

THE BIG AWESOME WEDDING GUIDE

FROM
ASCENSION EVENT SERVICE



ASCENSION
Event Service

OUR SIMPLE SOLUTION FOR

YOUR BIG AWESOME WEDDING

After planning and hosting more than 100 weddings we've seen almost EVERYTHING and can safely say there are TWO reasons couples get confused and overwhelmed when it comes to planning their wedding...

1. They don't have a solid plan for what to do each month to stay on track with planning a WHOLE wedding
2. They didn't sit down to plan out and agree on their budget before they start spending money.

It might seem simple but the best strategies usually are. #1 and #2 really boil down to great communication which is the crux of any successful relationship....and planning a wedding includes A LOT of relationships (the two of you, families, friends, vendors, etc.)

Speaking of communication: if you have people (like parents) who are contributing financially to your wedding you HAVE to sit down with them to determine what their contribution means to them and to you.

Is the contribution just a gift and you're still in charge of all decisions? Or, do they expect to have a say in what you're doing and who you're hiring?

ACTION ITEMS

- edit the text here
- What have you already done (if anything) for your wedding? Make a list and check it off!
- Talk to anyone who is contributing financially to your wedding so you're clear on roles.

IMPORTANT TASKS

EXAMPLE PERCENTAGE

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

The percentages below are an "average example" of how much should be allocated to each section of your wedding day to help you determine your overall budget. Keep in mind not all sections will apply to you (example: you choose not to provide welcome bags.)

3.5% Invitations and Paper Goods

3.5% Transportation

14% Ceremony + Reception Venue(s)

2.5% Ceremony Music

7.5% Flowers and Décor

6% Gown

2.5% Cake

25% Catering

9.5% Reception Music - Live Band or DJ

10% Photographer

4% Videographer

10% Planner

2% Miscellaneous (Favors, Welcome Baskets, etc.)

ACTION ITEMS

- Ask yourself what is and is not important when it comes to your wedding day?
- Where do you want to spend more & where do you want to cut costs?
- Create a spending tracker so you stay on budget

NOTES

OUR FAVORITE PLANNING TRICK

THAT WILL KEEP YOU ORGANIZED

We obviously LOVE a good Wedding Planning Checklist....you have ours in your hands right now :)

Something we don't love? When our sweet couples are truly overwhelmed by how many little tasks there are when planning a wedding. It's easy to become unorganized when looking at a checklist that is 12 MONTHS LONG.

Here's our favorite planning trick: ONLY use the portion of the planning checklist that applies to you THIS MONTH. If your wedding is 12+ months out, grab that checklist and put the rest of the checklist away...you don't need to even look at it.

Focus on the timeline you're actually in (12+ months out from the big day!) and complete that To Do List first.

Once you've checked all the boxes, you can move on to the next part of the Wedding Planning Checklist.

ACTION ITEMS

- Grab the part of the checklist that applies to your planning timeline
- Put the rest of the checklist in a safe spot and access it when you need it
- Check off any tasks you've already completed!

NOTES

WEEKLY WEDDING PLANNER

MON		WEEK OF
TUE		IMPORTANT TASKS
WED		
THU		NOTES
FRI		
SAT		
SUN		

12+ MONTHS BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

CHECKLIST

Set Your Wedding Date

This is the most important step pick a date that has meaning to you and your fiance

Choose Your Colors/Theme

Once you've nailed down your date, what color palette do you want at the wedding?

Tour + Book Venue

Once you have your venue, you can really kick off your planning process so do this first!

Start Your Wedding Binder

Does this feel too old school? We love a well-organized wedding binder so you can keep track of everything (like this list!)

Preliminary Guest List

Start talking about your guest list, the size of wedding you want, ask parents who they want to invite if applicable.

Start Pinning Decor Inspo

If you haven't already, now is a great time to Pin inspiration for decor, style and colors you like.

Select Wedding Party

If it feels too early to finalize your wedding party it's okay to start a preliminary list. Order "asking gifts" if desired.

Early Vendor Research

Your venue may have a Recommended Vendor List that you can start with here, ask for referrals, etc.

Hire a Wedding Planner

Hands down, one of the best things you'll do for yourself. Your venue might even include a planner so be sure to check!

Engagement Photos/Party

Time to celebrate! Get your engagement photos taken and have an engagement party!

12-9 MONTHS BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

CHECKLIST

Hire Your Vendors

From the early vendor research you've done now is the time to make decisions and put down payments down.

Choose DJ or Live Band

Decide if you're having a DJ (personal choice) or a Live Band and secure the one you want.

Create Wedding Website

Make a wedding website that WORKS for you! You want your wedding website to be a trove of information for your guests so you can just refer them to it.

Reserve Hotel Block

Choose one or two hotels near your reception site and reserve room blocks for your guests. You can typically get a small discount as well!

Decide on a Photographer

look at samples from prospective photographers and choose the one that will be the best fit for you

Order Wedding Dress

This is a bit of a hard deadline especially if you're ordering a custom gown.

Brainstorm Your Menu

Start thinking about what you want for your menu at the reception. Get quotes and ideas from catering companies.

Book Rental Company

For any special rental items and decor (large or small items) that you need for the big day!

Brainstorm Floral Design

What do you want your floral design to look like at your wedding? Start Pinning inspiration and what you might like based on your color palette!

Pick a Photo Booth

Choose a photo booth to get extra memories and entertainment for your reception

9-6 MONTHS BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

CHECKLIST

Purchase Invitations

Finalize & purchase your invites. Minted.com is a GREAT resource for weddings. You can save 25% with code: WEDPLVVE

Wedding Day Timeline

Another great reason to hire a planner! They'll create & manage your wedding day timeline. Touch base with them on what this will look like.

Order Bridesmaids Gowns

Hard deadline if you're ordering custom colors, styles, etc. Many websites now offer "off the rack" too which means you can get it shipped within a few days!

Have a slice

Take some time to meet with bakers to sample cakes also see if they can fit your dietary needs too!

Start Planning Honeymoon

This may seem secondary to the actual wedding day but planning in advance will save you time and money!

Send Your Save the Dates

Send out all Save the Date cards (not invitations) so your guests know it's coming up! Skip the post office during lunch, it's super busy!

Savor the flavor

Schedule some taste testing with prospective caterers to get sampling of food to consider for the reception meal.

6-4 MONTHS BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

CHECKLIST

Create Rehearsal Guest List

So you can plan the dinner accordingly. Don't forget to formally invite people - they don't always know if they're invited to dinner or not.

Hire Cake Designer

Check off hiring a cake designer/baker for the big day! Do a few tastings before making your final decision.

Purchase Bridal Accessories

Like jewelry, shoes, veil, etc.

Check On Invitations

Just touch base on the order or shipping status of your invitations to make sure everything is on time.

Dress Fitting

If your dress is in have a fitting and discuss any alterations that need to be made.

Book Rehearsal Evening

Choose and book where you'll have your rehearsal dinner/welcome party. Book time at your venue for ceremony rehearsal as well.

Hire Bulk Transportation

Bulk transportation is such an easy way to make a memorable guest experience. Hire shuttles, buses or local transport companies.

Choose Music & Playlists

Communicate back and forth with your music provider to nail down ceremony and reception playlists and songs.

Book Hair & Makeup

Book your hair and makeup team for the day of. Remember to do a hair AND makeup trial so you know what you like (or don't like).

Buy Wedding Rings

Buy wedding bands or rings. As you're browsing most jewelry shops will clean your engagement ring for free so take advantage of that!

3 MONTHS BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

CHECKLIST

Finalize Your Menu

Finalize the menu with your caterer. Continue updating them with RSVP count for final headcount on food.

Order Guest Favors

If you're providing guest gifts or favors now is a great time to get them ordered.

Finalize Floral Order

Finalize your floral design and order with your floral designer.

Meet with Officiant

Meet with the person marrying you and discuss the order of the ceremony, any traditions you'll be honoring, etc.

Finalize Day of Timeline

Work closely with your Wedding Planner on this one. The Day of Timeline doesn't have to be totally solidified 3 months out but you'll have a solid start.

Order Additional Paper

Place cards, seating charts, menus, etc.

Rent Formalwear

This goes for anyone wearing a suit, tux, etc. to the wedding.

Finalize Guest List/RSPNs

You should have a fairly accurate picture of your guest list size at this time. Some RSVPs will still come in so keep track!

Wedding/Bridal Shower

Attend any bridal or wedding showers that are being thrown for you!

Have Planner Send Timeline

Ask your planner to share the timeline with your other vendors. Make sure you've provided contact info for the other vendors.

2 MONTHS BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

CHECKLIST

Vendor Meetings

Time for a vendor check-in! You can do this or have your wedding planner do this for you if it's included in their package.

Send Thank You Notes

Write and send thank you notes for any early wedding gifts you've received and for wedding shower gifts, etc.

Buy Parent Gifts

Grab something meaningful and special for both of your parents. It doesn't have to be big, just a thoughtful thank you for all they've done!

Send Official Invitations

Time to send out the official invites!

Final Hair/Makeup Trial

One final hair/makeup trial to make any last minute changes and ensure you love the style you've chosen!

Buy Bridal Party Gifts

Get gifts for your wedding party to be distributed at the Rehearsal Dinner or you can choose to gift them on wedding day.

Write Your Vows

If you're writing your own vows it's time to get started! You don't have to do it all in one sitting, just get some ideas and bullet points out right now.

Meet Photog at Venue

This is totally optional. If your photographer hasn't shot at your venue before, having a short visit to scout photo locations could be a good idea!

1 MONTH BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

CHECKLIST

Vendor Check-in

Time for another Vendor Check In! Do you have any payments due? Do vendors need any questions answered?

Plan Guest Welcome Bags

If you're doing Welcome Bags now is the time to plan out the bags, the bag contents, how they'll be delivered, etc.

Get Your Marriage License

Head to your County Clerk's office to obtain your official Marriage License. Make sure you bring the required documentation.

Gather "Something List"

Find your Old, Borrowed, Blue and New items!

Buy Special Event Insurance

Most venues are starting to require Special Event Insurance. You can get it online at EventHelper, WedSafe or WedSure.

Rehearsal Dinner Invites

Send invitations to Rehearsal Dinner Guests. These don't have to be paper invites – try a digital service like Paperless Post.

Photographer Shot List

Send a shot list to your photographer or communicate with them to make sure they'll try to get the photos you want.

Buy "Day Of" Accessories

Such as toasting flutes, anything you're using in the ceremony, guestbook, etc.

Finalize Bar Menu

Finalize your drink menu, any specialty drinks you're doing and make any payments you owe your bartender.

2 WEEKS BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

CHECKLIST

- Go Through RSVP List**
Touch base personally with any guests you haven't heard from to get an accurate guest list for your caterer and venue.
- Final Guest Count to Venue**
Send your final guest count to your venue.
- Time to Party!**
Have your Bachelor and Bachelorette Parties! Enjoy yourself and have a great time!
- Hair Colored and Cut**
It's best to do this around this time instead of closer to the wedding just in case anything goes wrong & needs to be fixed.
- Create Bridal Emergency Kit**
Day of "Bridal Emergency" items like super glue, needle & thread, extra phone charger, pain reliever, bandaids, etc.
- Venue Final Walkthrough**
Do a final walkthrough with your venue if you haven't already. Discuss final setup for ceremony & reception. Planner should be present.

1 WEEK BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

CHECKLIST

Vendor Check-in

Final Vendor Check-in for payments, last minute details, etc. Your Wedding Planner may help you with this.

Wedding Party Roles

Confirm with your wedding party their roles on the day of the wedding and give them a wedding day timeline.

Construct Welcome Bags

If you're providing Welcome Bags start putting them together and give them to whomever is dropping them off at hotels for you.

Delegate Tasks to Planner

Delegate any last minute tasks and to-dos to your wedding planner if it's part of the package you purchased with them.

Pack for Honeymoon

Set aside time to start packing and organizing for your honeymoon.

Self-Care!

Get a massage and a facial or whatever form of self-care you enjoy the most!

Venue Contact to Vendors

Give your vendors all important contact information for the wedding day including the contact info for: your wedding planner, your venue, transportation ,etc.

2-3 DAYS BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

CHECKLIST

Vendor Check-In

The last Vendor Check In before the big day!

What to Give Your Planner

Give Escort Cards, Menus, Tables Numbers, Place Cards, etc to your planner.

Welcome Bags to Hotels

You or the person you've delegated to can distribute welcome bags to hotel rooms as out of town guests arrive.

Transportation Schedule

You and/or your wedding planner should confirm the transportation schedule for the day of the wedding.

Groom Pick Up Rental

The Groom (or anyone wearing a tux) will pick up their rental at this time.

Steam Wedding Dress

Steam your wedding dress or have it professionally done.

Groomsmen Confirmation

Have the Best Man confirm with all groomsmen that they have what they need and know where to be on the wedding day.

Bridal Party Confirmation

Have the Maid of Honor confirm with all bridesmaids that they have what they need and know where to be on the wedding day.

1 DAY BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

CHECKLIST

Self Care!

Get a maincure and a pedicure! Skip a facial or any kind of "treatment" to be safe.

Emergency Numbers

Give wedding party and vendors an emergency number to call if they need it. Can be your mom, maid of honor, the planner, or all of the above.

Assign Groom's Tux Return

Assign someone to return the groom's tux after the wedding. This is especially important if you're going straight to your honeymoon.

Wedding Party Gifts

Pass out gifts to your wedding party at the Rehearsal Dinner.

Final Vendor Payments

Make any final vendor payments online or give labeled envelopes of payments to your planner (or parent) to pass out to vendors.

Gifts/Cards

Assign someone (not a vendor or wedding planner) to be responsible for your gifts and cards after the wedding and for getting them to you safely.

Rehearsal and Dinner

Attend your ceremony rehearsal and rehearsal dinner. At the ceremony rehearsal you'll practice the processional & finalize details.

Go to Bed Early

Get some sleep! Tomorrow is a big day!

YOUR WEDDING DAY

CHECKLIST

Day of Gifting

Gift each other and your respective parents something special on the wedding day!

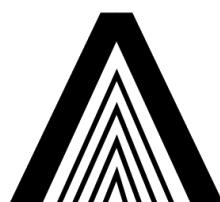
Last Minute Payments

Give your wedding planner any last minute vendor payments in marked envelopes for her to distribute.

Rings

Give your rings to the Best Man and Maid of Honor - or to the officiant depending on your preference and ceremony.

**Have an awesome
wedding!**



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