



# ACLU

# HOUSE PARTY TOOLKIT

There are so many ways to support the ACLU. You can donate, retweet @ACLU, share our blog posts, and show up at rallies. Still looking for more ways to help?

One way to maximize your impact is to bring your friends and family together to eat, drink, and donate. That's right... you can throw your own **ACLU house party**.

## WHAT'S AN ACLU HOUSE PARTY?

It's simple: invite your friends over, tell them about the ACLU's work and why it's important to you, and give them an easy way to donate. Oh, and have a little fun while you're at it.

## WHERE DO I START?

First things first: if you plan to hold a fundraising house party, email [events@aclu.org](mailto:events@aclu.org) and give us a heads up. It helps us to know a little bit about your event, the date, and the location. Then, use this toolkit to make planning a breeze.

Your toolkit includes:

- **Party checklist** that covers everything you'll need to host a great event
- **Sample party agenda**, though we encourage you to make it your own
- **FAQ** to guide you in your party planning
- **Sign-in sheets** so guests who want more info from the ACLU can stay informed
- **Printable donation form** for guests who want to make their donations by check
- **Sample email invite** for you to personalize and add your flair
- **Sample thank you email** with handy links for your friends to stay involved
- **ACLU resources** for you to read and provide to your guests

**Now all you need to do is set a date.  
Thanks for being part of the fight to defend our rights!**

# Start-to-Finish House Party Checklist

## Supplies

- Food
- Beverages
- A TV or computer monitor with an internet connection if you plan to show videos
- Speakers for the videos or music
- Handouts with a quick history of the ACLU
- [ACLU swag](#) to give out as party favors

## Three to Four Weeks Out

- Decide on your location, date, and time. If you can't host at your place, consider local businesses or community centers that might be willing to open their doors for a good cause (and maybe even contribute some cookies or coffee).
- Set a fundraising goal. People will be motivated to donate during your party if the finish line is in sight and they know they can help you cross it.
- Choose how you'll collect donations (see the FAQ for suggestions). Online fundraising platforms like [Facebook](#) or [Crowdrise](#) make it easy to dedicate your event to the ACLU. This means your guests can donate online before or after the event, plus your campaign has the potential to reach more people via social media. If you want to go this route, now's the time to set up your event page and start sharing it—you'll find us listed on these platforms as American Civil Liberties Union Foundation, Inc.
- Email [events@aclu.org](mailto:events@aclu.org) with the date, the location, and a few details about your event.
- Create your invite list—not everyone will be able to make it, so don't be afraid to invite a crowd!
- Send your invites. Email, e-invitation, or old-fashioned paper invites all work; go with what's easiest for you and your guests.
- Order any [ACLU swag](#) you want to decorate your place or give to your guests.

## Two Weeks Out

- Plan your menu and create a shopping list. If you're cooking to impress, recruit some day-of assistance. (Or do yourself a favor and go with fruit, cheese and crackers.)
- Follow up with anyone who hasn't responded. It might be old school, but a quick phone call adds a nice personal touch. If it turns out they can't make it, ask if they'd be willing to donate anyway and send them links to the [ACLU](#).

## Week Of

- Hit the grocery store for any food, drinks, recyclable utensils, and/or party balloons you may need.
- If you think things might get noisy or are worried about parking, give your neighbors a heads up. Even better—invite them.
- Print your donation forms and any other resources you want to hand out at the party.
- Send a reminder email to those who RSVP'd yes and tell them to get excited!

## Day Before

- Tidy up! Your friends will thank you.
- If there's food prep you can do ahead of time, go for it.
- Test out your music playlist and video setup.

## The Big Day

- Finish up any food or drink preparation.
- Rearrange the furniture so people have a place to mingle.
- Greet your guests with a smile and have fun!

## Post-Party

- Show some appreciation with a personal thank you email to guests.
- Enter the info from your printed sign-in sheet into our [online sign-in form](#) so that your guests who want updates from the ACLU can stay informed.
- If you collected cash, donate it online to the ACLU. Mail any paper checks you collected to:

**ACLU Membership – House Party**  
125 Broad St., 18<sup>th</sup> Fl.  
New York, NY 10004

**6-6:30pm**

Greet your guests and ask them to sign in using the sign-in sheet provided or [online using a computer or tablet](#). Give your guests time to socialize over drinks.

**6:30-6:35pm**

Briefly welcome your guests and remind them that the evening's event is a fundraiser for the ACLU. Let them know you'll be sharing more in a bit, and encourage them to get to know one another and have fun!

**6:35-7:30pm**

More mingling, plus food or passed appetizers. Now's the time for a game or group icebreaker, if that's your style.

**7:30-7:45pm**

Grab your guests' attention and share with them your reason for hosting an event to raise money for the ACLU. A personal story about your connection to the ACLU, focusing on one or two of the issues most important to you, is a really effective way to share your message.

If it makes sense in your space, consider showing a brief ACLU video, or download and hand out the "[Get to Know the ACLU](#)" infographic of groundbreaking ACLU cases. See the resources section of this toolkit for more ideas.

If there are others in attendance who have a strong connection to the ACLU's mission, you may want to ask them (ahead of time) to share a few words as well.

Finally, ask your guests to donate. Pass out donation forms and, if possible, provide a way for your guests to make donations online in the moment. Make sure they know it's not required but that it's very much appreciated.

**7:45pm and on**

Have a good time bonding over your shared passion for civil liberties!

**Q: What kind of party should I host?**

**A:** That's totally up to you! You know what would be most fun for your friends. Are they more sit-down dinner or backyard barbeque? Tea party or pool party? Perhaps your crowd would be down for a potluck. No need to get fancy—light refreshments are just fine, and the less work you take on as party planner, the more you can focus on the mission of your event.

**Q: Should my party have a theme?**

**A:** That might be fun! If you want to go really wild, throw in a game of ACLU history trivia.

**Q: I don't know the ACLU's work inside and out. Am I disqualified?**

**A:** Not at all! Use the resources included in this toolkit to get familiar, or simply share them directly with your friends and family. Remember: the best way to be an ambassador is to share how your own experiences connect to the ACLU's mission and what inspired you to take action.

**Q: What's the best way to promote my event?**

**A:** If you choose to send your invite through an online platform, there will likely be some built-in features that make it easy to remind and communicate with your guests. If your event is open to anyone, take advantage of social media to spread the word, and ask each guest to invite a friend or two. Expand your reach even further by co-hosting with a friend or colleague—bonus points if you don't have overlapping social circles.

**Q: Can you promote my event on your social media channels?**

**A:** Due to the nature of our work, we can't promote or endorse your event, but did we say thanks for your support? Thanks for your support!

**Q: How should my guests and I make our donations?**

**A:** Great question. We've made it simple for you to collect donations from your guests using one (or more, or all) of these options:

1. Ask your guests to give online to the [ACLU](#). They can donate before or after the event, or even during the party from their phones.
2. Collect cash donations during your event and then donate online to the [ACLU](#).
3. For folks who bring their checkbooks, print the donation form included in this toolkit and have them fill it out. To make it easy for your guests, collect the forms and checks and mail them to:

**ACLU Membership – House Party**

125 Broad St., 18<sup>th</sup> Fl.

New York, NY 10004

4. Start a campaign for the ACLU via [Facebook](#) or [Crowdrise](#), where you'll find us listed as American Civil Liberties Union Foundation, Inc. Include the link in your invite and ask your guests to share it with their networks to raise awareness and build momentum.

**Q: Can you send a speaker to my event?**

**A:** Due to high demand, we may be unable to, but include your request when you email [events@aclu.org](mailto:events@aclu.org) and we'll see what we can do! Be sure to include a description of your event, the date, and the location.

**Q: Are my guests going to get tax receipts for their donations?**

**A:** For gifts made to the ACLU, we send an acknowledgement. If your guest does not make a gift directly to the ACLU, they won't get a tax receipt or an acknowledgement. Contributions to the American Civil Liberties Union are not tax deductible.

**Q: Wait, what's the difference between donating to the ACLU and the ACLU Foundation?**

**A:** Gifts to the [ACLU](#) allow us the greatest flexibility in our work. While not tax-deductible, they allow us to apply the funds wherever need, including advocacy in legislatures at the federal and local level to advance civil liberties. However you choose to donate, we're glad you're with us.

## **ACLU Action**

Your home base for information on the ways you can take action now.

## **ACLU Online Store**

Stock up on stickers, buttons, or bookmarks to pass out at your party. There are even ACLU balloons and temporary tattoos, and purchases support the ACLU.

## **Get to Know the ACLU Infographic**

A downloadable history of the ACLU's landmark Supreme Court cases, from 1920 through today.

## **All ACLU Infographics**

Peruse the resources available on the ACLU's website and share with your guests information on the causes that matter most to you.

## **Know Your Rights**

Easy-to-use resources that outline your rights in a variety of situations. Packs of portable Know Your Rights cards are also available in the [ACLU Store](#).

## **Our Greatest Hits in Under Two Minutes**

A powerful video timeline of some the [ACLU's most important cases](#).

## **The Constitution is for Everyone**

A video portrait of the [ACLU's First Amendment campaign](#), multilingual ads featuring the First Amendment to remind the public that "we the people" means everyone.

## **Even More ACLU Resources**

Search ACLU multimedia by topic, including photo galleries, podcasts, blog posts, and more.

## **Join ACLU's People Power**

Join volunteers across the country by mobilizing when Trump or his administration trample on people's constitutional rights.



# Donation Form



Contributions to the American Civil Liberties Union are not tax deductible.

First Name	Street Address	Email	Donation Amount	Notes:
Last Name	City, State, Zip	Cell Phone	Method	
F:			\$	Notes:
L:		( ) -		
F:			\$	Notes:
L:		( ) -		
F:			\$	Notes:
L:		( ) -		
F:			\$	Notes:
L:		( ) -		
F:			\$	Notes:
L:		( ) -		
F:			\$	Notes:
L:		( ) -		
F:			\$	Notes:
L:		( ) -		
F:			\$	Notes:
L:		( ) -		
F:			\$	Notes:
L:		( ) -		

Host Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Party Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Total Amt. Enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tweak this template to include a few specific details about your party, such as whether guests should expect a meal or just snacks, and include a note about attire if you'd like. If you're fundraising via [Facebook](#) or [Crowdrise](#), be sure to include the link to your fundraising page.

Subject Line:

**You're Invited: House Party in Support of the ACLU!**

Dear [Name],

Please join me for a party to raise money for the ACLU. For nearly 100 years, the ACLU has been defending people's rights. They need us to stand with them, especially now, so let's get together and help!

When: [MM/DD/YY] at \_\_\_\_pm

Where: [Your address and directions if you think guests might need them]

**Refreshments will be served. Dress is casual!**

You can donate now to the [ACLU](#). You'll also have the option to contribute to the ACLU at the party by making a check, cash, or online donation. You'll be supporting the ACLU's defense of our freedoms of speech, religion, privacy, and more. Read more about the ACLU's work [here](#).

Please RSVP by [MM/DD]. If you're unable to make it but would like to show your support, donate online to the [ACLU](#).

Hope you see you there!

[Your Name]

Personalize this template by adding a fun memory or joke from the party. Consider including the website of your [local ACLU affiliate](#) so your friends can get involved at the local level as well.

Subject Line:

**Thanks for your support of the ACLU!**

Dear [Name],

Thank you for attending my house party in support of the ACLU. Thanks to your generous support, we were able to raise a total of \$[dollar amount]!

Now more than ever, people are fired up to fight for our rights. A few of you have asked me how you can stay involved, so here are a few suggestions:

- **[Become an ACLU online activist](#)**
- Follow the ACLU on **[Facebook](#)** and **[Twitter](#)** so that you can share and retweet
- Consider becoming a **[monthly donor](#)** to sustain the ACLU's work through the Trump era and beyond
- Connect with local grassroots communities through **[People Power](#)**

**Thanks again for being part of the fight for our civil liberties.**

Sincerely,

[Your Name]