

# *Your Personal Wedding Planner*



*MOLTO BELLA*

WEDDING & EVENT VENUE

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*A bride's must-have  
companion while  
planning her dream  
wedding on a  
realistic budget.*

# *Congratulations on your engagement!*

Your Personal Wedding Planner will help guide you down the path to **Your Dream Wedding** while saving you thousands of dollars. Whether your budget is \$15,000 or \$150,000, Your Personal Wedding Planner will save you money and time!

Filled with **OVER 275 MONEY SAVING TIPS** usually known only to wedding industry insiders, Your Personal Wedding Planner covers everything from creating a budget (and sticking to it), to negotiating with vendors to ensure that you get the absolute most for your money.

**Use just one tip and this book more than pays for itself!**

Your Personal Wedding Planner is invaluable to today's busy and budget-minded brides. It is like having a Professional Wedding Consultant at your side.

**Not all brides can afford a Professional Wedding Consultant. No bride can afford to be without Your Personal Wedding Planner!**

Being organized keeps you in control and saves you from making costly mistakes. Everything you need to keep you organized and armed with Money Saving Tips is included in one lightweight and durable binder.

Take Your Personal Wedding Planner with you to all meetings with vendors. Keep good notes so you can refer back to them as needed. Keep it with you to remind you of Money Saving Tips while interviewing and choosing your vendors.

**Remember** to take your binder to the wedding. If there are any questions or disputes with a vendor, you will have your contract promises and receipts on hand. As well as contact numbers for your vendors.

Thank you for choosing Your Personal Wedding Planner, and again,

***Congratulations!***



# *Your Personal Wedding Planner*

**A bride's 'must have' companion while planning  
her dream wedding on a realistic budget.**

**Jo Anna Zaffree**

**Wedding Planner**

**First Edition**

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# My Dream Wedding

When you picture your big day, what comes to mind? Use this sheet to help determine the wedding you want to have. It is helpful to have a pre-determined notion of what you really desire before you start shopping or interviewing vendors. Share this with your vendors when interviewing. Only then can you be sure that this vendor can accommodate your needs.

- Where is your ceremony? A castle in Ireland? Your family Church or Synagogue? Lakeside in the mountains? Under water in the Caribbean? Your parents' backyard?

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- Who do you see as your most cherished, 'must have' guests?

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- What does your dress look like? Simple, dressed up with Mom's jewelry? Ornate with lot's of beading? Long train? Tiara?

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- What music do you hear? Latin band? Orchestra? String Quartet? DJ with music to span the ages?

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- How does your cake look? Three tiered with fondant and flowers made of sugar? Or individual cakes? A cupcake tower?

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- How do your flowers smell? Are they roses, lilies, daisies, or a seasonal blend? Are they large bouquets or understated and elegant? Various colors or monochromatic?

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- What is the reception atmosphere? Candlelit, jazzy and elegant? Festive with balloons? Full out party atmosphere?

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- What are you doing on your honeymoon? Are you relaxing or playing the tourist? Cruising? Scuba diving? Lying on the beach? Rafting in Costa Rica? Visiting museums in Italy?

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- How does your food taste? Old family recipes? Seafood? Themed? Steak & potatoes? BBQ? Buffet? Plated? Food stations?

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## Money Saving Tips That Will Apply Throughout Your Planning

- Do not lose sight of the real reason for your wedding.
- Decide what is **really important** to you and your Fiancé and put your money there.
- Do not get caught up in the mindset of spending as much money as you can to keep up with or impress your friends.
- Remember this, and convey to your vendors; we are not looking for a “Budget Wedding”. We want our “Dream Wedding” on our budget!
- Blowing your budget as well as your parent’s budget can cause stress. You do not want to start your married life in overwhelming debt.
- Do not make any purchases unless you know for sure that you will use the item, no matter how little the cost. This is where hidden costs can creep up.
- Be clear about return policies wherever you shop.
- Be creative- many non-wedding vendors will have the item or service you need at non-wedding prices. These items include shoes, favors, stationary, décor, etc.
- Search the web. There are many websites that cater to brides, from dresses, to letting vendors bid to win your catering, photography or music needs. Be aware of return policies, shipping costs, etc.
- Watch the papers for coupons and sales on the items you need.
- Purchase wholesale and in bulk when you can. Many big box stores will give discounts for bulk items.
- It is your wedding, paid for by your money, as you see fit. **Take charge!**
- Apply for and use a credit card that offers incentives such as; free miles, money back, free hotel, etc. Use this card for wedding expenses only and pay the total amount due every month.
- Skip the extravagant extras- you know what they are.
- Network, network, network. Use your contacts. Do you know someone....who knows someone?
- Do you have a profession whereby you are in a position to barter? Trading your services for a vendor’s service may add up to BIG savings.
- Consider hiring a wedding planner. He or she can help you save time, money and your sanity by acting as a vendor liaison / coordinator on your wedding day.
- Hire professionals. Let friends and family come as guests. This will save more than money- this will save your friendship.
- Do you or your fiancé travel for work? Be sure to sign up for frequent flier miles. You may earn enough miles to take you on your honeymoon or earn free hotel stays.
- Have I mentioned stick to your budget? **Stick to your budget!**
- Don’t feel pressured to buy a wedding gift for each other. You each are the greatest gift to one another.
- Ask a friend or family member to perform the ceremony.

## Setting and sticking to your budget

Your budget is your friend. Keeping your budget in mind throughout the planning, will keep you from making costly mistakes that could be with you long after your wedding day. Being in financial stress over your wedding is no way to start your new life together.

- Bring together all of the paying participants in your wedding. Determine an exact dollar amount you have to work with.
- What are your priorities? Food, Décor, location, *that dress*?
- Develop a realistic picture of what you want your wedding to look like. Be realistic, what can you really afford? Where can you afford cuts?
- Interview recently married friends, co-workers and vendors to determine realistic costs.
- Fill in the wedding budget form. Allocate your funds in the estimated costs column. Refer to this page often and add actual numbers when available.
- When you over spend in one line item, you must pull from other categories.
- Just because you spend less in one category doesn't mean spend more elsewhere. The little "extras" can add up to at least 10% of your budget!
- Prepare the guest list AFTER the budget is set.
- Stick to your budget.
- Open an interest bearing, wedding/savings account at your bank. Determine an amount to set aside from every paycheck to have automatically transferred each month. Keep this up even after the wedding and you will be surprised at how much you have in the bank.
- Consider a longer engagement. This will allow you more time to save more money. Also, contracting vendors a year or more out will allow you to get the vendors you want and you may avoid future price increases.
- Do not go into major debt over this one-day. That is not a great way to start your new life together.
- Start minimizing your spending now. Entertaining at home, brown bag lunches, less time at the mall, etc. will all add up to big savings. That latte you buy every morning that costs \$2.75, adds up to \$660 in one year! That would be nice addition to your wedding budget!
- Cut your guest list. The easiest way to control your budget is to limit the size of your event. The largest expense of your event will be the reception food and alcohol (not to mention tables, linens, flatware, etc.). The quickest way to pare down your cost is by paring down the number of guests.
- Invite only your closest friends and family.
- You do not need to invite everyone you know, even if you attended his or her wedding.
- Get organized. Planning ahead keeps you in control and saves you from making expensive compromises with your vendors.
- Consider wedding insurance. Protect your wedding investment against such things as: attire damage, illness, inclement weather, loss, theft or damage, and vendor no-shows.

## Wedding Budget Worksheet

	Estimate	Actual		Estimate	Actual
<b>Attire- 10%</b>			<b>Stationery- 5%</b>		
Wedding Gown			Invitations		
Headpiece			RSVP Cards		
Shoes			Thank you cards		
Garter			Announcements *		
Under garments			Programs *		
Alterations			Postage		
Jewelry			Other		
Other					
Grooms Tuxedo			<b>Photographer / videographer- 10%</b>		
Shoes			Wedding Photos		
Other			Albums *		
Attendants dresses			Negatives		
Shoes			Video		
Flower girl's dress			Video for parents *		
Ring bearer Suit			Other		
Groomsmen's attire					
Shoes			<b>Reception- 50%</b>		
			Venue		
<b>Beauty</b>			Decoration *		
Hairstylist *			Rentals		
Make-up *			Centerpieces *		
Mani-Pedi *			Favors *		
Other			Catering		
			Service charge		
<b>Ceremony</b>			Liquor/beverages		
Officiant			Champagne *		
Venue fee			Cake		
Music			Venue insurance		
Marriage License			DJ / Band		
Other					
			<b>Transportation</b>		
<b>Floral- 10%</b>			To ceremony *		
Ceremony flowers			To reception *		
Reception floral			Departure car *		
Bride's bouquet			Guest transport *		
Attendants flowers					
Flower girl's petals *			<b>Miscellaneous- 13%</b>		
Boutonnieres			Guest book *		
Corsages			Ceremony candles		
Floral for cake			Parents' gifts *		
Other			Attendants gifts *		
			Groomsmen gifts *		
<b>Rings- 2%</b>			Cake knife/ server *		
Bride			Ring bearer pillow *		
Groom			Flower girl basket *		
			Toasting glasses *		

<b>Honeymoon</b>			Rehearsal dinner		
Airfare			Attendants Lunch *		
Resort/ hotel			...Something new *		
Entertainment			Wedding planner *		
Meals			Gifts to each other *		
Passports/ Visas			Vendor tips		
Other			Other		

The items above represent typical wedding expenses. You may have other expenditures that are not listed- place them in the "other" column. If you are a smart bride, dedicated to her budget, you will leave many of the columns empty. I have put an asterisk next to items that I believe can be skimmed on, handmade or left out all together. Let your budget be your guide.

## Stay on Budget even after the wedding!

Staying true to the idea of a budget will help you long after your wedding day has past. There are many ways to create and maintain a budget. Find one that works for you and your husband. It doesn't have to be difficult, but it will take discipline.

Setting a realistic budget will help you to ease financial burden. It will allow you to pay off your debts easier and keep money in the bank for unexpected expenses.

If you have amassed wedding debt, and most couples have, start eliminating the debt now. You want your money working for you, not wasted on outrageous interest rates!

Following is a simple way to get started tackling the debt and start using **your** money for the things you really want.

- Determine the amount of your debt
- Set a realistic date for repayment
- Keep a running balance chart your progress
- Pay off high interest debt first
- Switch to lower interest credit cards
- Consolidate all debt on one, low interest card for one easy payment
- Pay more than the minimum payment or you keep racking up interest
- Pay off debt using money from your wedding gifts, low rate savings accounts and tax refunds



## **Who pays for what- traditionally?**

### **The Brides Family**

- All of the reception costs (i.e., room rental, food, and beverages).
- Bridesmaids' bouquets and flowers.
- Decorative accessories for the ceremony and reception.
- Music for the ceremony and reception.
- Groom's wedding gift and wedding band.
- Bridesmaids' gifts and their hotel accommodations.
- Photographer and photographs.
- Wedding stationary.
- Bride's wedding gown, accessories and trousseau.
- All transportation and parking expenses for the ceremony and reception.

### **The Grooms Family**

- Bride's rings and wedding gift.
- Marriage license.
- Grooms-men's gifts.
- Ties and gloves for the groom's party.
- Bride's bouquet and corsage.
- Corsages for mothers and grandmothers.
- Boutonnieres for the groom's party.
- Clergyman's fee.
- Rehearsal dinner.
- The honeymoon.

[illegible]

## Wedding Countdown Checklist.

I have placed an asterisk next to the items I feel can be left out, homemade, or done by you. By cutting these items from your budget you can save hundreds of dollars without skimping on necessities.

### 12 Months Before the Wedding

- Announce your engagement to family and close friends
- If your parents are paying any part of your wedding costs, discuss your wedding ideas with them. Talk about the budget, guest list, and who will pay for what. Be realistic about the budget, yours as well as your families. This should be a fun time, keep things light.
- Set your wedding date. Keep in mind the important dates in your family, high season in the wedding industry, work concerns, menstrual cycle, etc.
- Set a realistic budget for your wedding. Do your research, visit websites, and speak to vendors and recently married friends.
- Start preparing the guest list. Start with your closest relatives and friends. Decide if you will invite co-workers, non-married “dates”, children, etc.
- Visit possible ceremony and reception sites. Visit at least 3, keeping your budget in mind.
- Choose your wedding attendants and ask them to be a part of your wedding. Decide who will pay for the dresses.
- \*Mail save-the-date cards to ensure your guests have enough notice.
- Start trying on wedding gowns. Try on various styles to see what suits your body style best.
- Attend bridal shows. Talk to wedding vendors and get ideas and prices for the services you’ll need such as catering, photography, and music. Plan to spend the day.
- This is a great time to start getting in shape for the big day as well as the rest of your life. If you choose a sleeveless gown, you’ll want to show off your beautiful arms and back.

### 11 Months and counting

- Book your ceremony and reception venues, keeping in mind your guest count and budget.
- Decide who will perform your wedding ceremony. It can be an uncle, best friend, clergyman, etc.
- Shop for and purchase your wedding rings.

### 10 Months and counting

- Interview and select your wedding vendors. Meet with a minimum of three vendors for each service, to ensure you find a vendor who you can work well with and who can work with your budget and still deliver a quality product or service.

The services you’ll need to reserve include:

- Caterer
- Baker
- Rentals (if not taken care of by your caterer).
- Photographer / Videographer
- Florist
- Music
- \*Transportation

## **9 Months and counting**

- Select your wedding gown. Shop ebay, sample sales, non-wedding boutiques, etc.
- Choose your attendants' dresses.

## **8 Months and counting**

- Set up cake tasting appointments. Discuss your budget for this item and how you can receive the best value. Remember that it is the decoration, frosting and number of slices that determine the cost of your cake.
- Research and discuss honeymoon locations, keeping your budget and vacation schedule in mind. It is okay to take your honeymoon at a later date. One of my brides married at the best time for her guests and family obligations, and then honeymooned 2 months later during the low season of her honeymoon destination, saving thousands of dollars on flights and hotel costs.
- Finalize your guest list.

## **7 Months and counting**

- Order your wedding invitations. Remember to cut out the fancy frills that add to the package, as well as to the postage.
  - Announcements
  - Invitations
  - \*Reception Cards
  - Response Cards
  - Thank You Cards
  - Have signed contracts for all participating vendors in Your Personal Wedding Planner

## **6 Months and counting**

- Make sure your attendants have ordered their dresses.
- Order the Flower Girl's dress, shoes and accessories.
- Along with your fiancé, choose his attire as well as his attendants' tuxedos. Instruct groomsmen to be fitted for and order theirs.
- Reserve any rentals needed.
- Register for your gifts and honeymoon.

## **5 Months and counting**

- \*Order wedding favors if any.
- Order any decorations for the ceremony and reception site if needed.
- Reserve hotel rooms for out-of town guests. If having your reception in a hotel, ask for discounts for your guests. Maybe even receive a FREE wedding night suite!

#### **4 Months and counting**

- Book your honeymoon air travel, and hotel accommodations.
- Apply for passports or visas.
- Confirm that the groom and groomsmen have ordered their tuxedos.
- Reserve Honeymoon suite for wedding night.
- \*Schedule an appointment with your stylist to discuss hair options. Remember to bring your veil, photo of your dress and wedding day jewelry. Practice this style your self and maybe you will be able to recreate it on your wedding day, saving you money. Discuss discounts if the attendants have their hair done as well, or, maybe offering the Bride a free style.

#### **3 Months and counting**

- Schedule the rehearsal and book a location for the rehearsal dinner. Opt for a restaurant near the ceremony location to save time. To save money, invite only those in the wedding party as well as your parents. Keep it low key and short- you have a busy day tomorrow!
- Plan the seating arrangements for the reception.
- \*Prepare place cards if necessary.
- If you do not hand make, purchase miscellaneous wedding accessories such as:
  - Guest book
  - Ring bearer pillow
  - Toasting glasses
  - Unity candles
  - Flower basket
  - \* Cake serving pieces (may be provided by the caterer)
  - \* Cake topper (a beautifully decorated cake needs no additional topper)

#### **2 Months and counting**

- Address and mail your wedding invitations, prepare one as a sample and take it to your local post office to ensure that your postage amount is correct.
- Contact each of your wedding service vendors to review your agreements and confirm the services they will be providing.
- Purchase gifts for your bridal party attendants. Consider homemade for a personal touch as well as savings.
- Schedule alterations if necessary.
- Apply for your marriage license.
- \*Schedule hair & make-up appointment for wedding day if needed.



## **1 Month and counting**

- Schedule final alterations if needed.
- Make sure your attendants have attended to any alterations needed.
- Finalize your reception plans.
- Prepare song list for your band or DJ. Make sure they have your required music.
- Finalize the transportation and hotel arrangements for your out-of-town guests.
- Review wedding day agenda with family and wedding party. Advise them of the rehearsal time and dinner after location. Let them know the importance of being on time as you all have a big day ahead of you. Make sure they each understand their responsibilities for the day. Give wedding party copies of the wedding day itinerary and wedding day contact list.
- Appoint one person in your wedding party to be a vendor liaison in case of questions or emergencies.
- Confirm hotel and travel reservations for honeymoon.
- \*Assemble your wedding favors.
- Give your caterer the final guest count. Be sure to include the DJ, clergyman, band, photographer, etc. Most caterers will feed these people for free but you must ask.

## **Only one Week to go....**

- Pick up your wedding gown and accessories. Make appointment for it to be steamed two days before the wedding.
- Make sure your attendants have picked up their dresses and accessories.
- Make sure your fiancé and his attendants have picked up their outfits.
- Prepare emergency kit.
- Attend rehearsal and rehearsal dinner.
- Pick up honeymoon tickets and Traveler's checks.
- Pack for your honeymoon.
- Assign someone to bring the cake topper and other items home from the reception as well as take your dress to the cleaners the day after.

## **Day of Wedding!!!**

- Wake up with plenty of time to get ready for your special day.
- Bring to mind all of the special reasons that you are getting married today.
- Remember to eat, and drink plenty of water.
- \*Bride to have hair and make-up done.
- Get dressed – get beautiful.
- Don't forget Your Personal Wedding Planner.
- Arrive at the ceremony venue on time.
- Enjoy the day!
- Take a few minutes alone with your new spouse between the ceremony and reception. This will be a busy time for the both of you- take time to connect throughout the night.

# January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

# February

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# August

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# September

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# October

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

# November

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

# December

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

## Appointments

Date:\_\_\_\_\_ Time:\_\_\_\_\_

Vendor:\_\_\_\_\_

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## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## My wedding day contact list

	Name	Phone	Cell	Work
Bride				
Groom				
Brides parents				
Grooms parents				
Maid of Honor				
Bridesmaids				
Best Man				
Groomsmen				
Ushers				
Officiant				
Ceremony site				
Limo				
Reception venue				
DJ				
Band				
Caterer				
Baker				
Dress shop				
Tux shop				
Photographer				
Videographer				
Rentals				

\*Distribute to all wedding party members as well as the vendors.



## Money Saving Attire Tips

- Your gown should not exceed 10% of your total budget.
- Shop sales, closeouts, and sample sales.
- Take the word “wedding “ away from your dress. Many beautiful gowns can be found in the eveningwear department of large stores. Many of these dresses cost far below “wedding” gowns and you may even wear it again.
- Borrow jewelry from Mom, Grandma or another family member. This not only saves you money, but you take care of the “something borrowed” tradition.
- You may have adored the accessories of a recently married friend, ask to borrow them. Your friend will be flattered and you will save money.
- Purchase only one pair of shoes that work with your gown, and which allow you to dance the night away.
- If you are a more casual bride, don’t forget to look at bridesmaids’ dresses **for your dress**. Many of the dresses are elegant enough for a bride and will cost far less. They can be ordered in cream or white and you can have a seamstress add beading or lace to add your own one of a kind touch.
- Choosing a quality fabric with a perfect fit is more important than fancy beading and appliques. You don’t want to be fussing with your dress all day. A simple dress that fits perfectly will be dressed up with your veil and jewelry. Look for fabrics such as organza, satin and crinkled silk to add texture and sheen.
- Select a gown that flatters your style and body type. You will feel confident and beautiful. This is more important than a poorly fitting, expensive costume.
- If choosing a fancy dress, remember to play down the other elements so as not to take away from the dress. ie., a simple headpiece, veil.
- Alterations come along with the territory and they can be very expensive. Choose a dress that fits properly to begin with. Dresses with fancy beading will cost more to alter.
- Ask about the alterations pricing and policies before purchasing. Purchasing an inexpensive gown that needs a lot of alterations is not a good bargain.
- This is not to say, “forget alterations”. Your dress must fit properly for the dress to live up to your expectations.
- Ask your local fabric store if they can recommend a seamstress who alters wedding gowns.
- Do not buy the first gown you try on. Hold it if you must, but shop around.
- Many gowns off the rack may be sold for a discounted price, just ask.
- Don’t be afraid of ebay when it comes to your dress. You will find many offerings of dresses that have never been worn, for a fraction of their original price. Also consider the dress that has been worn only once. Make sure you inquire as to the condition of the dress and get pictures as well as dry cleaning receipts if possible. Make sure it is returnable if not as promised.
- Bring along Mom and your Maid of Honor. Remind them of your budget. This will help keep you from making an emotional purchase that may break the bank.
- Your dress is just one little piece of the wedding day pie. Don’t blow your budget here.

- While at the tuxedo shop, don't forget to ask for a free tuxedo for the Groom when the rest of the party rents theirs. Many stores will do this, but you must ask.
- Pare down your wedding party. This will save on dresses, bouquets, gifts, hair, makeup, etc. Limit the party to your very dearest friends or relatives. You can honor your other friends with other duties such as, guest book and readings.
- Do not pay for your attendant's dresses if it is not within your budget. Be honest about your budget and they will understand.
- No one likes bridesmaids dresses anyway; no one style flatters all figures. To keep things fun for the attendants as well as you on budget, you select the color scheme and allow them to purchase a dress that flatters them in that color. This way they get a dress that they will wear again. You can dictate the length as well if you choose.
- Do your own grooming. Go to the makeup counter of your favorite cosmetics and ask the artist to do your makeup as she would for your wedding. If you love it, purchase the makeup and practice several times before the big day.
- Your favorite salon may be willing to negotiate a great price for you plus your attendants.
- A fun way to get beautiful. A few days before the wedding, get together with the bridal party to paint your nails, practice makeup. This is a great time to give the attendants their gifts.
- Attendants' gifts do not have to be expensive. Handmade items made with the attendant in mind are so much more valued over time.
- Want to look great in that dress? Get walking! Start a daily walk with your sweetie. You can strengthen your relationship as well as your body by working out together. No need to join an expensive gym. Hit the net to find exciting workout routines that can be done outside. Make a commitment to stay healthy for each other.
- When considering "Something old, something new"...consider your dress as **new**, wear a great **old** piece of jewelry from Mom, Grandmother, or other relative, and **borrow** something meaningful from your best friend.



## My beautiful gown

Designed by:\_\_\_\_\_

Style or gown number:\_\_\_\_\_

Color:\_\_\_\_\_ Size:\_\_\_\_\_ Price:\_\_\_\_\_

Vendor:\_\_\_\_\_

Alterations needed:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Order date:\_\_\_\_\_ Pick up date:\_\_\_\_\_

Put picture here

## Attendant's dresses

### Maid of Honor:

Style or dress number: \_\_\_\_\_

Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Price: \_\_\_\_\_

Vendor: \_\_\_\_\_

Alterations needed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Order date: \_\_\_\_\_ Pick up date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Bridesmaids:

Style or dress number: \_\_\_\_\_

Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Price: \_\_\_\_\_ #Ordered: \_\_\_\_\_

Vendor: \_\_\_\_\_

Alterations needed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Order date: \_\_\_\_\_ Pick up date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/size: \_\_\_\_\_

### Flower girl:

Style or dress number: \_\_\_\_\_

Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Price: \_\_\_\_\_

Vendor/store: \_\_\_\_\_

Order date: \_\_\_\_\_ Pick up date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Grooms Tuxedo

Style:\_\_\_\_\_

Color:\_\_\_\_\_ Price:\_\_\_\_\_ Free?:\_\_\_\_\_

Jacket size:\_\_\_\_\_ Pants size:\_\_\_\_\_ Shirt size:\_\_\_\_\_

Vendor:\_\_\_\_\_

Alterations needed:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Pick up date:\_\_\_\_\_ Shoe size:\_\_\_\_\_

## Best Man's attire

Best man:

Style:\_\_\_\_\_

Color:\_\_\_\_\_ Price:\_\_\_\_\_

Jacket size:\_\_\_\_\_ Pants size:\_\_\_\_\_ Shirt size:\_\_\_\_\_

Vendor:\_\_\_\_\_

Alterations needed:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Pick up date:\_\_\_\_\_ Shoe size\_\_\_\_\_

## Groomsmen's attire:

Style:\_\_\_\_\_

Color:\_\_\_\_\_ Price:\_\_\_\_\_

Vendor:\_\_\_\_\_

Pick up date:\_\_\_\_\_

Name/size:\_\_\_\_\_

Name/size:\_\_\_\_\_

Name/size:\_\_\_\_\_

Name/size:\_\_\_\_\_

Name/size:\_\_\_\_\_

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Name/size:\_\_\_\_\_

Name/size:\_\_\_\_\_

Name/size:\_\_\_\_\_

## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## Money Saving Catering Tips

- #1 biggest money saving tip in this category is, you guessed it, ‘Cut The Guest List’! Cutting just 15-25 people can save you thousands!
- A buffet style dinner is generally less expensive. The number of items offered as well as what is offered, dictates the price.
- Family style service is really catching on due to its fun style and the cost savings that go along. A server brings platters of food to your table and guests pass them around “family style”. Here you only need 1 server per table.
- Always attend a tasting offered by your caterer.
- A local culinary college may be the ideal for a smaller party. The savings can be tremendous.
- Negotiate the caterer’s service charge. The service charge should only be applied to the food and beverage portion of your bill.
- You cannot avoid service staff. A good rule of thumb, never go below 1 server per 20 guests. Remember not only do they serve your guests food, they bus tables, get water for your guests, tend bar, set up and breakdown the room, and offer other types of help when needed. A great reception needs great service!
- Theme dinners add a splash of fun and big savings. Think Asian, Mexican, Italian. The ingredients are less expensive and your guests will get a hearty, filling meal with plenty of taste.
- Another take on themes could be to serve a single entrée of a dish that is popular in your honeymoon destination. Using décor that is themed as well will make your guests feel special and involved in your honeymoon- without being there of course.
- Ask your caterer to be creative with chicken. Chicken is budget friendly and can be prepared many ways.
- When offering meat choices, balance a pricey beef or Lamb option with chicken or salmon.
- More expensive foods such as lobster, crab and beef, can break your budget. Use these options in smaller amounts by offering them in appetizers instead.
- Instead of 2-3 salad options, serve a spring mix with dressing options.
- You will save thousands of dollars by having a wedding “brunch”. Brunch options are far less expensive than dinners and the alcohol consumption will be greatly reduced saving you even more money.
- For small receptions, consider booking a restaurant for your party. You will save hundreds of dollars on items such as tables, chairs, linens, flatware, etc.
- Ask your caterer if they offer a discount for children 12 and under.
- Get an accurate count of the children 12 and under. Set up “kids” tables just for them. Give them coloring books, games, their own paper plate & plastic forks. You will save money on centerpieces & fancy table settings as well as keep the kids busy and allow the parents time to celebrate with you.
- Consider a children’s station. Hot dogs, Mac-n-cheese, chips, and fruit are what kids want to eat anyway. Some caterers will offer this at no cost to keep the kids in one area.

- Cut your cocktail hour to ½ an hour. This will save on alcohol consumption and less nibbles will be needed. Let your guests save their appetites for dinner.
- Stationery Hors D' Oeuvres save money over having passed appetizers. Less staff is needed.
- Hors D' Oeuvres can be expensive. Guests typically receive 4-6 pieces each. Choose only 2-3 inexpensive options. You want your guests to eat their meal anyway, right?
- The food is what your guests will remember most. Of all categories, this is the one to put your money where your mouth is. Centerpieces, flowers, linens, will not be remembered. So only use one tablecloth, simple flatware, and seasonal flowers and put that money towards a great meal.
- Some caterers will throw in a FREE cake when you book with them-ASK!
- The Rehearsal and dinner only require that your parents and bridal party attend. Of course you may invite anyone you like. To save money however, keep it short and sweet with limited attendees. You have a big day ahead of you!





## Questions to ask when interviewing Caterers

- What is the deposit and when is it due? Is the deposit refundable?
- Is there a gratuity or service charge? Is it included up front?
- How much are the taxes?
- How many hours of service do you include in your overall cost?
- How much extra will it be if our event runs overtime?
- What do you include in the price? Set-up, tear down, staff, food, rentals?
- How long have you been in business?
- Have you catered a wedding before?
- Can you handle small or large events? What is the largest event that you have managed?
- Are you licensed? Insured?
- Do you have health permits?
- Do you have a liquor license?
- If not, will you serve our alcohol?
- What is the charge?
- Will you provide bartenders? How much is this service?
- Is there a corkage fee if we purchase the alcohol?
- Is champagne service included for our toast?
- Will the wait staff refill drinks at the tables?
- Can you provide the rentals?
- When do you need to know the final head count?
- Will you feed the other vendors at no additional charge? How many?
- Do you offer discounted, children's pricing?
- Can you prepare a custom menu for us?
- Can you accommodate Kosher? Vegetarian? Allergies?
- What types of food service do you offer? Buffet? Seated? Family service?
- What are the costs of the different service styles?
- Do you provide the service staff?
- What ratio of servers to guests do you provide?
- How much is the charge per server?
- What do the servers wear? Tuxedos?
- Will you cut and serve the cake at no additional charge?
- Do you use fresh ingredients?
- What are the serving portions we can expect?
- Is the deposit refundable? When?
- What is your cancellation policy?
- When is the final payment due?
- What do you do with leftovers?
- Have you worked at our venue before? Do you have pictures?
- Can you work within our budget?
- May we have a current list of references?

**Caterer 1**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Liquor License: Y or N \_\_\_\_\_ Price: \_\_\_\_\_  
Specialties: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rentals available: \_\_\_\_\_  
Availability: \_\_\_\_\_  
I like this caterer because: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Caterer 2**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Liquor License: Y or N \_\_\_\_\_ Price: \_\_\_\_\_  
Specialties: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rentals available: \_\_\_\_\_  
Availability: \_\_\_\_\_  
I like this caterer because: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Caterer 3**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Liquor License: Y or N \_\_\_\_\_ Price: \_\_\_\_\_  
Specialties: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rentals available: \_\_\_\_\_  
Availability: \_\_\_\_\_  
I like this caterer because: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Money Saving Liquor Tips

- Ask your caterer if you can purchase the alcohol yourself. It can be significantly less expensive when you purchase from a local wholesaler and shop for sales. Even if your caterer charges a corkage fee, you should come out ahead. Negotiate corkage fees out.
- Caution your bartender to only open bottles as they are needed, as you will want to return any unused bottles.
- Offer only beer and wine. A selection of domestic and imports along with reds and whites. This will save you big time as well as give your guests a great selection.
- If your guest list contains light to non drinkers, nix the booze altogether. Serve mock-tails or seasonal non-alcoholic drinks.
- Morning and early afternoon affairs do not require any alcohol. Serve non-alcoholic Bloody Mary's, coffee & tea.
- If you must have a full bar, purchase house brands. When mixed it's hard to tell the difference from more expensive brands. You can always stash a bottle of Dad's favorite behind the bar.
- Another cost saving option to beer and wine is the signature drink. Add one specialty drink. This could be your favorite martini, or a colorful concoction popular in your honeymoon destination.
- Save big money by toasting with sparkling wine. Cava wines from Spain are fabulous and a great alternative to expensive French champagne.
- Really, not everyone likes champagne. You would not believe the full glasses thrown away at many weddings. Money down the drain! If you and your fiancé want champagne you should buy 1 special bottle to be served to the 2 of you for toasting and allow your guests to toast with their drink of choice. Several hundreds of dollars saved right there!
- Close the bar one hour before the reception ends. Save money as well as lives by offering soda, coffee and bottled water for the last hour.
- To host or not to host? Consider hosting only the first ½ of the cocktail hour or the whole cocktail hour.
- Consumption bar or flat fee? If you have just light drinkers, a consumption bar is more budget wise. A flat fee may be to your advantage if your guests are big drinkers.



## Money Saving Cake Tips

- If size matters and you want to knock-em dead with your display- do it! Here's how: Ask your baker to use Styrofoam to create the base and tiers. Add a small cake to the top for cutting ceremony purposes. Using butter cream frosting and real flowers, you will have a gorgeous cake at a fraction of the cost!
- Have your caterer serve your guests slices of cake that have been cut from a sheet cake provided by your baker. No one will know the difference and you can offer 2 flavor choices. Keep in mind though- the more flavors you offer adds up to more cake being needed as some people will want to try them all.
- Most bakers have standard designs that they can create in your colors. Opt for those over costly, labor-intensive cakes that can break your budget.
- Butter cream tastes better and is less expensive than heavy fondant. Fondants are hard to work with and greatly add to the cost. Most people don't eat the fondant- they peel it off.
- Ask your baker to use a pre-made cake mix- still great, but saves money by saving time and ingredients.
- Do not purchase a cake topper if you already have a beautiful cake. Cake toppers are often lost or broken and wind up in the basement never to be seen again.
- Believe it or not- fresh flowers are less expensive than their icing counterparts. Daisies come in a multitude of colors and really look amazing. Roses can still be expensive, consider using petals as well.
- More details = more money. Simple elegance goes a long way.
- When you offer cake you do not need other dessert options. Money will be wasted.
- Chocolate fountains are great. They add a huge WOW factor to a reception. They are also costly; fountain rental, chocolate, dippers, the staff to maintain it, the table, the linens, more plates, napkins, etc.
- If you must have a chocolate fountain – limit the cake! Have a small ceremonial cake and a small sheet cake in the back for the older guests. Have the wait staff inquire with your older guests as to whether they would like cake.
- Borrow the cake knife from your caterer. Most will have a very nice one on hand for this purpose. Why buy one and store in a box forever?
- Smaller cakes can be used as centerpieces for each table. The bride and groom will have theirs, as will each table. Use rented or borrowed cake stands and surround with floral petals or tea lights. Negotiate a “per slice” price with the baker and choose a simple design. You are still receiving the same amount of slices, but, you are saving \$\$ on floral or other centerpiece themes.
- Ask if your caterer will throw in a FREE cake- some will, you just have to ask.



[illegible]

## Money Saving Tips For Setting Your Date

- Consider the off-season months for your wedding. You may have your first pick of vendors and venues during the slow months. Many will offer an incentive if you book during off-season and negotiating becomes a breeze.
- Holidays ARE NOT an ideal time for weddings. Many vendors will charge a premium for their services and the price of catering staff can almost double.
- Be flexible. Have a back-up date in case a ‘must have’ vendor is not available.
- Consider your menstrual cycle. You want to be in best form mentally and physically on your wedding day, not bloated, moody and broken out.
- Plan to be away from your jobs during the most “stress free” times – for you and your boss.
- Be mindful of your “A” list guests. What date would liken the chances of their being able to attend? Enquire as to their important dates; birthdays, vacations, anniversaries, etc.



## Money Saving Tips For Your Ceremony

- Ask a friend or relative to act as the officiant.
- Get married at your reception site. Many sites have a ceremony site. Ask if they will include in your reception package. At least at a discount.
- Get married in your home church.
- Use the musicians on staff at the ceremony site.
- Used tape-recorded wedding- march and other ceremony music provided by ceremony site.
- Choose a location that needs no decoration: botanical gardens, beach, mountains, museum, etc. Check for permit regulations.
- If you provide any décor, make sure it can serve double duty at the reception.
- Ask the site to use the décor they own.

## Questions to ask when interviewing Ceremony Venues

- What is the fee for renting the venue?
- What does the fee include?
- How much deposit is required and when is the balance due?
- How many hours does the fee include?
- What are the hourly charges if we go over the time limit?
- Is a security deposit required?
- What is the refund policy?
- Does the fee include the rehearsal the day before the wedding?
- Will there be a coordinator available?
- Are there any requirements regarding my officiant?
- Is pre-marriage counseling required?
- Can couples from mixed faiths be married at the venue?
- What rental equipment is included with the fee; i.e., microphones, unity candles, etc.
- If not included, are they available to rent?
- Is there an organist available?
- What is the seating capacity?
- Is there a dressing room for the Bride/Groom?
- Is parking is available?
- Are there any other weddings held on my date?
- If so, what time will they be held?
- When can the florist and decorator come in to set up?
- Are there any restrictions on decorating?
- What are the policies regarding: photography, flower petals, birdseed/rice etc.?

## **Questions to Ask When interviewing an Officiant**

Your officiant is a very special part of your ceremony. Choose wisely, whether it's your home church clergy person, friend, relative, or someone else. Look for someone who understands and can offer the type of ceremony you want, whether it is religious or completely customized for you.

- What is the fee and when is it due?
- Does the fee include the rehearsal?
- Are there any restrictions on vows, music, prayers, readings, etc.?
- Will you perform an interfaith ceremony? Same sex marriage?
- Will you participate in conjunction with another officiant?
- Can you perform ceremonies at various locations?
- Can you provide a copy of your script beforehand?
- Can changes be made to your script?
- Can personal vows be included within the ceremony?
- Will you attend the reception?

## **Money saving Tips For Your Transportation**

- As with all vendors, know what your contract says! Know all of the terms. How much is overtime? Do you charge by the mile or the hour? Is gratuity included? When does the meter start?
- Do not leave your driver outside billing you for wasted time. Hire one limo to take you to your ceremony and reception, then another to take you to your wedding night destination.
- Hire a black car. Many limo companies charge more for white cars as they have less of them.
- Hire a sedan to carry only the two of you to the reception. This will save money as well as allow the two of you a moment alone together. Of course you want to make sure that the bridal party has their own reliable transportation and knows when to be available for pictures. Suggest they carpool.
- If your budget doesn't allow for a limo, ask a reliable friend or relative to drive you.
- Transportation costs are greatly lessened when you hold your ceremony and reception at the same location.



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## My Wedding Day Itinerary

Following is a form representing typical wedding day events. Use it as a guideline for your event, adding or deleting items as needed. When you have filled in all of the events and times, make sure to give copies to all vendors as well as all wedding day participants

Task	Time	Performed by
<b>Bride</b>		
Wake up / Breakfast		
Hair / Makeup		
Bridal party arrives		
Flowers arrive for bridal party		
Get dressed, allow 1 ½ to 2 hours		
Photographer arrives		
Videographer arrives		
Bride & attendants photo session		
Car arrives to transport bridal party		
Leave for ceremony site		
<b>Groom</b>		
Wake up / Breakfast		
Flowers arrive for Groom & groomsmen		
Photographer arrives		
Videographer arrives		
Car arrives		
Leave for ceremony site		
<b>Ceremony</b>		
Florist arrives to decorate		
Musicians arrive		
Ushers arrive		
Groom & groomsmen arrive		
Parents of the groom are seated		
Bride's Mother & Father arrive		
Guests are seated		
Mother of the Bride is seated		
Bride and bridesmaids arrive		
Prelude Begins		
Processional Begins		
Recessional begins		
Photo session begins		

<b>Reception</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Performed by</b>
<b>VENDORS</b>		
Florist arrives		
Caterer arrives		
DJ arrives		
Cake arrives		
Rentals arrive		
Liquor arrives (if not with caterer)		
Decorators arrive		
Photographer arrives		
Videographer arrives		
Music starts		
Drinks & Hors D'oeuvres begin		
Bridal party arrives		
Bridal party are introduced		
Dinner begins		
Bride & Groom's toast		
Best Man's toast		
Parent's toast		
First dance		
Father Daughter dance		
Parents dance		
Cake cutting		
Bouquet toss		
Garter toss		
Misc. activities		
Misc. activities		
Misc. activities		
Last dance		
Car arrives to pick up Bride & Groom		
Bride & Groom depart		

## Money Saving Floral Tips

- Use **in season flowers** for your décor and bouquets. Exotic flowers that must be flown in are expensive and don't always hold up well.
- Create ceremony displays that can be transferred to the reception site and play double duty.
- Decorate only the altar area of your ceremony venue, if needed. All eyes will be on the two of you, so add the drama to where the action is.
- Hire a florist who knows and respects your budget. Let him or her be creative with the use of tulle, greenery and other inexpensive fillers.
- Using a combination of silk with fresh flowers can create amazing arrangements and bouquets. It is a great way to add exotic flowers.
- Using fruit in your centerpieces adds color and excitement as well as making them larger without using more stems.
- Using seasonal décor such as gourds, Christmas bulbs, and garland, add interest and can mean less money spent on floral.
- Using a high volume florist can save you big money. They have more buying power so they pay less money for their flowers than the small corner florist.
- Do not let the florist talk you into a great deal by using the older, non-selling stock in their coolers.
- Consider renting a potted tree when a large area needs décor, such as a corner.
- Bigger isn't always better in flowers. A small bouquet of calla lilies tied with ribbon is very elegant.
- Two or three colorful Gerbera daisies are very dramatic in a clear vase.
- Floating flowers or petals in a lotus bowl, atop a mirrored tile, surrounded by tea lights, make a beautiful, low cost centerpiece. The candlelight adds interest as well as romance to your tables. Always opt. For unscented candles at the tables.
- A smaller wedding party will save you money here. You will need less boutonnieres, less bouquets.
- Bridesmaids can add drama by carrying a single stem in a bold color.
- Create bouquets that can be transferred to the head table after the ceremony. Have your florist place water filled vases on the head table for the bridesmaids to place their flowers in. This not only save money but it also helps to preserve the flowers.
- Hand tied bouquets are easier to create and easier to preserve.
- Take a class in floral arranging at your local community college. You learn something as well as save money by doing your own floral arrangements. Use magazine photos as your inspiration.
- Purchase flowers from wholesale flower markets, on-line suppliers, Costco or your local grocer.

## Most common wedding floral needs.

Working with a florist who has worked at your ceremony and reception site is very helpful. He or she will know what needs to be done where, to create the most bang for your buck and where you can scale down or cut out altogether. Make sure to bring a photo of your dress, ceremony & reception location to your meeting.

- Bridal Bouquet
- Maid of Honor's bouquet
- Bridesmaids' bouquets
- Flower Girl's flowers- although using fake is preferred in many locations.
- Ring Bearer's Boutonniere
- Mother / Grandmother's corsages
- Grooms Boutonniere
- Best Man's Boutonniere
- Groomsmen's Boutonniere's
- Father's Boutonniere's
- Pew / aisle décor
- Altar décor
- Table centerpieces
- Cake table
- Buffet table

## Just a few Flowers and their seasons

January	Carnation		July	Larkspur, Snapdragon
February	Tulip		August	Gladiola, Sunflower
March	Iris, Peony		September	Snapdragon, Chrysanthemum
April	Lilac, Tulips		October	Gerbera Daisy
May	Lily, Daffodil		November	Mums, Evergreen
June	Rose, Gladiolas		December	Dendrobium Orchid, Poinsettia

## Money Saving Stationery Tips

- Purchase invitation kits, customize them and assemble with your wedding party.
- Address your own invitations. Practice with a nice calligraphy pen or just use your best handwriting.
- Count twice, order once. Have an accurate count and print a few extras. Add on orders can be very expensive.
- Order early to avoid rush charges. Some stationers will charge up to 50% for rush jobs. This will also allow time to correct any mistakes if needed.
- Proof. Proof. Proof your invitations before they go to print. You will pay a hefty fee for any corrections.
- Opt out of engraved invitations and ask for thermography. It is a fraction of the cost and just as beautiful. No one will know how price savvy you were.
- Don't waste time and money on 'save the date' cards. Just mail your invitations 6 weeks out and give your guests plenty of time to make arrangements for your big day.
- However, postcards from the area where you will be married are a fun and inexpensive way to send 'save the date' announcements. The postcards are inexpensive as well as the postage for postcards is much less.
- Forgo the extras such as vellum, ribbon, and rhinestones. These items are expensive and can add to the postage.
- Oversize invitations are not worth all of the costs involved.
- Fit all of your wedding/reception information on the invitation. This will save you printing charges as well as postage.
- Use an online map site to create your own map. Print them on nice paper and include with the invitation.
- Ask your stationer if you can save money by doing the assembling yourself.
- Programs are costly and are generally left behind in the guest's seats after the ceremony. From there they go directly to the garbage bin. If you want to honor a special person, have your clergy make an announcement.
- Place cards can be confusing as well as an un-needed expense. Most people want to sit with their friends and family. They are more comfortable with people they know. Imagine sitting at a table with 8 strangers. You can designate family tables and let grandma and grandpa know where you'd like them to sit.

[illegible]

## Money Saving Music Tips

- Time is money! Overtime is more money. Stick to your schedule.
- Get referrals; visit other events that are using your DJ/band. Do not hire sight unseen.
- Booking musicians directly will save agency fees.
- Most churches will have an organist who is available for a small fee or free.
- Ask a friend who sings to perform at your ceremony.
- Students of local music schools would love the opportunity to play at your ceremony or cocktail hour.
- Play CD'S during the cocktail and dinner hour, and then have the band or DJ on for dancing afterwards. Your guests will not miss them, as they will be busy talking about your wonderful wedding.
- DJ's generally cost less than a band and can cover a wider range of music to please everyone from nine to ninety.
- When hiring a band, you can have just the guitar or piano player play during cocktail and dinnertime.
- Many DJ's charge extra for lights, smoke, disco balls, etc. Have everything spelled out in your contract. Know exactly what you want so you do not pay for the extras that you do not want.
- Your DJ is also your master of ceremonies. Choose a person that is well spoken, outgoing, and can deliver the type of party atmosphere that you are looking for.
- Take the word "Wedding" off when looking for a DJ.
- Be sure to complete a song list for your Master of Ceremonies. Include all of the songs you want played as well as those you DO NOT WANT PLAYED. Keep a copy attached to your contract.





## Questions to ask when interviewing DJ's and Bands

The DJ or band you choose will have the greatest effect on the mood of your reception. These are the people who will motivate your guests to do what you want them to do- HAVE FUN!

Hire someone whom you feel relates well with you and understands the kind of mood you want.

- What is your price per event? Per hour?
- What is the over time charge?
- What is the gratuity? Is it included?
- Who will be the DJ at our event?
- How many weddings has this person done?
- May we attend one of his/her upcoming events to see him/her work?
- Do you use professional grade equipment?
- Do you have a comprehensive song list? May we view it?
- If you do not have songs that we want, will you obtain them?
- Can your selection span a crowd from 9-90?
- Do you provide lighting and special effects? Are these included or additional?
- Will the DJ also be the master of ceremonies?
- Can the DJ motivate the crowd?
- Have you worked at our venue before? Do you have pictures?
- Can you work within our budget?
- May we have a current list of references?

[illegible]

## Money Saving Photography & Videography Tips

Wedding videos are gaining popularity. Most couples are too busy on their wedding day to catch all of the action. Video's are a living reminder of those who were at your wedding, not only do you see them, but you get to hear their voices and well wishes.

Consider video especially, when you have elderly guests whose voices you want to remember, or you just want to hear your vows again.

- **Own your proofs!!!** This way you can make as many duplicates as you wish for a much smaller charge. You will save \$\$\$ by purchasing a smaller package and having the proofs included. There is no reason to have the photographer store your photos and charge you for reprints and look-up fees.
- Hire your Photographer and Videographer for only the **peak hours** of your event.
- Compose your own book and family album with your proofs.
- Hire one photographer with a backup camera. You do not need to hire the photographer's assistants.
- Hire a photographer who will create a custom package for your needs.
- Give a complete list of the pictures you must have taken on your big day. Have these pictures listed as part of your contract. Know what the contract is for and what you are paying for.
- Look through the photographer's books and call their referrals.
- You will be working closely with this person. Choose someone you like and trust.
- Ask if the photographer provides digital services. It will cost the photographer nothing but his time and you can get your proofs via cd in no time.
- To save on editing costs, ask your videographer to prepare a nice but basic cut of your video. If you want, you can get a more elaborate version later. However, it will be pricey.
- Tell your videographer exactly what and who you want to see. Two hours of eating, and best wishes is unnecessary.
- Skip the special effects on your video.
- Ask your photographer to put your pictures on a web based ordering system so that your friends and relatives can easily order at a later date.
- Say this with me: No disposable cameras! Along with the cost of the cameras and developing, is the fact that many of them go unused, except of course by children whose photos of their shoes are unlikely to add any additional shots for your album. Instead, ask your friends and relatives to take photos with their digital cameras and then upload them to an online site that you can share.
- Be very specific about the photos you must have, i.e., specific people, locations, activities, etc. Your photographer should have a photo request form for you to fill out so that you both know what your expectations are. I have included a sample for you in the photography section of Your Personal Wedding Planner.

## Questions to ask when interviewing Photographers/Videographers

- Have you photographed/video recorded other weddings?
- Have you worked at our venue before? Do you have pictures? Video?
- Can you work within our budget?
- Do you do this for a living or for a hobby?
- How many weddings have you shot?
- What is your charge per event?
- Do you charge a travel charge?
- Are our negatives included?
- Can we purchase our negatives?
- What packages do you offer?
- Will you create a custom package for us?
- Do you offer proofs on the net or by CD?
- When will our photographs/video be ready?
- How much are duplicate tapes?
- What is your photographic style? Candid? Formal? Journalistic? Combination of them all?
- Do you shoot film or digital?
- Do you have a recent book of your work we can look at?
- Do you bring an assistant with you? Is there an extra charge for their service?
- Is there a deposit required? Is it refundable?
- When is the final payment due?
- May we have a list of current references?
- Do you have a web based ordering system for friends and family?

## Wedding Photography Checklist

Following is a sample of a form your photographer may use for your photo selection. Fill your form out completely and inform your photographer of any shots you require that are not listed. Don't forget special friends, Great Grandparents, etc. Keep a copy in your binder to have readily available at the wedding if necessary.

### BEFORE THE CEREMONY

- ☐ Mother/Maid of Honor adjusting veil
- ☐ Bride in dressing room with mirror

### AT THE CEREMONY LOCATION

- ☐ Groom and groomsmen photographs
- ☐ Groom with father
- ☐ Bride with parents
- ☐ Bride and bridesmaids group pose

### DURING THE CEREMONY

- ☐ Bridal party coming down the aisle
- ☐ Bride being walked down aisle by father
- ☐ Father giving bride away

### AFTER THE CEREMONY AT CEREMONY LOCATION

- ☐ Best man signing certificate with bride and groom looking on
- ☐ Matron of honor signing certificate with bride and groom looking on

### SETUP POSES IN THE CEREMONY LOCATION

- ☐ Groom kissing bride at the altar full length
- ☐ Groom putting ring on bride's finger
- ☐ Bride and groom lighting candles
- ☐ Bride and groom's hands with rings and flowers
- ☐ Bride and groomsmen
- ☐ Groom with bridesmaids
- ☐ Bride and groom with bride's parents
- ☐ Bride with her parents
- ☐ Bride and groom with groom's parents
- ☐ Groom with his parents
- ☐ Getting into limo

### OUTSIDE SHOTS

- ☐ Outdoor shots of bride and groom
- ☐ Outdoor shots of wedding party

### AT THE RECEPTION

- ☐ Introduction of the wedding party
- ☐ Close up of bride and groom kissing
- ☐ First dance
- ☐ Bride and father dance
- ☐ Groom and mother dance
- ☐ Candid of guests and bridal party
- ☐ Cutting the cake
- ☐ Bride throwing the bouquet
- ☐ Groom taking off garter
- ☐ Groom throwing the garter
- ☐ Getaway car

## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## Money Saving Reception Tips

- Think outside of the box when it comes to reception venues. Don't just look in the yellow pages for "wedding reception" locations. I have planned receptions in our local fireman's museum, bed & breakfasts, museums, colleges, historical buildings, botanical gardens, city parks.
- Choose a venue that is beautiful 'as is' without extra decorating on your part. See above.
- Keep your guest list in mind- you don't want the venue too big or too small for your party.
- Some venues will offer "off season" or "off night" discounts. If you are not getting married in a religious site, a Sunday wedding can be very nice. You can feel free to shorten the reception time since many people will have to go to work the next morning.
- You can save money by having your ceremony and reception in one location. No transportation needs and you need only decorate one site. This is also convenient for your guests.
- Some venues are "all inclusive" meaning you have to work with their list of vendors. Be sure to interview these vendors and check their references. Also, what are the hidden fees? Corkage? Cake cutting? Make sure to get it in writing.
- Beware the inexpensive "rental hall". You will have to spend a lot of money on decorations, floral, linens, tables, chairs, plates, etc. Find a location that needs little, if, any décor.
- Remember: the location not only sets the tone for the level of formality in your occasion, but your dress, invitations, and décor are governed by it as well.
- If you are having your reception in a hotel, ask them to include a free bridal suite as well. You should also be able to book guest rooms at a discount. Negotiate!
- Ask your venue what Freebies they can throw in if you use their facility. Some venues have been known to throw in cakes and flowers.
- Have a clear contract that states exactly what you will and will not be paying for.
- Negotiate out any standard charge that does not apply to your party.
- A four hour event (instead of 5) = great savings all around! Less time at the venue, less alcohol, less entertainment. So much fun in 4 hours no one will miss the 5<sup>th</sup>.
- If you are planning an outdoor event, make sure to have a plan b, indoors, in case of inclement weather.
- Not all outdoor events cost less. Consider that you must rent; tables, table settings, chairs, tents, dance floor, portable restrooms.
- Choosing a monochromatic color scheme, one or two colors, can be beautiful and dramatic. Focus on the big picture and save money on the small, frivolous details. As long as you stay true to the theme, it won't matter that you use inexpensive flowers instead of roses.

- Party shops as well as some antique stores, will rent out beautiful candelabras and other ornamental pieces for the evening.
- Fireworks may break the budget but you can still give your guests sparklers at an outdoor reception. Of course, be careful around children.
- A fun centerpiece idea that several of my brides have used in a variety of ways; create your centerpiece with items that are local and define your wedding city or honeymoon destination. Add fun facts about either destination, you can even use postcards with local sites as coasters.
- Use native materials/ flowers for your décor. At a wedding I coordinated in the Colorado Rockies, the bride's father made candleholders for the tables from various size Aspen branches he cut and surrounded them with pine and cones from the area.
- Ask the venue manager if they have any wedding decorations on hand for you to use.
- Focus your efforts on the areas needed. You do not need to decorate every nook and cranny.
- Favors, again a lot of them get tossed in the bin. No one is going to be sorry that they did not receive a shot glass with your wedding date on it, sorry. This is really the worst place to spend your money. Just say no to favors!
- If you must do favors, I suggest edible ones such as candy. Also, give one favor per couple and save 50%.
- Handmade items are much more meaningful than store bought and generally less expensive.
- Multi-task! Use your favors as part of the centerpiece that can be removed by the guests before they leave.





## Questions to ask when interviewing reception locations

- Is our date available?
- Do you have other weddings booked on that day? Some venues will only book one wedding per day and others may book two.
- Will this interfere with our deliveries, arrival times, departure, etc?
- Do you offer 'off night' discounts?
- Do you offer a ceremony location onsite? Is there a charge? How many will it hold?
- Is the venue large enough to hold our party ? Have you held a reception this large/small before?
- May see pictures of the room set up for a wedding.
- Do you offer any decorations that we can borrow?
- Are there any restrictions on candles, rice, flower petals, tape, or any other décor items?
- How many hours will we have for our reception? Does this include deliveries and tear down?
- What is the charge if we go over the time limit?
- Do you offer wedding packages that include, food, cake, flowers, etc?
- May we use our own caterer?
- Does the rental include, linens, tableware, chairs, chair covers, tables, etc?
- May we bring our own alcohol?
- If not, what are our bar options? Cash Bar, Open Bar? Do you provide bartenders?
- Do you have sufficient parking for our guests?
- Will you offer our guests discounted rooms for the night?
- Do you offer a Honeymoon Suite at no extra charge?
- Is there air conditioning/heating?
- Is there handicap access?
- May we have a list of recent references?

## Reception Site Survey Sheet

Venue:\_\_\_\_\_ Address:\_\_\_\_\_

Contact:\_\_\_\_\_ Title:\_\_\_\_\_

Phone#:\_\_\_\_\_ Cell#:\_\_\_\_\_

Fax#:\_\_\_\_\_ email:\_\_\_\_\_

Website:\_\_\_\_\_

Charge:\_\_\_\_\_ Extra Hours:\_\_\_\_\_

Deposit:\_\_\_\_\_ Gratuities:\_\_\_\_\_

Availability:\_\_\_\_\_ Cancellation policy:\_\_\_\_\_

Seating capacity:\_\_\_\_\_ Number of rooms:\_\_\_\_\_

Condition\_\_\_\_\_

Ceremony site?/ Charge:\_\_\_\_\_ Dance floor:\_\_\_\_\_

Parking spaces: Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

On Site Catering/ own caterer option?: \_\_\_\_\_

Outdoor facilities:\_\_\_\_\_

Staff:\_\_\_\_\_

Washrooms: Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Condition:\_\_\_\_\_

Handicapped facilities: Washrooms:\_\_\_\_\_ Parking:\_\_\_\_\_ Ramps:\_\_\_\_\_

Audio/Visual capabilities:\_\_\_\_\_

Linens/ table decor:\_\_\_\_\_

Decor: \_\_\_\_\_ Allow candles, petals, nails, tape:\_\_\_\_\_

Janitorial service included:\_\_\_\_\_

Kitchen: Professional or Home style Appliances:\_\_\_\_\_

Bar: Portable or Static: \_\_\_\_\_ Bartenders:\_\_\_\_\_

Cleanliness/concerns:\_\_\_\_\_

## Reception Site Survey Sheet

Venue:\_\_\_\_\_ Address:\_\_\_\_\_

Contact:\_\_\_\_\_ Title:\_\_\_\_\_

Phone#:\_\_\_\_\_ Cell#:\_\_\_\_\_

Fax#:\_\_\_\_\_ email:\_\_\_\_\_

Website:\_\_\_\_\_

Charge:\_\_\_\_\_ Extra Hours:\_\_\_\_\_

Deposit:\_\_\_\_\_ Gratuities:\_\_\_\_\_

Availability:\_\_\_\_\_ Cancellation policy:\_\_\_\_\_

Seating capacity:\_\_\_\_\_ Number of rooms:\_\_\_\_\_

Condition\_\_\_\_\_

Ceremony site?/ Charge:\_\_\_\_\_ Dance floor:\_\_\_\_\_

Parking spaces: Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

On Site Catering/ own caterer option?: \_\_\_\_\_

Outdoor facilities:\_\_\_\_\_

Staff:\_\_\_\_\_

Washrooms: Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Condition:\_\_\_\_\_

Handicapped facilities: Washrooms:\_\_\_\_\_ Parking:\_\_\_\_\_ Ramps:\_\_\_\_\_

Audio/Visual capabilities:\_\_\_\_\_

Linens/ table decor:\_\_\_\_\_

Decor: \_\_\_\_\_ Allow candles, petals, nails, tape:\_\_\_\_\_

Janitorial service included:\_\_\_\_\_

Kitchen: Professional or Home style Appliances:\_\_\_\_\_

Bar: Portable or Static: \_\_\_\_\_ Bartenders:\_\_\_\_\_

Cleanliness/concerns:\_\_\_\_\_

## Reception Site Survey Sheet

Venue:\_\_\_\_\_ Address:\_\_\_\_\_

Contact:\_\_\_\_\_ Title:\_\_\_\_\_

Phone#:\_\_\_\_\_ Cell#:\_\_\_\_\_

Fax#:\_\_\_\_\_ email:\_\_\_\_\_

Website:\_\_\_\_\_

Charge:\_\_\_\_\_ Extra Hours:\_\_\_\_\_

Deposit:\_\_\_\_\_ Gratuities:\_\_\_\_\_

Availability:\_\_\_\_\_ Cancellation policy:\_\_\_\_\_

Seating capacity:\_\_\_\_\_ Number of rooms:\_\_\_\_\_

Condition\_\_\_\_\_

Ceremony site?/ Charge:\_\_\_\_\_ Dance floor:\_\_\_\_\_

Parking spaces: Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

On Site Catering/ own caterer option?: \_\_\_\_\_

Outdoor facilities:\_\_\_\_\_

Staff:\_\_\_\_\_

Washrooms: Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Condition:\_\_\_\_\_

Handicapped facilities: Washrooms:\_\_\_\_\_ Parking:\_\_\_\_\_ Ramps:\_\_\_\_\_

Audio/Visual capabilities:\_\_\_\_\_

Linens/ table decor:\_\_\_\_\_

Decor: \_\_\_\_\_ Allow candles, petals, nails, tape:\_\_\_\_\_

Janitorial service included:\_\_\_\_\_

Kitchen: Professional or Home style Appliances:\_\_\_\_\_

Bar: Portable or Static: \_\_\_\_\_ Bartenders:\_\_\_\_\_

Cleanliness/concerns:\_\_\_\_\_

## Notes

[illegible]

## How to negotiate with vendors and win

- Make friends with your wedding vendors. Make them a partner in your big day.
- Vendors are not the bad guys, find the ones you can work with and your wedding will be a success.
- Remember that the vendors are running a business to make a profit. That is good business. Hire vendors that have your best interests in mind as well as theirs.
- **NEGOTIATE, NEGOTIATE, AND NEGOTIATE!!!**
- Do not hire the first vendor you meet with, without first interviewing 2 other vendors.
- Do not be afraid to walk away if a vendor cannot meet your requirements.
- Let your vendors know up front what your budget is and that you intend to stick to it!
- Let your vendors know that you are visiting competitors and that quality as well as price is very important to you.
- Visit at least 3 vendors within a category. Get the details in writing (a quote) and make sure you are comparing apples to apples.
- Do not be intimidated by vendors who say “book now or risk losing the date.”
- Ask for referrals and check the Better Business Bureau before you sign contracts or leave a deposit. Call those referrals.
- Dare your vendors to be creative in finding ways to stick to your budget.
- Keep pictures of your inspiration for the “wedding of your dreams” with you when meeting with vendors. This will ensure that they know what you want and it will keep you from spending wildly on items that do not fit in your wedding scheme.
- Plan as far ahead as possible to inspire your vendors to negotiate with you, this is money in the bank for them.
- If advance planning isn’t possible, you can still negotiate with a vendor if they are open on your date. Vendors don’t want an empty calendar. If your date is near and they aren’t booked, you have the power to negotiate on your terms.
- Ask what extras the vendor can throw in to add value to their service. This may be in lieu of lower pricing.
- Have your vendors’ breakdown the charges so that you can see what you are paying for and where you can cut the fat.
- **Get everything in writing.** This means **everything**; prices, freebies, times, hours, amounts, food, song list, must have photographs, etc.

- Know who, from your vendors company, will be attending your wedding. Meet them upfront and advise them all of the negotiations of the services you have been promised. Make sure you feel comfortable with them beforehand, if not, request another person. It is your wedding after all.
- DO NOT fall for the “it’s your wedding day, it only happens once” line. Vendors have been using this line for years to guilt you into going over your budget. Do not fall for it.
- Being flexible while still being true to your wedding vision, can add up to big savings. Keeping the upper hand in negotiating while practicing give and take can usually strike a deal that is acceptable to both you and your vendor.
- Give deposits with a credit card in case there is a dispute with your vendor.
- Only give non-refundable refunds when you are absolutely, 100% sure of your vendor.
- REMEMBER- vendors do have minimum standard requirements. Do not ask them to lower them. No one will win.
- DO NOT trade quality for price. The least expensive is not always a good value. This is especially true when it comes to catering. You do not want to order the toughest cut of meat because it is cheaper. If you cannot afford a good cut, choose a very nice pasta dish.
- Take the wedding label off when searching for vendors. This can save you big when shopping for services.
- Wait until the wedding day to pay the final balances to your vendors. They are more likely to keep all promises when they are still owed money.
- Remember the vendor is your employee for a given period, being paid by you to perform a service.
- Be kind to your vendors. They can be your biggest allies in having the wedding of your dreams while saving money in the process.
- Always ask to speak to the manager. This is the person who is able to give you a better price and offer freebies. Most employees are not able to offer discounts without going to the manager. Cut out the middleman to save time and money.
- Do your research before signing any contracts.
- I strongly suggest against hiring a vendor who is new to the industry. Although his prices may be great, you have no guarantee that his work will be. You want to see pictures of past work and have references to speak with. With a newbie, this isn’t possible.
- DO NOT hire a vendor who requires you to pay in cash. You will have no recourse if he fails to perform.
- Participate in comparison shopping, not comparison weddings. Stay true to your vision and do not get caught up in what other brides have done. This is not a contest.

## Questions to ask when calling references

It is imperative to call on the references provided by your vendors. You are not only going to hear what they did wrong (if anything), but you will also learn how great they were. Don't be afraid to ask questions, brides love to talk about their weddings.

For each vendor ask....	For the Caterer ask...
<p>Would you work with this vendor again?</p> <p>Would you recommend this vendor to your sister or best friend?</p> <p>Did the vendor provide all services promised?</p> <p>Did the vendor work within your budget?</p> <p>Was the vendor timely?</p> <p>Was the vendor a people person? Did he/she work well with you and others?</p> <p>Was the service provided worth the price?</p>	<p>Was the meal served at the correct temperature?</p> <p>Was the meal served in a timely manner?</p> <p>How was the food? Excellent? Great? Okay?</p> <p>How was the service? Were there enough servers for your amount of guests?</p> <p>How were the servers dressed?</p> <p>Were the servers professional and good with your guests?</p> <p>Was the meal well thought out?</p>
For the photographer ask...	For the DJ/band ask...
<p>How soon did you receive your proofs? Photos?</p> <p>Did he/she get the shots promised?</p> <p>Was he/she on time?</p> <p>Did you work well together?</p> <p>Was the photographer in your face or in the background?</p>	<p>Did they keep the party upbeat and guests on the floor?</p> <p>Did they play the required songs you requested?</p> <p>Were they professional and well dressed?</p> <p>Did they have an extensive play list?</p> <p>Did you get value for your money?</p>



## My Baker

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final count due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deposit due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final payment due: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Caterer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final count due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deposit due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final payment due: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Bridal Gown Shop

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deposit due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final payment due: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Formalwear Shop

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deposit due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final payment due: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Ceremony Location

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final count due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deposit due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final payment due: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Officiant

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fee: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Reception Venue

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final count due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deposit due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final payment due: \_\_\_\_\_

## My DJ

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deposit due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final payment due: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Florist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final count due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deposit due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final payment due: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Photographer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deposit due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final payment due: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Videographer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deposit due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final payment due: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Transportation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deposit due: \_\_\_\_\_  
Final payment due: \_\_\_\_\_

## Notes

[illegible]

## Money Saving Guest List Tips

This is where couples as well as parents need to be realistic. If it is within your budget to invite everyone you know, then do it. If not, it needs to be an area for honest discussion.

Everyone involved wants to invite certain people. Decide how many you can afford and split them between the paying parties. Also consider having each party create an “A” List and a “B” List. This will help to prioritize the guests.

- Your #1 consideration here should be your **BUDGET**.
- You do not need to invite everyone that you know.
- Weddings are not trade off events; I went to hers so she must come to mine. Not!
- Facts to remember: Average wedding has 178 guests; the average amount of money spent per guest is \$115. Do the math. Divide your budget by the number of guests you would “like” to invite. It is hard to drop below the \$100 per guest number without **looking** frugal.
- If you simply cannot cut your list, then you will have to make cuts across the board. Such as: a less elaborate dress, buffet instead of seated dinner, less floral, less décor, less than dreamy reception venue, less bar options, and the list goes on and on.
- Invite only those who you would invite to your home for dinner.
- Set guest list boundaries such as; no children, no co-workers, no business acquaintances of parents, no guilt invitations, no “and guest” of single guests. Of course these will be different for every bride and some brides will have boundaries different from these.
- How many guests will your ceremony and reception hold? That quaint chapel in the mountains that you “just have to have” may not hold all of you guests.
- Have an “A” list and a “B” list. Only tap into the “B” list if you have invited all of the “A” lister’s and you still have room.
- Keeping your guest list concise with only those who you truly adore and must have at your wedding will allow for you to splurge a little and really have the wedding of your dreams.
- DO NOT invite someone for the benefit of a wedding present.



## Guest List Planner

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Out of town Y/N  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_  
Invite sent on \_\_\_\_\_ RSVP received \_\_\_\_\_ # attending \_\_\_\_\_  
Gift received \_\_\_\_\_ Thank you sent \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Out of town Y/N  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Guest Seating Planner

Table - Head Table	Table - Family Table

Table #	Table #

Table #	Table #

## Guest Seating Planner

Table #	Table #

Table #	Table #

Table #	Table #

## Guest Seating Planner

Table #	Table #

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## Notes

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## Money Saving Honeymoon Tips

Average spent on a honeymoon \$4000. Average stay is 7 days. That is almost \$600 a day. Do your research. Spend your time and money wisely.

- Book your honeymoon at least 6 months in advance. Ask for incentives such as, complimentary breakfast, champagne on arrival, free scuba lessons, car, upgrades, etc.
- Use a travel agent for insider information on the destinations you are interested in. He or she may be able to snag discounts that aren't offered otherwise.
- Be Internet savvy and do your own research as well before locking into a package.
- A cruise is usually very budget friendly. All costs are paid up front and there are many options for destinations, entertainment, adventure, etc.
- Mexico is budget friendly. It is just a few hours away (depending on where you live), the beaches are fabulous, the airfare is reasonable and they offer a variety of low cost packages.
- Consider staying in the USA. Depending on your interests, there is something for everyone; beaches in TX, mountain climbing in CO, surfing in CA, theatre and sightseeing in NYC, biking in UT, rain forest in OR. The list goes on for miles.
- Why register for house wares when you can register for your honeymoon? Your guests will be directed to contribute to your honeymoon fund instead of a department store. They may even Purchase your scuba lessons or helicopter ride. Call your local Travel Agent for details.
- Determine when the high and low seasons are for your destination. During high season you can count on paying the maximum on airfare, hotel/resort, activities, food etc. However, if you choose to go during the low season, you will experience better service due to less guests and budget friendly prices on almost everything.
- Consider the currency exchange. The American dollar is not worth as much as it used to be. You will notice this especially when visiting Europe since the EURO went into effect.
- Many honeymoon destinations include wedding ceremony services. If you have a small guest list, consider getting married on location at one of the many destinations. Of course you will want to negotiate room rates for your guests.



## Top 3 Honeymoon Destinations

When choosing your honeymoon location, there are many things to consider, such as: destination, length of honeymoon, cost, and activities desired. Do you want a relaxing, lazy beach atmosphere or a bicycle tour through the vineyards in Tuscany? Do you want to stay in the United States or go abroad? Everyone has different vacation styles. What's yours?

While you may be tempted to book your travel yourself, I would suggest working with a seasoned travel Agent. This can save you both time and money. Travel Agents can often, offer discounts you may not be able to receive if booking on your own. Also, your Travel Agent will be able to help customize a vacation package just for you.

You should still shop the net before committing to a package. Let your agent know the deals you are finding on the net and have her match or better it.

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Price: \_\_\_\_\_

Activities: \_\_\_\_\_

Travel Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Passport or Visa required: \_\_\_\_\_

Packages available: \_\_\_\_\_

Amenities: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Price: \_\_\_\_\_

Activities: \_\_\_\_\_

Travel Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Passport or Visa required: \_\_\_\_\_

Packages available: \_\_\_\_\_

Amenities: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Price: \_\_\_\_\_

Activities: \_\_\_\_\_

Travel Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Passport or Visa required: \_\_\_\_\_

Packages available: \_\_\_\_\_

Amenities: \_\_\_\_\_

## Honeymoon Planning List

- Plan early to make sure you have all of your travel documents and passports.
- Some countries require visas, some passports. Apply as soon as you know.
- Confirm that your passport is valid for the length of your honeymoon.
- Have a copy of your itinerary with you as well as leaving one with your parents. Carry your Travel Agents contact info as well.
- Don't forget your Traveler's Checks and credit card.
- Birth certificate, passport and copy of your marriage license.
- Hide a copy of your passport's 1st page inside your luggage.
- Make sure you identify your luggage, inside and out.
- Prepare a packing list according to the destination and activities you will be participating in.
- Pack a book of "getting around in\_\_\_\_\_" to pick up useful phrases at your honey destination. Read it on the plane and arrive ready to converse with the locals.
- Purchase and pack an outlet adaptor for foreign travel. Must be able to use your blow dryer.
- Pack for inclement weather as well. Some exotic locations may experience rain or chilly evenings, bring a sweater or a wrap.
- Pack all necessary medications as well aspirin, antacids, band-aids and diarrhea pills.
- Pack needed items from your wedding day emergency kit.
- Take comfortable walking shoes for sightseeing.
- Don't forget sunscreen, hat and sunglasses.
- Have all mail and newspapers held.
- Have a neighbor keep an eye on your home but, don't tell everyone that you are going to be away.

## Wedding Day Emergency kit

Assemble the items below into a carry-on type bag. Assign it to a member of the wedding party for the day. Take it to the ceremony venue as well as the reception. Most of these items can be taken along on the honeymoon, in the same carry-on bag. Save time-pack once.

- Small travel blow dryer
- Double stick tape
- Extra hosiery
- Masking tape
- Lint roller
- Travel size sewing kit
- Safety pins / straight pins
- Wine away™ spot remover
- Club soda
- Static spray
- First aid kit
- Antacids, aspirin, eye drops, smelling salts, & cough drops
- Prescribed medications
- Breath mints
- Deodorant
- Wet wipes
- Sanitary products
- Tissues
- Toothbrush and paste
- Dental floss
- Hand lotion
- Cotton swabs
- Hair pins
- Cosmetics
- Curling iron
- Nail file
- Face powder
- Hair brush / comb
- Hairspray
- Makeup remover
- Nail polish / remover
- Make up / lipstick

## **Name change information**

Changing your last name doesn't need to be a hassle. Following is a list of organizations that will need your new information. Starting with the Social Security dept. and Motor Vehicle dept. will ensure that the rest go smoothly. This is a general list, you may have other changes that need to be made as well.

- Social Security Administration
- Department of Motor Vehicles
- Post Office
- Employer
- Business cards
- IRS
- Voter Registration
- Bank; checking, savings and bank cards
- Credit cards; Visa, MC, AMEX
- Loans
- Department store credit cards
- Memberships; gym, clubs
- Subscriptions
- Insurance company
- IRA / Retirement plans
- Will
- Deed of Trust on your home
- Your landlord
- Library card
- Friends & family

## Tips For Wedding Shows and Gift Registry

- Show up and sign up to win! Come armed with pre-made information cards to put into the drawings. Vendors are offering many freebies and discounts through their drawings. You may even win a free honeymoon!
- Plan to spend several hours here. It is possible to hire all of your vendors on this day.
- Use the handy name/address labels included in Your Personal Wedding Planner for entering drawings at the shows. Enter as many as you like, you may win a free honeymoon.
- Be armed with information and be prepared to make decisions and deposits. Many vendors fill their calendars during these shows and you don't want to be the one to miss out on the perfect vendor for you. Many vendors will have a show discount if you leave a deposit today.
- Talk to all of the vendors and get a feel for what they can provide for you. Look at their samples and get their references if you are considering them. Call references while at the show if you must.
- When merging two households, do an inventory of your house wares. Note what you have and what you need. If you have two of something, donate one to charity.
- While planning your gift registry, be sure to request only items that you really want and plan to use. Otherwise you will have a basement full of unused and unwanted items and **you** will have to spend your money for the things you need.
- Registering on line is simple and will save you both time and gas money.
- Remember, you can also register for your honeymoon, down payment on a home, etc. Be creative. Let your parents know what your true desires are and they can pass this on to inquiring gift buyers.



**Use these labels to enter drawings at wedding shows.**

Most vendors will have their own labels for you to fill out, but it doesn't hurt to save time and come prepared.

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