

Wedding Checklist

This wedding planning checklist covers a 12 month span, but you can adjust the schedule to your own timeline, whether you're planning two years or one month in advance. Then, simply start at the top of the list below and browse through each group of tasks before tackling them one by one.

12 Months Before

- Announce your engagement to family and friends and plan an engagement party
- Place an engagement announcement in your local newspaper
- Sign up for a wedding website to keep your guests informed about event details, area information, etc.
- Work on the budget
- Consider purchasing wedding planning software to organize everything, or hire a wedding planner to help secure contracts, etc.
- Choose a wedding date - select a few days in case your first choice is booked
- Choose a location and reserve your ceremony and reception site(s)
- Begin a rough guest list and compile current addresses
- Decide on who you'd like to have as your attendants, including your maid of honor and best man
- Begin shopping for your wedding gown
- Attend a local bridal show or two and jot down notes about any vendors you really liked
- Purchase a wedding planning organizer or calendar to keep track of important dates and appointments (fittings, showers, etc.)

6-9 Months Before

- Research and choose one or more bridal gift registry
- Order your wedding gown and buy undergarments that you will wear with it (bring these to all fittings)
- Order other bridal accessories - shoes, gloves and veil
- Begin shopping for bridesmaids dresses
- Find an officiant who will perform your ceremony
- Research local vendors and book ceremony musicians, a wedding band/DJ, photographer, videographer, caterer and florist

4-6 Months Before

- Select and order your wedding invitations, invitation envelopes and thank-you cards
- Hire a calligrapher, if desired (check with a local stationery store for referrals)
- Select and purchase wedding favors and wedding favor accessories - boxes, personalized wedding ribbon, labels, etc.
- Purchase any desired ceremony and reception decorations - unity candles, vases, aisle runner, etc.
- Start researching wedding cake pictures and local bakeries
- Book your honeymoon and verify that you have any necessary travel documents including passports and visas
- Book a room for your wedding night, if you will be leaving for your honeymoon the next morning
- Book hotel rooms or arrange other accommodations for out-of-town guests
- Finalize your guest list and send out save-the-date cards, if using
- Print out directions to the ceremony, reception, rehearsal dinner and hotel(s) for guests
- Compile a list of area information and things to do for out-of-town guests
- Reserve transportation for you and your wedding party as well as a bus or trolley for your guests (if necessary)

2-4 Months Before

- Find out what your state's requirements are for obtaining a marriage license and get blood tests done, if required
- Order tuxedos for the groom and groomsmen
- Meet with your caterer to discuss the menu and your bar/liquor needs
- Meet with your officiant to discuss ceremony details, wording and wedding vows
- Select wedding readings
- Order your wedding cake
- Buy thank-you gifts for your attendants, flower girl and ring bearer
- Shop for a gift for your new spouse-to-be
- Select and purchase wedding rings, and have them engraved if desired
- Coordinate and choose a location for the rehearsal dinner

- Contact party rental companies for tents, tables, arches, etc. if necessary
- Book any other specialty services - ice sculptures, photo booths, etc.
- Purchase luggage and other travel necessities and attire for your honeymoon
- Order/renew passports if necessary, leaving ample time for them to be sent back to you
- Schedule an appointment with your dentist if you'd like to have your teeth whitened or cleaned before the wedding

1-2 Months Before

- Mail invitations out to everyone eight weeks prior to the wedding date and send accommodation info to your out-of-town guests
- Compile and complete name change documents or purchase a bridal name change kit online
- Fill out a change of address form at the post office, if necessary
- Have ceremony programs printed
- Purchase a guest book, pen and other wedding accessories including toasting glasses, cake knife, ring pillow, etc.
- Keep your wedding web site updated with directions and event details
- Choose your hair and makeup stylists and schedule a trial for both; also book appointments to have your hair, make-up and nails done on the day of the wedding
- Review insurance information with your fiancé and check with employers to see what documents need to be updated once you are legally wed (car, home, medical, etc.)

2 Weeks to 1 Month Before

- Create a seating chart for the reception and make table numbers and place cards (or have your calligrapher work on these)
- Contact your caterer with a final guest count
- Print out a timeline of events for your wedding party and vendors - include contact information and cell phone numbers
- Meet with your photographer to finalize your wedding photo list of any must-have photos
- Contact your florist to confirm your final flower order (bouquets, boutonnieres, centerpieces, etc.) and go over any decor details or venue logistics for the big day
- Finalize your ceremony and reception music and song lists for your wedding band or DJ
- Confirm lodging reservations for out-of-town guests
- Place a wedding announcement in your local newspaper
- Plan a bridal luncheon or dinner with your bridesmaids
- Pick up wedding bands and make sure the fit is good
- Schedule a final wedding dress fitting
- Apply for your marriage license
- Write rehearsal dinner toasts

1 Week Before

- Write out final checks to your wedding vendors (each organized in an envelope) and let your wedding coordinator or one of your attendants to distribute at the wedding
- Pick up your wedding gown
- Pick up your marriage license
- Confirm limo or other transportation reservations
- Pack for your honeymoon and confirm travel arrangements
- Have your post office hold your mail, if necessary, while you are on your honeymoon
- Treat yourself to a spa day - you deserve it!

The Day Before

- Welcome out-of-town guests as they arrive
- Take a yoga class or go for a walk during the day
- Schedule a hair appointment for prior to the rehearsal dinner
- Attend the rehearsal and enjoy the rehearsal dinner!

The Wedding Day

- Wake up early and do some easy exercise, or just go for a peaceful walk outdoors and try to soak up the beauty of the day ;)
- Set aside some time before the festivities to share gifts with your bridesmaids or close family members
- Eat a healthy breakfast - you'll need your energy for the big day ahead!
- Enjoy it; it's finally here and everything will be wonderful... Congratulations!!