



Harry Potter Party ~ the Hogwarts Experience

This guide includes all the decorations, games, and activities I did to create an experience the kids talked about for weeks.

You can implement all the ideas or just a few based on your budget. The decorations take some time to make, so work on them weeks ahead.

FOOD:

- Butter Beer (apple juice)
- Snacks for later
- Pizza for dinner
- Dessert (cake if it is a birthday party)

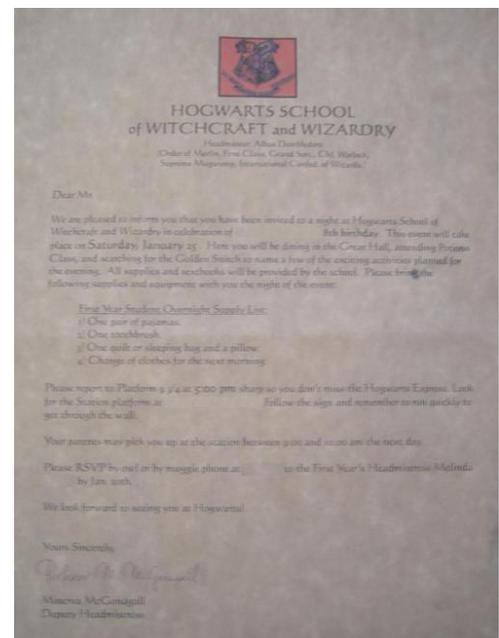
INVITATIONS:

Check a store such as Michael's or a similar shop that sells 8.5"x11" special paper by the sheet. Find some that looks like old parchment-type paper and get enough for your invitations. For added effect, find some parchment type envelopes to mail the letter in.

On the next page is an example of text to use on your invitation. The red text shows where you need to customize the letter. Use a script font (I used Footlight MT Light) for added effect. Google images for "professor mcgonagall's signature" to find the signature I used at the bottom of the letter.

Customize the "Dear ____" for each child, and print on the parchment paper.

Print the return address on your envelopes using the Hogwarts coat of arms and your address so it looks like it came from Hogwarts. Use the special font, too, and it will look official.





HOGWARTS SCHOOL Of WITCHCRAFT and WIZARDRY

Headmaster: Albus Dumbledore

(Order of Merlin, First Class, Grand Sorc., Chf. Warlock,
Supreme Mugwump, International Confed. of Wizards.)

Dear Mr. _____/Miss _____:

We are pleased to inform you that you have been invited to a night at the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in celebration of **BIRTHDAY CHILD'S NAME's** birthday. This event will take place on **DAY, MONTH DATE**.

You will be dining in the Great Hall, attending Charms Class, and searching for the Golden Snitch to name a few of the exciting activities planned for the evening. All supplies and textbooks will be provided by the school. Please bring the following equipment with you the night of the event:

First Year Student Overnight Supply List:

- 1) One pair of pajamas.
- 2) One toothbrush
- 3) One quilt or sleeping bag and a pillow
- 4) Change of clothes for the next morning

Please report to Platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ at **TIME**pm sharp so you don't miss the Hogwarts Express. Look for the Station platform at **PARTY ADDRESS**. Follow the sign and remember to run quickly to get through the wall.

Your parents may pick you up at the station between **TIME** and **TIME** the next morning.

Please RSVP by owl or muggle phone at **PHONE NUMBER** to the First Year's Headmistress **MOTHER'S NAME** by **DEADLINE DATE**.

We look forward to seeing you at Hogwarts!

Yours Sincerely,

Minerva McGonagall
Deputy Headmistress

DECORATIONS:

The Great Hall (your dining room)

- **Portraits:** Google some pictures of Hogwarts' staff such as Severus Snape, Minerva McGonagall, and Albus Dumbledore. Print the pictures, grab a few picture frames from around the house, and temporarily place/hang the pictures in the dining room.
- **Table:** Black plastic tablecover for the table. Use any other accessories you have around the house to add a royal look to the table: candelabras, candles, etc.
- **Goblets:** Purchase some cheap plastic "goblets" to use for drinks. (Walmart or the dollar store).



Bathroom

- Fun surprise! Tape a printout of Moaning Myrtle, who haunts the bathroom at Hogwarts, above the toilet. ☺

Front entrance (outside)

- By the beginning of the sidewalk to the house, place a sign on a stake saying "Hogwarts Express ahead – walk quickly through the wall"
- Hang streamers in front of the entrance way if you can. This is to mimic the walking through the wall. If you can't do this, it is fine without it.
- Place a sign on the front door – "Welcome to Hogwarts, please ring the bell."

COSTUMES:

Party shirts (optional):

Each child will get a shirt to change into when they arrive. This doubles to protect their clothes later with the painting activity. Get enough cheap Hanes plain **black** T-shirts so each child has one. (Purchase a slightly larger size so they are "one size fits all" and can fit over their clothes.)

The children will be divided into two houses, so here are a few options:

1. Get the printable iron-on paper, and add the Hogwarts coat of arms on the pocket area of each shirt so they all match. Don't worry about making them different.
2. Using the printable iron-on paper, make half the shirts with the Hufflepuff coat of arms and half with the Gryffindor coat of arms.
3. Skip the iron-ons, use plain black shirts, and just print some coat of arms that you can pin on them with a safety pin temporarily.

Your costume as hostess/potions teacher

Pull together a Headmistress outfit with black clothes. I used a cape and a witch hat from my Halloween costumes box for added effect over some black clothes.

Wands

No Harry Potter party is complete without everyone getting their own wand. (Party store)

SUPPLIES:

Charms Class:

- Small flower pot for each child – they will be painting them
- One package of seeds (doesn't matter what kind)
- Small bag of potting soil
- Assortment of acrylic paints and brushes. Even go as simple as blue, purple, and silver as the choices for paints.
- Plastic tablecloth for the craft table to protect it from paint and dirt.
- Tray of bedding flowers...whatever is in season –**NOTE: HIDE THE FLOWERS!!** It's important the kids do not see these, so hide them away in a safe place, such as the garage.

The Golden Snitch Game

- A bag of cheap ping pong balls – Paint one with gold acrylic paint. To make it look more like the Golden Snitch, hot glue 2 white feathers as wings onto it. The others need to have points written on them 10, 20, 30, 40 and 50 assorted. Use a black permanent marker to write numbers on the balls.
- Use a sheet of poster board as a scoreboard with the 2 houses listed: “Gryffindor VS Hufflepuff “
- Display the scoreboard on a wall where it is visible.
- A basket or bag to collect the ping pong balls as they bring them to you.

The Sorting Hat

- Find a hat that would work as the “sorting hat”. A magician top hat type will work. (Party Store)
- Print and cut up small pieces of paper with 1/2 saying Gryffindor and 1/2 saying Hufflepuff.

Treat bag

The kids will be going home with lots of things from the activities, so just have a small bag of special candy from Hogwarts to give them.

Candy ideas:

- **Bertie Botts Every Flavor Beans:** I was able to find boxes of the actual candy at Target; however, I am not sure they are still available. You can make your own using Jelly Bellies in a bag with a label saying “Bertie Botts Every Flavor Beans”.
- **“Chocolate Crispy Frogs”:** If you can’t find the actual candy, purchase a frog mold and some meltable chocolate pieces to make your own. (Michaels or Walmart’s craft section) Make a label to go on a plastic sandwich bag with a picture of a cartoon frog. Make it look fancier by using curling ribbons to tie up the bags.

The Hogwarts Experience

– schedule of events

Before the party starts, hide the ping pong balls either outside in the yard or around the house.

Arrival

The children will arrive through the invisible wall and ring the doorbell.

In costume, you answer and introduce yourself as Headmistress (your name) and welcome them to Hogwarts. Direct the child to an out-of-the-way area to place his/her sleepover stuff.

Sorting Hat

Return to the entrance hall to see what house the Sorting Hat will put him/her in. Have the child draw a paper out of the hat, and give them the appropriate shirt to put on (over their clothes).

Once all the children have arrived and been “sorted” into the two houses, take a group “class” photo with them all of them wearing their Hogwarts shirts.

Flower pot decorating

Let each child decorate/paint their flower pot (so it can be drying before Charms class).

Have a table set up for the craft project. Believe me ...this is the best part of the whole sleepover, but it doesn’t reveal the magic until morning. 😊



Order the pizza.

You want it to be delivered by the time the Golden Snitch game is over.

Golden Snitch game

Explain that there are ping pong balls hidden around the home (or outside) with points on them. To score points for their house (Gryffindor or Hufflepuff), they must collect the balls and return them to you so you can add the points to the scoreboard. The special "Golden Snitch" gets a bonus 100 points for the finder's house. The house with the most points by cake time will win.

Give out some additional house points throughout the evening for "neatest eater", "most creative painted pot", etc.

Pizza time.

Ask if anyone would like some "Butter Beer" and serve apple juice in a fancy pitcher. Pour it into their goblets in the Great Hall. If you can dim the lights in your dining room, it adds some atmosphere. If your crowd isn't too rowdy, light some candles on the table.

Charms class

The party then moves back to the craft table for Charms class. Explain that you will be teaching the class in place of Professor Flitwick today. If you have an older sibling/husband that wants to be Professor Flitwick, you may introduce him, and he can conduct the class.

Each child will fill their decorated pot with some dirt and plant one seed.
You can do this outside if you think they will be too messy.

Everyone is presented with their own wand.

As a new wizard they will learn their first charm: the "Growth Charm." Make up a charm they have to repeat after you, and make it really silly.

Example: *"Wiggily Wiggly Wabbely Fro...I wave the wand and the seed will grow."* It is funnier if at the end you add some crazy, hard-to-pronounce word that sounds Harry Potterish, such as "In-can-tastical-last-tus."

Have them repeat it several times while waving their wands over their planted seeds. Compliment them all on how well they cast their charms.

Place the pots on a counter or table where they will sit until morning...but make sure they are in view.

Roll up and toss the plastic tablecloth to clean up the dirt mess.

Cake

Let everyone clean up and enjoy some cake. Announce the winning house in the points contest.

Movie

Let the kids watch a Harry Potter movie with some snacks. While they are busy watching the movie, print a copy of the group “class” photo for each child.

Sleep

When the last child goes to sleep, you will work the magic of the party.

Put a flower (that tray of flowers you were hiding) in each of the pots. When the kids awake to see them in the morning, they will be amazed...the growth charm worked!

I think my son and his friends were in first/second grade when we did this party. I can tell you..they totally bought it...for awhile. It was so cute to see them discover that the flowers grew overnight, and the looks on their faces were priceless. I videotaped them discussing it over breakfast.



Child takes home:

- shirt
- wand
- decorated flower pot
- group “class” photo
- candy bag
- ...and a great memory.

Find more ideas at <http://www.SimpleHomeOrganization.com>