

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 in the right direction.

12+ months before

- ◆ 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 site.
- ◆ 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

- ◆ 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

- ◆ Book ceremony musicians.
- ◆ Order bridesmaid dresses.
- ◆ **Start planning honeymoon. Make appointment with Superior & Frankenmuth Travel Service professional honeymoon and destination wedding specialist.**
- ◆ 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

- ◆ 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

- ◆ 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

- ◆ 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

- ◆ 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

- ◆ 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

- ◆ 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

- ◆ 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.
- ◆ **Pack for your honeymoon.**

Day before

- ◆ 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

- ◆ 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 your wedding

- ◆ 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

- ◆ 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.
- ◆ **HONEYMOON!!!!**
- ◆ Write and send thank-you notes to gift-bearing guests and vendors who were especially helpful.