


The Bride's Book Planning Pages

Essential guidelines for planning your wedding



First Things First!

- Set wedding date.
- Invitations should be mailed 6 weeks before the wedding.
- Wedding dress should be ordered at least 6 months before wedding date.
- Bridesmaids' dresses should be ordered at least 6 months prior to wedding.
- Bride's hair should be cut and colored about 2 weeks before wedding.
- Groom's hair should be cut 2 weeks before wedding.
- Blood tests generally must be taken within 30 days of the wedding.

12 or More Months Ahead

- Pick a date! Look at your calendar with your fiancé (don't forget to confer with parents on both sides) and set the date. Be sure to have an alternate date or two in case the venue is already booked.
- Start now thinking about whether you will plan a formal or informal wedding.
- Creating a preliminary guest list now will really help out down the road when it's time to create a budget.

10 to 12 Months Ahead

- Select wedding date and time
- Send out save the date cards/emails.
- Announce your engagement and have engagement photos taken.
- Discuss and create a preliminary wedding budget with all involved.
- Determine how expenses will be shared.
- Determine your wedding theme or style.
- Reserve your ceremony location.
- Determine who will officiate the ceremony.
- If you choose to use a professional planner you should begin interviewing now.
- Reserve your reception location.
- If your reception or wedding is planned for outdoors have an alternate plan in place.

8 to 10 Months Ahead

- Decide on your wedding colors.
- Determine the size of your guest list.
- Begin compiling list of names and numbers and addresses.
- Send out a "Save the Date" cards or emails.
- Select bridal attendants.
- Ask attendants for their measurements and sizes.
- Select Groomsmen.
- Ask Groomsmen for their measurements and shoe size.
- Plan reception.

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(8 to 10 Months Ahead cont'd)


- Select a caterer.
- Select photographer.
- Select Videographer.
- Select Florist.
- Select Band or DJ.
- Select Soloists, organists, musicians for ceremony.
- Select your dress and order if necessary.
- Select your headpiece and shoes.
- Select petticoat and jewelry.
- Select bridesmaids' dresses and order if necessary.
- Select and order invitations, matches, napkins, thank-you notes and programs.
- Start planning honeymoon.
- Start addressing invitations and announcements when they arrive.
- Pre-address thank-you note envelopes while addressing invitations and announcements.
- Prepare maps and directions to include in your invitations for ceremony and reception.
- Check with the post office for the amount of postage needed to mail the invitations when all the pieces are in the envelope.
- Register with Bridal registries.
- Reserve the rehearsal dinner location.
- Select a baker for the cake.

6 to 4 Months Ahead

- Check with your local newspaper for the form and timing of your wedding announcement submission.
- Reserve block accommodations for out-of-town guests.
- Have mothers select their dresses.
- Choose songs that you would like for the band or DJ to play at your wedding.
- Keep gift checklist up to date and write thank-you notes DAILY.
- Arrange accommodations for out-of-town guests.
- Hire limousines and/or other transportation.
- Make appointments for physicals and update your immunizations shots and records.
- Shop for wedding rings.
- Start planning your honeymoon.
- Get your passport and other important documents.
- Begin shopping for your trousseau.
- Begin addressing invitations and announcements (These should be sent out 4 to 6 weeks before the wedding.).
- Order favors for guests.

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2 Months Ahead

- Finishing addressing invitations.
- Prepare wedding vows and speeches to be made.
- Begin dance lessons or purchase dance lesson video.
- Finalize all details with the caterer, photographer, florist, reception coordinator, musicians, etc...
- Order the wedding cake if not supplied by the caterer.
- Order candies for reception.
- Purchase gifts for out-of-town guests to be left in hotel rooms.
- Finalize the ceremony details with the officiant.
- Purchase guest book
- Purchase or make place cards.
- Purchase cake and knife server.
- Purchase garter.
- Make rehearsal and rehearsal dinner arrangements.
- Plan the Bridesmaids luncheon.
- Make appointments with your hairdresser and make-up artist.
- Finalize your honeymoon plans.

1 Month Ahead

- Have a final fitting of the wedding and bridesmaids' dresses.
- Have a formal portrait done.
- Complete all physical and dental appointments.
- Get blood test and marriage license.
- Make transportation arrangements for the wedding day.
- Purchase gifts for all of your attendants.
- Purchase gift for your fiancé.
- Keep careful records of the gifts you receive and write thank-you notes as you receive them.
- Select responsible person to handle your guest book
- Make sure that all of the men's attire has been ordered.
- Pick up wedding rings and make sure they fit.
- Take care of legal affairs such as changing the names on insurance policies, bank accounts, credit cards, etc...
- Reconfirm the accommodations for out-of-town guests.
- Prepare wedding announcements to be sent to the newspaper.

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2 Weeks Before the Wedding


- Plan bachelor and bachelorette parties.
- Have bridal consultant give you a copy of the time schedule for your wedding day. Make any adjustments or changes immediately.
- Have maid or matron of honor contact attendants about final fittings for all participants.
- Arrange to have wedding gifts moved to your new home.
- Turn in change of address card to post office if necessary.
- Finish addressing announcements to be mailed on the wedding day.
- The groom should have his hair cut.
- The bride should have her hair cut and colored if necessary.

1 Week Before the Wedding

- Contact guests who have not responded.
- Give the final count to the caterer and review the details.
- Go over any final details with all wedding professionals you have hired.
- Give wedding consultant favors and place cards for reception.
- Give seating chart to wedding consultant.
- Give seating chart and time schedule to reception manager.
- Give wedding consultant envelopes for any payments/tips for vendors to be handed out on the day of the wedding.
- Check with wedding consultant to make sure she will carry a "wedding day emergency kit" with her at all times.
- Make sure that wedding consultant is prepared with cell phone, schedules, and important phone #'s and vendor contracts.
- Have your wedding consultant tell the caterer to put together a food basket (don't forget some wedding cake!) and have it delivered to your getaway car 30 minutes before you leave.
- Give the photographer a list of pictures you would like.
- Give the videographer a list of shots you would like included in the video.
- Give all musicians the lists of music for the ceremony and reception.
- Plan the seating arrangements.
- Continue to write Thank-you notes
- Pack your suitcase for the honeymoon
- Make sure you have your marriage license
- Make sure that you have your wedding rings and that they fit.
- Make sure that all wedding attire is picked up and it fits.
- Reconfirm all honeymoon reservations.
- Make sure that you have your plane tickets.

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The Day Before the Wedding

- Don't plan a wild late night party!
- Have the bridesmaids' luncheon if you are not having it the day of the wedding and you haven't already had it.
- The bride should have her nails done.
- Have rehearsal with all participants, reviewing their duties at least twice.
- Go over special seating or pew cards with ushers.
- Give any instructions about the wedding such as what time everyone should arrive at the church for pictures, transportation plan, reception locations etc...

The Day of Wedding

- Eat Breakfast!
- Have bridesmaids' luncheon if you have not already had it.
- Have wedding consultant carry fruits veggies and crackers with her at all times.
- If at all possible, make sure someone else is driving you to your morning appointments.
- The bride should have her hair and make up done.
- Make sure that each of you has the rings.
- Make sure that you have the marriage license.
- Place the officiant's fee in an envelope and give it to the best man so he may present it after the ceremony.
- Relax and enjoy this magical day!