***Wedding Planning Timeline***

*This comprehensive timeline provides you with a checklist that will help you plan a wedding to remember, without forgetting the most important details.  Keep in mind however, this is meant only as a general guideline and there will surely be additional steps unique to your wedding.****Good Luck and******Enjoy!***

**12 - 16 Months before the wedding**

**Choose a wedding date**.  Don't rush.  Give yourself enough time.  The best way to do this is to visit ceremony and reception facilities at which you would like to be married and have your reception.  Choose a date based on availability.  If you give yourself a year or more to plan, you have a much greater chance of booking your desired venue on your desired date.

**Start a wedding file**.  This is a file or folder to keep all your wedding documents, contracts etc...  Organization is the key to staying sane during the planning phase.

**Discuss & Choose the style and formality of your wedding.**  Pick what best suits your lifestyle, personalities and budget.  "Formal",  "Semi-Formal" or "Informal".  There is no wrong choice.  This is your day and you should make it your own.  This will also help in narrowing down which venues you will consider.

**Put an announcement of your recent engagement in the local paper**.  This is optional, but is a nice touch and memento.

**Decide on a wedding budget**.  Common sense dictates that you do not spend beyond your means.  The last thing you want is to begin your marriage in major debt because of your wedding.

**Hire a wedding consultant** if you plan to.  Some brides choose to hire a wedding consultant to ease the stress of planning or because their schedule doesn't allow enough time for planning.

**Select a ceremony location**.  Keep in mind that reservations are sometimes booked over a year in advance, so if you find one that you like, put a security deposit down to hold the date.  Always check the cancellation/refund policies first and have them in writing).

**Select a reception site**.  Many times the ceremony and reception will be held in the same facility.  If this is not the case, be sure that the ceremony and reception facilities are available on the same date.  also keeping in mind that they sometimes book over a year in advance.  Again, always check the cancellation/refund policies first and have them in writing.

**Start shopping for a wedding gown.**Custom gowns can take up to a  year to prepare.  Be sure to begin this process as early as possible.  Sometimes the wedding gown can become a stress factor, so the more time you leave for this, the better.  Keep in mind that alterations and final dress fittings can also eat up extra time. There are no refunds on wedding gown purchases, so make sure your selection is 100% what you want.  You can also start looking for a coordinating [**veil**](https://www.weddingcram.com/wedding-veils.htm) and [**tiara**](https://www.weddingcram.com/bridal-tiaras.htm).

**8 - 10 Months before the wedding**

**Select your bridal party** and request their participation in your special day.

**Interview and Hire the following:**Don't forget that not all of these service providers will be available on your wedding day, so be sure to have more than one to consider.

*find a wedding vendor in your area:*

**National Wedding Vendor Directory (returning soon)**

**Wedding officiant.**This can be a religious or civil person depending on your beliefs and preference.

**Reception Caterer.** if your reception site does not provide one, you will need to arrange for your own.  Once you have found one that appeals to you be sure to secure your date with a signed contract and a security deposit.  As always, be comfortable with  your selection, and know the refund/cancellation policies in the event you cancel or change your date.

**Photographer and Videographer**.  If your budget allows for it, hire a professional.  There will only be one chance to get this right.

**Band or DJ.**Interview several.  Review demo CD's to hear their sound and style.  A good band or DJ can make a reception, but a bad one can all but ruin it.

**Decide on bridesmaids dresses.**When ordering your gowns for the women, be sure to order them at the same time to assure an identical dye lot.  Be sure to bring this factor up to the person taking the dress order as well.

**Start compiling names & addresses for the guest list.**Keep in mind that you still have to combine and refine your list, his list, his family's list, your parents' list and the final list.If you are limited to the number of guests that can be invited to the wedding, be sure to give your families  the number of guests they may include in their list. By requesting a certain number of guest beforehand, you alleviate a lot of potential stress. Also, try to make the request even on both parents' sides.

**Sign up for a gift registry.**  Gift registries are a great way of ensuring that you get items you really want and can use.  It also makes your guests' shopping much easier.  Be sure to choose items for your registry from every price range to accommodate each guest's budget.

**Engagement party.**It's a great way to get the families and friends together beforehand.

**5 - 7 Months before the wedding**

**Finalize the guest list.**   Determine the number of invitations and thank you cards that need to be ordered.

**Shop for  your wedding stationery**.  Invitations, thank you cards and personal stationery.

**Arrange accommodations.**Some guest (such as out-of-towners) may wish to stay at a nearby hotel after the festivities.

**Select your wedding cake.**  Give careful thought to you & your fianc�'s favorite flavors, style, size, decorations and color.

**Begin preparations for your honeymoon.**Consult with your travel agent and discuss possible honeymoon destinations and prices.  Make arrangements early to catch the lowest airfares.

**4 Months before the wedding**

**Book  your florist.**  Once you have found one that appeals to you be sure to secure your order with a signed contract and a security deposit.  Be 100% sure of your selection, and know the refund/cancellation policies in the event you cancel or change your date.

**Shop for your wedding bands.**You should do this with your fianc�.  You will both be wearing these rings for a long time, so you should both be happy with your selection.

**Visit your physician.**Get your physical examinations and blood tests if required to obtain a marriage license in your state.

**3 Months before the wedding**

**Send out your invitations.**  Be sure to include everyone who received a save the date magnet or card.  Double check the postage required to ensure that the invitations reach your guests.

**Select tuxedos.**  Get all the groomsmen, best man and couple's fathers together.  Measurements should be taken at the tux shop (to ensure a proper fit).

**Arrange for rental of items**needed for your ceremony and reception.  This includes but is not limited to, arches, candelabras, china, crystal, flatware, flowing punch fountains, and silver if necessary.

**Discuss finalized menu options and costs with your caterer**.  Confirm arrival and departure times, as well as any added extras.

**Arrange transportation/ limousine service** for the wedding party to the ceremony and reception.

**Order wedding favors** and ribbons (imprinted).  Don't forget the extra's such as imprinted napkins, matches, and coasters.

**Shop for bridal party gifts.**

**Begin any necessary counseling**sessions with your wedding officiant.

**2 Months before the wedding**

**Choose your wedding music**and share your selections with your Band or DJ.

**Select a location for your rehearsal dinner** and make the necessary reservations & deposits.

**Confirm with formal wear shop**that they have received all measurements of every male attendant.

**Schedule your alterations** and final fitting for the gown.

**Schedule fittings for the bridesmaids and flower girl.**

**Make arrangements for your "Bridesmaid Luncheon" and other "Pre-Wedding Parties".**

**Order address labels with you & your future husband's new name & new address.**This adds a personalized touch when sending out your wedding thank you cards.

**Confirm your order with the florist.**

**1 Month before the wedding**

**Design your wedding programs.**You don't want to do this too much sooner than this because things inevitably change.

**Apply for your marriage license.**

**Have a final gown fitting.**

**Choose all of your wedding accessories.**There are many accessories that you will need to choose for your big day.

**Visit your hair stylist**, work on a style with your veil.

**Visit your make-up artist** the same day.

**Hair & make-up done, have your formal bridal portraits done**.

**Discuss and finalize details with wedding service providers.**

**2 Weeks before the wedding**

**Call any guests**that haven't sent back their response card (there will almost always be a few).

**Give the caterer a finalized head count.**

**Pick up your marriage license.**

**Give your DJ or Band a list of songs** that you may have come up with since your last contact with them.

**Confirm rehearsal plans** with your officiant and church wedding coordinator.

**Obtain any legal information**regarding changing your name for: Drivers License, Social Security Card, Vehicle Documents, Credit Cards, Bank Accounts, Investment Accounts, Passport, Change of Address Card with Post Office, Insurance Policies, Voter Registration Card, Subscriptions, Employment Records, Billing Address/Name Change.

**Complete floor and seating plan** for reception.

**Confirm all rental and floral delivery dates and times.**

**Confirm arrival time**for all attendants.

**Check parking arrangements.**

**1 Week before the wedding**

**Make any last minute seating arrangements/adjustments**.

**Organize your wedding day attire**, make sure you try everything on & it fits perfectly.

**Confirm honeymoon reservations.**

**Confirm reservations for out-of-town guests.**

**Pack for your honeymoon.**

**Pick up passports** (if necessary).

**Gather all necessary documents**for travel**.**

**Confirm rehearsal plans with attendants**and request that they arrive on time.

**Confirm reservations for the rehearsal dinner.**

**Pick up formalwear.** Be sure to try everything on & make sure all your accessories are there.

**Your Groom's bachelor party** should be during this week prior to the wedding. **Remind him to be on his best behavior!**

**Have a relaxing massage.**

**1 Day before the wedding**

**Go through your list of things to do and make sure all your bases are covered.**

**Pack your wedding day emergency kit.**

**Get a manicure and pedicure.**

**Take a steamy relaxing bath.**

**Put wedding attire and accessories together.**

**Give rings to best man.**

**Try to get a good night's sleep!**

**YOUR WEDDING DAY!**

**Eat Something!**It will help the Pre-Wedding Jitters if you have something in your stomach!

**Get your hair and make-up done** (wear a button up shirt to keep everything perfect).

**Have someone check the reception site. (**as early as possible**)**

**Dress for your wedding.**

**Have candid photos taken with family.**

**Enjoy, you've worked hard !!**

**Most Importantly...** If anything doesn't go according to plan, don't worry,  your guests probably won't even notice the difference.

**AFTER THE HONEYMOON**

**Have your wedding gown and flowers preserved.**

**Write Thank-You notes.**

**Change your name.**