

THE PERFECT *Bride* GUIDE



A MONTH-BY-MONTH TO-DO LIST

to prepare for your special day!

Note: All may not apply due to engagement lengths and different types of weddings

12+ MONTHS BEFORE

- 12 Envision your wedding. Set top priorities and draw up a budget
- Insure wedding rings
- Assemble your “planning team,” whether it is you and your spouse, your family or a wedding planner
- Pick a date and time
- Look for and book ceremony, venue, reception sites, officiant, etc.
- Schedule your engagement photo session
- Start thinking about your wedding party and guest list

11-8 MONTHS BEFORE

- 11 Host an engagement party (optional)
- Create a wedding website (optional)
- Search for and book a wedding photographer and videographer
- Think about, shop for and order your gown
- Search for a florist and/or find faux flowers to make or buy
- 10 Envision reception food and search for a caterer
- Decide on entertainment such as a DJ or live band
- Start making a list of must-play wedding songs
- 9 Ask people to be in your wedding party
- Finalize your guest list

6-8 MONTHS BEFORE

- 8 Shop for bridesmaids' gowns
- Reserve blocks of hotel rooms for out-of-town guests (optional)
- Search for and book a designer for your stationary needs
- Send [save-the-dates](#) and include your website address
- Test flavors and order a wedding cake or other dessert substitutes
- Find a rental supplier for chairs, chair covers, tents, tables, etc., if needed
- Book ceremony musicians
- Discuss rehearsal dinner with appropriate family members
- 7 Select your bridesmaids' dresses and flower girl's dress. Have your attendants get sized and place dress orders
- Search for a vendor for your hair, makeup or other pre-wedding pampering
- Finalize your order for event rentals
- Have rehearsal dinner host finalize the venue

4-6 MONTHS BEFORE

- 6 Check gift registry. Replace discontinued items
- Choose groom's attire; decide if purchasing or renting
- Purchase accessories for bridal gown: Veil, shoes, jewelry, etc.
- Schedule ceremony rehearsal and alert attendants, officiant and ceremony musicians of date and time
- Finalize text for rehearsal dinner invitations
- Book hair and makeup appointment
- 5 Book accommodations for your wedding night
- Search for transportation vendor
- Choose bridesmaids' accessories. Purchase or pass along information
- Choose groomsmen's attire. Send them information
- Discuss and confirm with your maid of honor and best man the plans for [bachelorette](#)

- + [bachelor](#) parties and/or [bridal shower](#)
- Provide the guest list to your maid of honor and best man for main social events
- Confirm addresses before sending your wedding invitations

3-4 MONTHS BEFORE

- 4 Attend pre-wedding counseling, if required
- Book your transportation vendor for the wedding party (optional)
- Finalize the wedding menu and service details with your caterer
- Design and create [favors](#)
- Schedule gown-fitting appointments
- Purchase wedding bands
- Ask your readers to be a part of your ceremony. Begin to search for readings and discuss with officiant
- Mail wedding invitations
- For international honeymoon, get papers/passport in order
- 3 Confirm with your florist the number of bouquets, boutonnieres and centerpieces
- Contact ceremony musician about song selections
- Purchase guest book and nice pens (optional)
- Track gifts received and send thank-you notes
- Order alcohol (wine, champagne, liquor, beer). Discuss supply and transportation with caterer or reception hall manager
- Contact readers about the ceremony readings
- Design your ceremony programs and have them printed
- Research local marriage license requirements. Schedule a blood test appointment if one is required in your state
- Alert your wedding party of the rehearsal time, date and place. The host should send rehearsal dinner invites
- Determine your ceremony music selections and send the list to your musicians
- Shop for all additional accessories like undergarments, jewelry, headpiece, purse, etc.

- Finalize reception hall songs for musicians/vendor for introductions, first dance, cake cutting, father/daughter dance, anniversary dance and last dance
- Finalize in writing with your officiant any special preferences, readings or other ceremony details
- Create a wedding-day schedule and send information to your wedding party and vendors
- Bring bridesmaids to final gown-fitting to learn how the bustle will be tied
- Obtain a marriage license. Follow state's guidelines

1-2 MONTHS BEFORE

- 2** Write your vows
- Purchase gifts for parents, attendants and each other
- Call guests who have not yet RSVP'd for the wedding and rehearsal dinner to get a final headcount
- Pick up your gown. Before leaving the shop, try it on to make sure there are no additional alterations to be made
- Give final headcount to caterer. Confirm set-up instructions
- Call bus driver one week before the wedding to confirm plans
- Verify with reception venue that your vendors will have access to the site when they need it
- 1** Confirm headcount, delivery time and location with wedding cake/dessert vendor
- Confirm delivery locations, times and final arrangements with your florist
- Confirm the rehearsal details and wedding-day schedule with your officiant
- Pick up the groom's tuxedo/suit and try on at shop. See if any other alternations are needed
- Purchase any additional décor to decorate ceremony
- Prepare the favors, drink menu, table placecards and silverware, and buy bathroom supplies
- Finalize reception seating chart
- Buy beverages and bring food containers if needed for transporting the wedding party
- Send transportation service the schedule, addresses and contact information for the wedding day

- Confirm all final payment amounts with your vendors. Mail your payment checks or make arrangements to pay on your wedding day
- Shop and pack for honeymoon
- Confirm location, date and time with your photographer. Create your “must-take” photo list
- Confirm your wedding-day beauty appointments
- Confirm all honeymoon travel plans. Give someone a copy of your itinerary and contact information in case of emergency
- Drop off favors, placecards, guest book, pens, cake knife, toasting flutes and all other reception items at venue

WEDDING EVE

- Print off readings and bring to rehearsal dinner
- Meet with wedding party, ceremony readers, immediate family and your officiant at the ceremony site to rehearse and iron out the details
- Bring unity candle, aisle runner and any other needed ceremony accessories to the site
- Give your marriage license to your officiant
- Present attendants with gifts at rehearsal dinner

DAY OF WEDDING

- Present parents and each other with gifts
- Give wedding bands to best man and maid of honor to hold during the ceremony
- Give the best man the officiant’s fee envelope to be given after the ceremony
- Introduce your reception site manager to your consultant or maid of honor for questions or problems during the reception
- Assign a family member or attendant to be the photographer’s contact so he/she knows who is who
- Relax and don’t get stressed about the little things. This day is about your love

AFTER WEDDING

- Pre-arrange for someone to return any rentals
- Preplan for attendants to take bride's gown to the cleaners, and return the groom's tux to the rental shop or get it cleaned if bought
- Make sure all vendors have been paid in full
- Write thank-you notes for all the gifts received. Traditional etiquette gives you an 8-week grace period
- Update all insurance policies to include you and your spouse: health, auto, homeowner's and life insurance
- Complete paperwork for official documents if changing names

WEDDING NOTES