

Friendsgiving, at your pace

Choose one arrival activity and one after-dinner activity. Dinner conversation is the default, not an empty slot to fill. This menu is a schedule; pages 2 to 5 contain the rules. Page 6 is the answer key. These original house games have planning time allowances, not playtested durations.

Before dinner: choose one

One Table, Three Conditions | Up to 8 minutes | Page 2

A gentle cooperative puzzle using five paper labels. Finish early when solved.

Three-Track Arc | About 6 minutes | Page 3

Arrange imaginary music cards. No singing, trivia, streaming, or accounts.

Between courses: optional

Supper Forecast | 2 to 3 minutes | Page 3

Predict the table's votes on two fictional choices. Skip if conversation flows; stop when serving resumes.

After clearing: choose one

Second-Clue Supper Mystery | Up to 8 minutes | Page 4

Read evidence, make a provisional answer, then revise or confirm it. No real guests are suspects.

Postcard From This Table | 6 minutes plus 1 per group | Page 5

Make one seated photo or sketch, write two clues, then reveal. Uploading is optional and comes afterward.

Set out before guests arrive

Paper, pens, chosen rule pages, and a timer. For postcards, a camera OR sketch paper per pair/trio. Put page 6 aside. Cover clue two on page 4 until its reveal.

Print one rules copy per discussion group and one prediction slip per willing voter. Read aloud or enlarge this text as needed; leave paths clear and supplies within reach.

Say this before starting

"You can play, watch, help, or pass without explaining. We stop for food. Written, spoken, pointed, or dictated contributions are welcome. Photos can be sketches. Sharing is a separate choice."

Arrival choice: _____ After-dinner choice: _____

Guest helping run games: _____ Supplies ready: _____

If sharing photos, who can see them: _____

One Table, Three Conditions

PLAYERS: 4 to 6 together. Split 7 to 12 into two groups of 3 to 6, as evenly as possible. Seven becomes 3 + 4; eleven becomes 5 + 6. Each group uses its own copy and does not race.

MATERIALS: Five paper cards, a pen, and a sheet numbered 1 through 5. Copy the labels below onto separate slips. These are paper labels, not items to fetch from the kitchen. Keep the answer on page 6 hidden.

TIME: Up to 8 minutes including instructions and the answer. Allow no more than five minutes of solving, and finish early when solved. This is a gentle warm-up, not a hard logic test.

Copy these five card labels

Spoon
Napkin
Mug
Candle
Postcard

The three conditions

1. Mug occupies position 3.
2. Spoon sits immediately before Napkin, in numerical order.
3. Postcard occupies position 5.

How to play

Place one card in each numbered position. Start with one turn around the group: suggest a placement, ask about a condition, or pass. Then discuss and move cards together until all three conditions hold.

All conditions stay visible. A guest may direct a move instead of reaching, point to a card, ask for a spoken reading, or observe. Late arrivals may join the discussion. No guest holds a required secret clue.

Finish

Stop when everyone agrees or after five minutes of solving. Check page 6 and read the explanation, even if unfinished. No individual points, speed prizes, or tiebreakers. Stop immediately if food is ready.

Write your final order

1: _____ 2: _____ 3: _____ 4: _____ 5: _____

Three-Track Arc

PLAYERS: 4 to 6 together; split 7 to 12 into groups of 3 to 6. MATERIALS: Six paper cards and three spaces labeled Arrival, Dinner, Wind-down. TIME: About 6 minutes. Copy these imaginary tracks onto separate slips:

Doorbell Groove: bright, bouncy
Window Seat: gentle, steady
Kitchen Disco: lively, rhythmic
Long Conversation: quiet, flowing
Night Bus: slow, reflective
Second Helping: warm, upbeat

Place the first three cards in the three spaces. Going around once, each guest may swap two occupied cards, replace one with an unused card, or pass. Offer a short reason aloud or in writing if desired. Another guest may move cards for you. Late arrivals take the next turn.

After the last turn, read the sequence and finish. No points, ties, or correct musical taste. The descriptors carry the game; no hearing, singing, playback, or song recognition is required. Stop for food.

Supper Forecast

PLAYERS: 4 to 12 invited; at least two voters per round. MATERIALS: Paper and pens. TIME: Two rounds of 60 to 90 seconds. Play only between courses, after participants have finished eating; skip if conversation flows.

1. Your imaginary neighborhood restaurant has one spare room. A: a listening lounge. B: a board-game library.
2. A fictional midnight diner needs an opening-night special. A: breakfast at dinner. B: a dessert tasting menu.

Read one question. Privately write your vote (A/B) AND prediction of the group's result (A/B/tie). Reveal both simultaneously when everyone is ready. Count votes cast, including your own. One point for a correct majority/tie prediction. Repeat for question two; highest totals share the win. Maximum two points, no tiebreaker.

Pass by leaving a round blank, or dictate privately to a nonvoting helper. Do not explain or defend your vote. Void rounds with fewer than two voters. Discard an unrevealed round if serving resumes; a completed first round can stand alone. An odd guest count can tie when someone passes.

Copy one slip per voter

Round 1 | My vote A/B: ____ | My prediction A/B/tie: ____ | Points: ____
Round 2 | My vote A/B: ____ | My prediction A/B/tie: ____ | Points: ____

Second-Clue Supper Mystery

PLAYERS: 4 to 6 together; split 7 to 12 into groups of 3 to 6. MATERIALS: This page, paper, pens, and the covered answer on page 6. TIME: Up to 8 minutes. All clues go to every group at the same time. No real guest plays a suspect or a liar.

Read the premise

At a fictional dinner, exactly one of three helpers moved a recipe envelope from the mantel to a safe place. Alex left at 6:40, Blair at 6:50, and Casey at 7:00. Each was present until leaving once and never returning. All evidence is true; no other person or explanation is possible.

Read clue one

A timestamped photo shows the envelope still on the mantel at 6:45. Another shows it gone at 6:55.

Discuss for two minutes. Record a provisional answer or "not enough evidence." Reveal these answers before uncovering clue two. Silent reading, written observations, and passing are welcome; nobody must defend a guess.

Provisional answer: _____

What supports it: _____

STOP: cover or fold below this line until the second reveal

Read clue two

The helper who moved the envelope had already left by 6:55.

Discuss for two more minutes. Record a final answer or "undecided." A first guess may be confirmed or revised. No penalty for changing your mind.

Final answer: _____

What the new evidence changed or confirmed: _____

Finish

Reveal page 6 and read the reasoning, even if the group remains undecided. There are no individual scores, accusations, elimination, or tiebreakers. Pause or finish early if guests want to return to conversation.

Postcard From This Table

PLAYERS: Pairs or trios, one entry each. Five guests: one pair + one trio. Eleven guests: one pair + three trios. MATERIALS: A camera OR sketch paper per group, paper for clues and guesses, pens, timer.

TIME: One minute explaining, three minutes capturing, two minutes writing, then up to one minute per group at a later natural reveal pause. Eight minutes for two groups; ten for four. The timer is a stopping point, not a race.

Make one image

From your seats, choose a stationary visible object and photograph or sketch it. Do not move hot dishes, enter private rooms, or include people, reflections, screens, private notes, or personal documents. A napkin or empty glass is enough. Keep the image hidden until the reveal.

Write two clues

Write one literally true description and one imaginative comparison. Neither should name the object. Example for a folded napkin: "I began as a flat square" and "I am the smallest mountain at dinner."

Guess and reveal

At a natural pause, read one group's clues aloud. The other groups confer briefly, each write one guess, and reveal simultaneously. Show the photo or sketch and identify the object. Accept the object type rather than requiring a particular identical glass or fork. Repeat for the next group.

Finish after one reveal per group. No points or ties to resolve. Guests can choose a subject, dictate clues, sketch, observe, or skip. Ask for any needed access changes rather than assuming everyone can see or reach the object. Uploading and later sharing are separate choices, after the reveal, not conditions of play.

Copy one clue slip per pair or trio

Literal clue: _____

Imaginative clue: _____

Our object (keep hidden): _____

If the group chooses to share photos afterward

Who can see them: _____

Where we will collect them: _____

Ask separately before sharing images outside this gathering.

Keep this page aside

Read answers only after the corresponding game finishes. These are cooperative activities: finishing early, passing, or revising a guess does not need a penalty.

One Table, Three Conditions

The only order is:

1. Spoon
2. Napkin
3. Mug
4. Candle
5. Postcard

Mug fixes position 3 and Postcard fixes position 5. Spoon must sit immediately before Napkin. Positions 2 and 3 would displace Mug, as would 3 and 4; positions 4 and 5 would displace Postcard. Therefore Spoon and Napkin occupy 1 and 2. Candle takes the remaining position, 4.

Second-Clue Supper Mystery

Answer: Blair.

After clue one, Blair and Casey are both possible. Alex left at 6:40, but the 6:45 photo still shows the envelope on the mantel. Alex never returned, so Alex could not move it after that photo.

Clue two says the mover had already left by 6:55. Casey stayed until 7:00, so Casey is excluded. Blair was present after 6:45 and left at 6:50, before 6:55. Blair is the only helper consistent with both clues.

The other games

Three-Track Arc has no correct sequence and no score.

Supper Forecast awards one point for predicting the actual majority or tie in each completed round. Maximum two points; highest totals share the win. Passes do not count as votes. With five guests, two A votes, two B votes, and one pass produce a tie. With eleven guests, six A votes and five B votes produce A, not a tie. Void a round with fewer than two voters.

Postcard From This Table has no points. Accept a reasonable object-type guess and reveal every participating group's image once. Do not score photo quality, speed, or handwriting.

End with the dinner, not the score

Guests can leave the games unfinished. Return to food, conversation, or goodbyes whenever that suits the room. Sharing any photographs afterward remains optional.