4 *entertaining* TIPS FOR THE SHY WOMAN

1 GUEST LIST

People make a gathering so be thoughtful about your guest list. Think of people you want to introduce to one another - regardless of age or occupation. And if you know two people don't get along, invite them to separate gatherings.

2 INVITES

For a last-minute small-group event, a call or text is fine. If you are having a larger gathering, consider a physical invitation that lets people know the day, time, and what to expect meal wise so guests don't come hungry for an party with light refreshments - or eat dinner before coming to a BBQ you've got on the grill.

3 FOOD & DRINK

Plan ahead. Stock your kitchen with drinks. If you have a large drink dispenser, lemonade or even water will keep guests refreshed. Consider toothpick-ready snacks for guests to enjoy as you prepare the main course.

4 GET HELP

Maybe you can hire someone to clean the house before the party or a caterer. But not everyone can. Instead, enlist the help of friends who don't mind bringing an appetizer or their favorite dessert.

BONUS *tips*

No gathering is perfect. The drinks will spill, the food will burn, the AC will go out - just expect it - and don't let it ruin the gathering.

We are military women! We are used to things not going as planned. A good hostess can laugh and remember that the food isn't important - the people are.

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