

Calendar Checklist

The following checklist is an ideal timetable. Couples who do not have as much time as shown should plan their wedding in much the same order, using the checklist as a guide. Be sure to check things off as they are completed.

immediately after the engagement:

- Discuss a budget and the size and style of the wedding with parents. Decide who pays for what.
- Choose a wedding date and time. You may want to check vendor availability prior to setting date.
- If using a wedding consultant, enlist their services.
- Create binder to organize your thoughts, photos, worksheets, etc.
- Make initial contact with vendors and obtain references.
- Meet with clergy member; schedule pre-marital counseling.
- Reserve wedding and reception sites; make initial catering contacts.
- Register at local bridal registries.
- Hire photographer.
- Hire videographer.
- Make arrangements for the music at the wedding and reception.
- Make all transportation arrangements to and from the wedding and reception. Consider hiring a limousine, party bus, trolley or horse-drawn carriage.

six months or more before:

- Compile the guest list.
- Send out Save-the-Date cards.
- Reserve a block of hotel rooms for out-of-town guests.
- Choose wedding rings.
- Send engagement announcement to newspapers.
- Select and order wedding gown, leaving ample time for delivery and alterations.
- Look for alteration specialist (if someone other than bridal shop).
- Select the attendants (bridesmaids and groomsmen). Choose and order bridesmaids dresses.
- Select one usher for every 50 guests.
- Schedule wedding cake design appointment. Get estimates. Book the date.
- Plan beauty preparations by checking with your salon for how far in advance they book wedding parties.
- Complete all honeymoon plans. If traveling outside the country, check on visas, passports and inoculations.
- Sign up for dance lessons. Talk to instructor about choreographing a special dance routine to "wow" guests.
- Book vendors, securing dates by putting down deposit.

four months or more before:

- Confirm final details with the caterer.
- Order napkins and purchase any other items needed for the ceremony and reception. Check with the caterer to see what he/she includes.
- Order invitations (25 extra) and personal stationery or "Thank You" notes.
- Book engagement photo session with enough time to submit photos to local newspapers.
- Visit the photographer again to discuss specifics. Use the "Photography Worksheet."
- Get estimates and order flowers and floral arrangements for wedding and reception.
- Get estimates and order balloons, decorations and favors for wedding and reception.
- Book room for wedding night.

three months or more before:

- Order wedding rings. Allow time for any final engraving.
- Order tuxedos for the groomsmen and fathers.

two months or more before:

- Mail invitations (six weeks before wedding; eight weeks to out-of-town guests).
- Finalize arrangements of accommodations for out-of-town attendants and guests.
- Buy a wedding gift for future spouse and gifts for attendants and helpers.

one month or more before:

- Ready all accessories, shoes and lingerie for bridal gown.
- Have beauty consultant do a trial run with bride's hair and makeup. Schedule this appointment on the day the bridal portrait is taken and/or a party is planned. Or schedule on the day of your final dress fitting to see exactly how you will look on wedding day.
- Have final fitting for bridal gown and bridesmaids' dresses.
- Have bridal portrait taken.
- Have groomsmen registered and measured at the formal wear store.
- Check with the newspapers on wedding announcement requirements.
- Finalize plans for rehearsal dinner.

Plan seating arrangements for the rehearsal dinner and reception.

Review this checklist to be sure nothing has been missed.

Complete change-of-address information for post-office.

Keep current with "Thank You" notes for shower and early wedding gifts.

two weeks before:

Get the marriage license. Be sure to bring all needed documents.

Inform or send rehearsal invitations including exact time and location to those who will attend the rehearsal and rehearsal dinner.

Inquire about where bride, groom and attendants will dress for the ceremony.

Review all details. Walk through the entire event considering things like parking, access for handicapped guests, etc.

Confirm all transportation plans.

Check in with caterer, photographer, videographer, musicians, DJ, florist, etc. to confirm all arrangements.

"Break in" wedding shoes at home.

one week before:

Appoint someone to act as an "organizer" to handle any last minute problems.

Give a final guest count to the caterer.

Review final details for those in the wedding party.

Confirm honeymoon arrangements.

Pack for the honeymoon.

Enjoy a day with family and friends. Visit a day spa, have a massage, a facial and relax.

one day before:

Attend the rehearsal and rehearsal dinner and give gifts to attendants.

Give the rings and clergyman's fee to the best man.

Organize gown, accessories, etc. to go to ceremony.

on the wedding day:

Mail wedding announcements.

Get hair, makeup, etc. done.

Enjoy the day!