Pack a guest’s holiday meal in separate components

A guest-portion checklist and reheating-label space. Use the free printable with the steps below. Compare the optional supply only if you need it.

Materials: Cooked meal components; suitable food containers; labels; clean utensils; insulated carrier and cold packs when needed

1. Ask what the guest needs

Confirm the number of portions and any dietary requirements. Keep a record of the actual ingredients. Plan separate spaces for wet sauces, crisp toppings and foods needing different reheating methods.

2. Portion with safe handling

Use clean utensils and suitable shallow containers. Follow authoritative leftover-cooling guidance instead of leaving the meal on the table while you pack gifts. Do not mix fresh food into older leftovers without tracking their dates.

3. Label the components

Write the food name, preparation date and relevant storage or reheating directions. Explain what needs refrigeration on arrival. The container's maker instructions apply separately to its base, lid, freezer use and any reheating method.

Source / recipe: USDA leftovers and food-safety guidance

Keep perishable food cold and follow actual recipe, food and container instructions. Use the worksheet to organize ingredients and serving arrangements.

Your printable workspace

Main component / ingredients / date

Side component / ingredients / date

Storage / reheating / arrival needs

Use suitable items you own. Check exact recipe, material and product directions.