

Wedding Planning: 12-Month Wedding Calendar

Just engaged? Starting to envision your wedding? Wondering about all the things you'll need to do and when? Our month-by-month snapshot of all your wedding to-dos will steer you

12+ months before

Date: _____

- Envision your wedding and draw up a budget.*
- Assemble your "planning team." Consider hiring a wedding consultant.*
- Pick a wedding date and time. Select several options, then check with your venues, officiant, and important guests before finalizing.*
- Start planning the guest list.*
- Look for and book ceremony sites and reception sites.*
- Ask friends and relatives to be in the wedding party.*
- Optional: Have an engagement party. You may want to register beforehand for gifts.*

8-10 months before

Date: _____

- Bride: Think about, shop for, and order your gown.*
- Envision reception food.*
- Decide what type of entertainment you want. A pianist for the cocktail hour, strolling violinists, a DJ, or band?*
- Think about your floral decor.*
- Research and book your wedding professionals. Interview vendors: photographer, videographer, reception band or DJ, florist.*
- Research a wedding insurance policy to protect your deposits.*
- Research and reserve accommodations for out-of-town guests.*
- Register for gifts.*
- Contact rental companies if you need to rent anything for ceremony/reception, such as chairs, tables, and tent.*

6-8 months before

Date: _____

- Book ceremony musicians.*
- Order bridesmaid dresses.*
- Start planning honeymoon.*
- Send save-the-date cards. This is a particularly good idea if you're marrying during a tourist or holiday season or having a destination wedding.*

4-6 months before

Date: _____

- Attend prewedding counseling, if required.*
- Shop for and order invitations and wedding rings.*
- Shop for formalwear.*
- Renew or get passports, if necessary.*
- Envision your wedding cake and research, interview, and book a cake designer.*

3 months before

Date: _____

- Order wedding cake.*
- Hire a calligrapher, if you want your invitations professionally addressed.*
- Attend your shower. (It may be earlier, depending on when hosts decide to have it.)*
- Groom: Rent the men's formalwear.*
- Hire wedding-day transport: limousines, other cars. Look into transportation sooner if you're considering renting streetcars or over-the-top travel.*

2 months before

Date: _____

- Mail your invitations.*
- Write your vows.*
- Purchase gifts for parents, attendants, and each other.*
- Book your stylist and try out big-day hairstyles.*
- Book a makeup artist and go for a trial run.*

1 month before

Date: _____

- Apply for a marriage license. Check with the local bureau in the town where you'll wed.*
- Bride: Have final gown fitting. Bring your maid of honor along to learn how to bustle your dress. Have the dress pressed and bring it home.*
- Call all bridesmaids. Make sure they have their gowns ready for the wedding.*
- Make last-minute adjustments with vendors.*
- Create a wedding program to hand out to guests.*
- Order and plan in-room welcome baskets for out-of-town guests.*

2 weeks before

Date: _____

- Review final RSVP list and call any guests who have not yet sent a response.*
- Deliver must-have shot lists to photographer and videographer. Include who should be in formal portraits and determine when portraits will be taken.*
- Deliver final song list to your DJ or bandleader. Include special song requests and songs you don't want played.*

- Bride: Get your last prewedding haircut and color.*

1 week before

Date: _____

- Give reception site/caterer final guest head count. Include vendors, such as the photographer or band members, who will expect a meal. Ask how many extra plates the caterer will prepare.*
- Supply location manager with a list of vendor requests such as a table for DJ or setup space needed by florist.*
- Plan reception seating chart.*
- Print place and table cards, or finalize list with the calligrapher you have hired to do so.*
- Call all wedding vendors and confirm arrangements.*
- Give ceremony and reception site managers a schedule of vendor delivery and setup times, plus contact numbers.*
- Groom: Get your hair trimmed.*
- Attend bachelor/ette parties.*

2-3 days before

Date: _____

- Bride: If you need to, have your gown pressed or steamed.*
- Groom: Go for final fitting and pick up your formalwear.*
- Groom: Ask the best man to make sure all groomsmen attend fittings and pick up their outfits.*
- Determine wedding-party positions during ceremony and the order of the party in the processional and recessional.*
- Hand off place cards, table cards, menus, disposable cameras, favors, and any other items for setting the tables to the caterer and/or reception site manager.*
- Reconfirm final details with all vendors. Discuss any necessary last-minute substitutions.*
- Call the limousine- or car-rental company for pickup times and locations.*
- Arrange for guests without cars to be picked up from the airport or train station. Ask friends, attendants, or relatives to help.*
- Deliver welcome baskets to the hotel concierge; make sure to include names and delivery instructions.*

Day before

Date: _____

- Provide all wedding professionals with an emergency phone number to call on the day of the wedding.*

- Write checks and/or talk to wedding hosts (usually your parents, if not you) about any final balances to be paid at the end of the reception.

Night before

Date: _____

- Rehearse ceremony. Meet with wedding party, ceremony readers, immediate family, and your officiant at the ceremony site to rehearse and iron out details.
- Bring unity candle, aisle runner, yarmulkes, or other ceremony accessories to the site.
- Give your marriage license to your officiant.
- Attend rehearsal dinner.
- Present attendants with gifts at the rehearsal dinner. You'll want to do this especially if the gifts are accessories to be worn during the wedding.

Day of

Date: _____

- Present parents and each other with gifts.
- Give wedding bands to the best man and the maid of honor to hold during the ceremony.
- Give best man the officiant's fee envelope, to be handed off after the ceremony.
- Introduce your reception site manager to your consultant or maid of honor for questions or problems during the reception.
- Assign a family member or attendant to be the photographer's contact so he knows who is who.

Postwedding

Date: _____

- Prearrange for someone to return any rentals.
- Preplan for attendants to take the bride's gown for cleaning and return the groom's tux to the rental shop.
- Write and send thank-you notes to gift-bearing guests and vendors who were especially helpful.

As found on: *The Knot* (<http://wedding.theknot.com/wedding-planning/planning-a-wedding/articles/12-month-wedding-planning-countdown.aspx>)