, identify what lies underneath (grass, gravel, asphalt). A foundation layer may be required.*
- Confirm lounge, bar, catering, or AV positioning relative to tent poles and legs
- Identify any sprinkler systems — must be shut off 48–72 hours before installation  
*Wet ground causes equipment to sink and can damage both the lawn and rental items.*

### PRO TIP | Stake When You Can — Always

*Water barrels and B&R; systems are effective, but staking is unmatched for security in wind. If there is any chance of staking, pursue it — especially for events near the coast or in open fields.*

## SECTION 03

# 03 Power, Lighting & Technology

*Map your power before you map your floor plan. Everything else depends on it.*

## POWER SOURCE ASSESSMENT

- Locate all available power sources at or near the event space  
*Mark each on the venue diagram with outlet type and amperage.*
- Calculate total power draw for all vendors: AV, catering, lighting, climate, and bar
- Confirm the number of dedicated circuits available  
*Coffee makers, espresso machines, and large appliances require their own dedicated circuit.*
- Identify circuit breaker location and assign a single point of contact to manage it
- Measure distance from power source(s) to tent/event space  
*Determine whether extension cords or a generator are required.*
- Confirm generator placement if venue power is insufficient or unavailable  
*Note fuel type, run time, noise level, and proximity to guests.*

## EVENT LIGHTING

- Confirm whether tent lighting is included in the rental package
- Identify power source for lighting and required cord length
- Confirm any lighted exit signs, pathway lighting, or safety lighting requirements  
*These may be required by the fire marshal or venue.*
- Plan for early morning or late-night installation/removal lighting  
*If ambient light is insufficient, GTE can provide supplemental work lighting.*

## AV & TECHNOLOGY

- Share AV vendor power requirements with GTE at least 2 weeks before event
- Confirm Wi-Fi availability and strength at the setup location  
*For presentations, registration systems, or live streaming, signal must be verified on site.*
- Identify cable routing paths to prevent trip hazards — use cord covers or ramp systems
- Confirm any ceiling height restrictions that may affect projection screens or trussing

### PRO TIP | One Vendor for Power Mapping

*Have your catering team source their equipment through the same rental vendor whenever possible. Fewer parties managing power needs means fewer tripped breakers and fewer mid-event surprises.*

## SECTION 04

# 04 Permits, Safety & Compliance

*Get the paperwork right early — it protects your event, your guests, and your vendors.*

## PERMITS & INSPECTIONS

- Determine whether a special event permit is required from your municipality
- Contact the local fire marshal to confirm tent permit and inspection requirements  
*Most jurisdictions require flame-retardant certification for tent fabric.*
- Confirm maximum occupancy limit for the tent or off-site venue
- Obtain all vendor Certificates of Insurance (COI) and share with venue**  
*GTE's COI will be provided upon request. Confirm venue's additional insured requirements.*
- Confirm alcohol permit or liquor license is secured if a bar is included
- Verify noise ordinance compliance and apply for noise variance if evening music is planned

## LIFE SAFETY & EMERGENCY PLANNING

- Ensure all exit pathways are clear and clearly marked — never obstructed by tables or decor
- Build an emergency contact list: client, venue, GTE, AV, catering, security, and local emergency services  
*GTE is available after hours. Save our number before event day.*
- Confirm first aid station location and assign a responsible party
- Identify AED location if available at the venue
- Brief all vendors on emergency exit routes and meeting point

## VENDOR COMPLIANCE

- Collect COI from every vendor attaching equipment to the tent structure  
*This includes AV rigs, drape, floral installations, and caterer equipment.*
- Confirm each attached vendor's timeline for installation and removal
- Ensure all vendors have reviewed and agreed to venue restrictions

### PRO TIP | Book Your Fire Marshal Inspection Early

*Fire inspections can be scheduled weeks out in busy municipalities. Book as soon as your tent is confirmed — do not leave this to the week before.*

## SECTION 05

## 05 Guest Comfort &amp; Experience

*Comfortable guests stay longer, engage more, and remember your event for the right reasons.*

## CLIMATE CONTROL

- Assess expected temperature range for the event date and time of day  
*Nashville evenings can be surprisingly cool at elevation — always plan for both heating and cooling.*
- Confirm whether tent sidewalls are needed for wind, rain, or temperature control
- Reserve HVAC, fans, or misting systems based on guest count and tent size
- Confirm power availability for all climate equipment  
*High-draw HVAC units will need dedicated circuits.*

## FLOORING &amp; ACCESSIBILITY

- Determine whether flooring or ground cover is required (grass, gravel, sand, or uneven terrain)
- Plan ADA-accessible pathways from parking to entrance and throughout the event space  
*Guests with mobility aids need smooth, stable surface from arrival to their seat.*
- Identify outdoor dance floor foundation needs based on surface below  
*A secondary flooring layer is often required for outdoor installations.*
- Confirm whether a tarp is needed to protect the dance floor before and after the event
- If near a muddy or gravel approach: plan for guests stepping on that surface before the floor  
*Entryway mats, stepping stones, or a pathway solution prevents tracking onto the dance floor.*

## SEATING &amp; FURNITURE STRATEGY

- Match seating type to event format: banquet rounds vs. conference tables vs. theater rows vs. lounge  
*Not all chairs are created equal — select based on duration, formality, and guest demographics.*
- Plan communal tables and highboys for networking areas where guests can set items down to shake hands
- Confirm chair and table count includes 10–15% buffer for unexpected guests or last-minute needs**  
*Always order a little extra — unused inventory is far less costly than shortage.*
- Confirm all table linens are appropriate for outdoor use  
*For outdoor events in wind-prone areas, use linen clips or switch to spandex for stability.*

## SIGNAGE, BRANDING &amp; ESSENTIALS

- Plan wayfinding signage from parking to registration to event space
- Identify branded decal and signage opportunities: registration bars, sponsor displays, entrance arches  
*Branded environments reinforce your company identity and photo opportunities for guests.*
- Confirm trash and recycling station placement and bin quantity for guest count
- Confirm stanchion placement for queuing: registration, bar, food service, and guest flow control
- Confirm guest restroom access from the event space — distance, quantity, and cleanliness plan

**PRO TIP | Design for Connection, Not Just Capacity**

*The best corporate events are designed so people can set things down — drinks, bags, lanyards — and engage face-to-face. Mix round banquet tables, cocktail highboys, and lounge clusters to create natural networking zones throughout the space.*

## SECTION 06

## 06

**Vendor Coordination**

*Fewer vendors, unified timelines, and proper introductions prevent the most common event-day failures.*

**VENDOR LIST & COMMUNICATION**

- Build a complete vendor list with company name, contact name, mobile number, and delivery window  
*Desk phones are not acceptable as primary contact numbers — mobile only.*
- Introduce all vendors to each other by email or group chat at least 2 weeks before the event**  
*Vendors who know each other collaborate — vendors who don't, collide.*
- Assign a single point of contact to receive all vendor questions on event day  
*Direct vendors to you — not to the client, and not to individual crew members.*
- Confirm your rental company (GTE) has mobile numbers for client, venue contact, and groundskeeper
- Bring business cards and distribute to venue staff, security, and key vendors on arrival

**DELIVERY & ACCESS WINDOWS**

- Confirm earliest possible access time for each vendor
- Confirm hard deadline for all vendor setup completion
- Confirm pickup window: earliest we can return and when we must be fully out
- Stagger delivery windows for vendors sharing the same loading dock or entry  
*Overlapping large truck deliveries create delays that cascade through the entire day.*
- Confirm whether GTE can deliver a day early or pick up a day after  
*GTE charges by rental period (approx. 3–4 days including delivery and pickup), not by the day.*

**SHARED INVENTORY & STORAGE**

- Have catering source linens, tabletop, and bar equipment through the same rental vendor when possible**  
*Consolidated orders mean fewer delivery fees, less coordination overhead, and better pricing.*
- If items are stored in a separate area (closet, kitchen, staging room), mark clearly on the diagram  
*Label everything to prevent loss — especially linen bags and small tabletop items.*
- Track equipment movement for vendors who drop items and leave before setup completes
- Document storage location for any items that arrive early and must be held on site

**PRO TIP | The Power of the Pre-Event Vendor Introduction**

*One email chain connecting your caterer, AV team, florist, and rental company saves hours of event-day phone tag. Share the floor plan and each vendor's window in a single message — the best events are built on that foundation.*

## SECTION 07

# 07 Food, Beverage & Catering Setup

*Catering is often the single biggest power draw at an event. Plan for it first.*

## POWER & EQUIPMENT PLANNING

- Obtain catering team's full equipment list and power requirements
- Assign dedicated circuits for high-draw appliances: coffee makers, espresso machines, chafing dishes**  
*Coffee makers must always have their own dedicated circuit — they are a leading cause of popped breakers.*
- Confirm whether catering requires a generator or if venue power is sufficient
- Identify placement of catering equipment relative to power sources  
*Extension cords should be minimized and never daisy-chained.*

## WATER ACCESS

- Confirm water source location and distance from catering setup
- Confirm hose access if water is needed for installation (e.g., water barrels, power breezers)
- Identify drain or dump location for water post-event  
*Note if drain is far from original placement — this affects strike time planning.*
- Confirm gray water disposal plan if catering is preparing food on site

## BAR & BEVERAGE

- Confirm bar structure type: traditional bar, portable bar, high-top cocktail setup
- Confirm whether bar is inside or outside the tent and plan power for lighting and refrigeration
- Confirm ice delivery logistics — timing, quantity, and storage on site
- Confirm tipping and glassware plan: will glassware rental be included or provided by caterer?

### PRO TIP | Bundle Catering Equipment Into Your Rental Order

*When your caterer rents their chafing dishes, serving tables, and bar equipment from GTE alongside your tent and furniture, you benefit from a single delivery, a single invoice, and a vendor team that already knows your floor plan.*

## SECTION 08

**08 Contingency & Weather Planning**

*Nashville weather changes fast. The best planners make peace with uncertainty — then plan around it.*

**RAIN PLAN**

- Secure a tent on standby for every outdoor event — do not leave this to chance**

*Contact GTE to confirm tent availability and hold it as a rain plan backup.*

- Establish a weather decision deadline: typically 48–72 hours before the event

*Make the call early — last-minute tent deployments are possible but come at premium cost and stress.*

- Identify a shelter location for guests if weather requires evacuation of the tent

- Confirm tent sidewalls are available and accessible for rapid deployment

**WIND MITIGATION**

- Assess wind exposure at the venue — is the site open, coastal, or in a known wind corridor?

- Use linen clips on all tablecloths for outdoor events in wind-prone areas

*Alternatively, consider spandex table covers for a cleaner, more wind-resistant look.*

- Ensure all hedge walls, pipe-and-drape structures, and freestanding decor are weighted or staked

- Inspect tent anchoring method in context of expected wind conditions

*Coastal events should always stake when possible.*

**MULTI-DAY & OVERNIGHT EXPOSURE**

- If rentals remain outdoors overnight between delivery and event: plan for dew, moisture, and rain

- Confirm sprinklers are turned OFF 48–72 hours before installation on grass**

*Wet soil allows tent stakes and table legs to sink, causing uneven surfaces and equipment damage.*

- For outdoor dance floors: plan for ground moisture and provide a protective tarp pre-event

- Protect linens and fabric items from sun bleaching if left outdoors for extended periods

**PRO TIP | Decide Within the Forecast Window**

*For most events, a reliable rain decision can be made 72 hours out. Plan your decision tree in advance — if X, then call GTE by [date]. Delayed decisions cost more and limit your options.*

## SECTION 09

**09** **Timeline Milestones***Book early. Confirm often. The best equipment, staff, and venues go first.***12+ MONTHS OUT**

- Lock in your venue — before anything else can be planned
- Contact GTE to secure equipment availability for peak-season dates**  
*Booking 12 months out locks in current pricing and guarantees labor availability before blackout dates.*
- Identify event format, estimated guest count, and budget range

**6–9 MONTHS OUT**

- Confirm tent size, structure type, and anchoring method with GTE
- Book AV vendor, catering, entertainment, and photography
- Conduct site visit with GTE representative to assess ground, access, and power
- Begin permit applications for fire, noise, and special event as applicable  
*Lead times vary widely — start early.*

**3–6 MONTHS OUT**

- Submit GTE order including all furniture, lighting, flooring, and climate equipment
- Finalize guest count and floor plan — share with all vendors
- Confirm all vendor contracts, insurance certificates, and timelines
- Schedule fire marshal inspection (if required)
- Introduce all vendors to each other via group email

**4–6 WEEKS OUT**

- Conduct final site walk with venue contact and GTE
- Confirm delivery and pickup windows with every vendor
- Finalize and distribute event-day contact list to all parties
- Confirm power requirements with catering and AV — adjust circuit plan if needed
- Finalize floor plan diagram and distribute to GTE at least 48 hours before delivery  
*Hand-drawn sketches are acceptable — just make sure dimensions are noted.*

**1–2 WEEKS OUT**

- Reconfirm delivery window with GTE
- Confirm venue access: gate codes, key contacts, elevator reservations
- Confirm sprinkler shutoff date for grass installations
- Check extended weather forecast and activate rain plan decision protocol if needed
- Brief all internal team members on event-day roles and emergency contacts

**48 HOURS OUT**

- Final diagram submitted to GTE (required)**
- Confirm all vendor arrival windows are staggered and communicated
- Confirm ground protection, moving blankets, and elevator prep are in place at venue
- Check weather one final time and confirm rain plan status

**PRO TIP | Locking In Early Is a Strategic Advantage**

*Peak-season dates in Nashville fill up fast. Booking your rental partner 6–12 months out doesn't just guarantee pricing — it ensures your preferred items are available and that dedicated labor is reserved for your event before company-wide blackout periods kick in.*

## SECTION 10

# 10 Event Day & Strike Checklist

*The day-of is all about execution. If the prep was done right, this section should be easy.*

## PRE-EVENT WALK-THROUGH

- Walk the full setup with venue contact and confirm every element is in place
- Test all lighting, climate equipment, and power connections before guests arrive
- Confirm all exit pathways are clear and signage is visible
- Confirm restrooms are stocked, clean, and accessible
- Take pre-event photos of all areas — from truck arrival path to full setup**  
*These protect all parties in the event of a damage claim.*
- Confirm GTE crew has departed and space is guest-ready

## DURING THE EVENT

- Keep GTE's after-hours number saved — we are available for urgent issues
- Monitor weather and have a designated person to trigger rain plan if needed
- Do not allow guests or staff to move or reposition tent structures, poles, or anchoring
- If dance floor gets wet, mop before guests return to prevent slipping and additional cleaning fees

## STRIKE & PICKUP

- Confirm pickup window has not changed — communicate any timing shifts to GTE immediately
- Ensure all linens are separated from food debris and bagged prior to pickup  
*Excess cleaning fees apply for linens returned with food waste or liquid damage.*
- Clear dance floor of any spilled liquids or mud before crew arrives for pickup
- Remove pets from the property during strike — for crew and animal safety
- Take post-strike photos of all areas matching pre-event documentation
- Confirm all rented items are accounted for and none are left in secondary storage areas  
*Check closets, kitchens, and staging rooms where items may have been stored during the event.*
- Complete a final walkthrough with the venue contact to confirm the space is returned to original condition

### PRO TIP | GTE Is Available After Hours

*Something unexpected always happens. If an issue arises during your event — a lighting malfunction, a missing item, a last-minute setup change — call us. We build after-hours availability into every event we support because that is when it matters most.*

