

1946

## Five-Pound Party Planning

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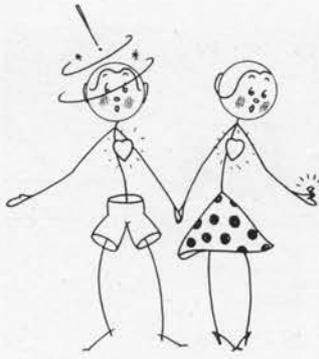
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### Recommended Citation

Hackett, Ruth (1946) "Five-Pound Party Planning," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 26 : No. 7 , Article 2.  
Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol26/iss7/2>

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*Is it the real thing at last?  
Ruth Hackett has ideas on*

## Five-Pound Party Plans

**A**NYTIME in the night a general buzzer in the dormitory or sorority house used to announce 5-pound parties. In housecoats and sleepy yawns the surprised guests devoured chocolates, ice cream and cake; sang sentimental songs and gave their congratulations to the groom-to-be.

Last year an announcement was made that men could not be in women's residences after hours. Reasons for this action were excessive use of privileges given and too frequent interference with sleep.

Many coeds wondered how enforcement of this ruling would affect the tradition of 5-pound parties. They have little cause for worry. A recent survey shows that while 21 engagement announcement parties were given fall quarter, 1945, the number increased to 37 in fall quarter, 1946.

Coeds still seem to be finding ways in which to surprise their friends with the announcement. One woman put small cards telling the good news under the salad plates, where they were discovered at dinner. Others give breakfasts at Memorial Union or have special desserts after Sunday dinner. At any rate, the statistics prove that the custom is still in favor here.

Giving a 5-pound party is one of the steps on the stairway to marriage. It may be used or skipped, according to the circumstances of the engagement. The first step on the stairway could be called the "coke date," the second one "the first date" and on up through "common friends," "letters during holidays," "going steady," "fraternity pin," "the engagement ring," "five pound party" and "wedding bells."

A 5-pound party doubled to a 10-pound one means that the couple are not only announcing their engagement, but the date of their marriage. And it may be half-joke, half-truth, that a 15-pound party means the announcement of a third member to the family.

**U**NLIKE formal weddings, where tradition settles everything including the details, a 5-pound party reveals the originality of the couple. None of them are alike. A clever scheme with favors that can be saved for bulletin boards is used to set the stage for the party.

The average 5-pound box of chocolates provides candy for 135 people, so most boxes are passed several times among the guests. The ring may be sparkling on top of the box or two chained pins may serve as the token of the engagement. After the bride-to-be gives her announcement, her fiancé may pass cigars or ice cream among his friends, if they had not been included before.

A typical 5-pound party could be planned like this. Vicky and Roger have decided that they should let the world know how they feel. She has her sparkling diamond but is keeping it a secret, she hopes. They reserve the candy and order small paper napkins with their two names across one corner. It may be necessary

to let the residence director in on the secret in order to get permission to use the dining room or kitchen, but the secret rarely goes any farther than that.

The next task is to choose a theme. Ideas used in past 5-pound parties might help Vicky find one for hers. The theme could be a song, a season, combination of fraternity symbols, how they became acquainted or what the future holds.

Vicky has heard of one 5-pound party given in the cyclone cellar by a couple who used a miniature stadium as the table centerpiece. Pipe-stem cheerleaders waved pennants with their names. Refreshments were hot dogs and coffee.

She has read about another announcement party centered on a small tennis court with the world "Love Match—Bruce and Barbara" on the tiny tennis racket favors. A sophisticated theme of top hats and canes using the colors of black, gold and shocking pink intranced Vicky. The favors for this particular party were match folders inscribed "To Enlighten You" and the couple's names. The candy came from under a silk top hat.

**T**HEMES of the future interest Vicky. She finds parties based on the small white cottage inside a picket fence, with the ring under the "Welcome" doormat or posing as the door knocker. In another 5-pound party a graduating veterinarian's shingle hung out in front of a toy ark filled with small bandaged animals. Two dolls representing Noah and his wife held up the chained pins of the couple. The candy was underneath the ark.

Then Vicky finds themes on the present season. Once the climax of an Easter egg hunt was 10 pounds of candy. Big eggs announced the names and wedding date of the couple. Another springtime theme once used was centered on a gay spring hat. The tiny favors given away were cellophane top hats and little hat boxes containing spring hats.

Vicky and Roger decide on a Sunday afternoon party. For the centerpiece they find a crystal ball with which to tell the future. White chrysanthemums as magic clouds will rise around the ball. The favors they plan to make themselves will be little wands sparkling with fairy dust which unroll to reveal the words "Vicky and Roger under the Spell of Love." And from underneath a silk scarf will come the box of candy with Vicky's new ring centered among red chrysanthemums.

Vicky will invite her parents, close friends and Roger to the Sunday dinner. With the stage set by an accomplice while they eat, Vicky's friends will be surprised as they enter the living room after dinner.

After the final plans have been made, Vicky dreams of the traditional singing of "I Love You Truly" when Roger will place the ring on her finger and kiss her. And after the congratulations are over, both Vicky and Roger will find themselves engaged, Iowa State way.