

Getting Started Guide

Complete with advice, tips & questions for your vendors!

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What to Expect

Congratulations on your engagement! This wedding planning guide is your essential companion on starting the journey to your big day. Packed with insightful advice, creative ideas, and practical tips, it's designed to be your starting resource for orchestrating a memorable celebration that reflects your unique style and love story.

Whether you're just starting or fine-tuning the details, this guide walks you through each step of the planning process. It will provide you with tips and questions to ask your vendors and our wedding planner will help with all the details - from setting a budget and choosing a venue to selecting vendors and crafting personalized vows. These resources together will ensure you stay organized and stress-free, allowing you to savor the joy of your wedding journey!

Prepare to experience stress-free planning and create memories that will last a lifetime. Our guide and planner will enable you to focus on what truly matters – your love and the joy of celebrating with family and friends. You will be empowered with the knowledge and inspiration needed to create a celebration that resonates with your vision, turning your dream wedding into a beautiful reality. Welcome to the world of seamless wedding planning!





How To Use Your *Planning Guidebook*

First Things First

Begin by reading through this planning guidebook thoroughly before diving into vendor appointments. Use it as a roadmap to familiarize yourself with the key aspects of wedding planning, including tips and questions to ask vendors. This preparation ensures that you go into meetings with a clear understanding of what to consider and ask, making your interactions with vendors more focused and productive.

Bring It Along

Make the guide a companion during vendor appointments. Bring a printed copy or have it accessible on your device. This allows you to reference specific questions, prompts, or tips tailored to each vendor. It serves as a handy checklist to ensure you cover all essential details during discussions. This proactive approach helps you make informed decisions and build a comprehensive understanding of each vendor's offerings.

Think of this guide as your wedding prep companion, strategically designed to enhance your understanding of our planner. These two tools are crafted to work together. Use this guide to deepen your understanding of the process and have intentional questions to ask during vendor appointments. You'll want to bring both with you on these appointments. These resources work together, streamlining and elevating your wedding planning experience.

Wedding Planning
First Steps

Define Your Wedding Vision

Before diving into any details, take the time to define your wedding vision. Consider the atmosphere, style, and emotions you want to convey on your special day. Discuss key elements such as the overall theme, color scheme, and any specific cultural or personal touches you'd like to include. This vision will serve as the guiding light for all your planning decisions.

Set A Realistic Budget

Establishing a clear and realistic budget is crucial. Discuss financial priorities with your partner and any contributing parties. Consider not just the big-ticket items like the venue and catering but also smaller details like decor and transportation. This early budget framework will help you make informed decisions and avoid overspending, ensuring a well-balanced and financially feasible celebration.



Create Initial Guest List

Drafting a preliminary guest list is a fundamental step that influences many aspects of your wedding, from the choice of venue to catering quantities. Begin by listing close family and friends, then expand based on your preferences and overall budget. Having a rough idea of your guest count early on will guide your venue selection and provide a foundation for other planning elements.



Creating Your *Guest List*

Crafting your wedding guest list is a foundational step in the wedding planning journey. It involves not only choosing who will share in your joy but also managing logistical considerations like venue capacity and budget constraints. To navigate this process smoothly, start early, collaborate with your partner, and consider the size and structure of your celebration.

Collaborate and Prioritize

Begin the guest list creation process by sitting down with your partner. Together, compile a preliminary list of family, friends, and loved ones you both wish to invite. Collaborate on the priorities for your celebration, setting clear expectations for the size of the guest list. By establishing a unified approach early on, you ensure that both partners contribute to the decision-making process and create a guest list that reflects your shared vision.



Tiered Planning for Flexibility

Categorize your guest list into tiers to manage potential constraints effectively. Create an A-list consisting of must-invite guests, such as close family and friends. Simultaneously, form a B-list with additional guests you'd like to include if space and budget allow. This tiered approach offers flexibility, allowing you to adjust your guest list based on RSVPs from the A-list. As you receive declines or regrets, you can extend invitations to individuals on the B-list, maximizing the number of loved ones present while navigating logistical challenges gracefully.

Wedding Budget Tips

1. **Establish Priorities:** Begin by identifying your top priorities for the wedding. This could be the venue, photography, or entertainment. Allocate a larger portion of your budget to these elements.
2. **Create a Realistic Budget:** Set a budget that aligns with your financial situation. Be honest about what you can afford and avoid starting your marriage with unnecessary debt.
3. **Contingency Fund:** Build a contingency fund into your budget to account for unexpected expenses. A buffer of 10-15% can help cover unforeseen costs without causing financial stress.
4. **Research and Compare:** Explore different vendors and get multiple quotes to ensure you're getting the best value for your money. Don't settle for the first option; shop around.
5. **Off-Peak and Midweek Savings:** Consider getting married during off-peak seasons or on a weekday. Venues and vendors often offer lower rates for events held on less popular days.
6. **DIY Thoughtfully:** While DIY projects can save money, be strategic about where you invest your time and effort. Focus on elements that are important to you and consider your skill level.
7. **Guest List Management:** Be mindful of your guest list size. A smaller guest list not only saves on catering costs but also reduces expenses on invitations, favors, and other items.
8. **Prioritize Spending:** Identify the aspects of your wedding that are most important to you as a couple, and allocate a larger portion of your budget to those areas.
9. **Negotiate with Vendors:** Don't hesitate to negotiate with vendors. Many are willing to customize packages to fit your budget, especially if they know you're considering multiple options. Don’t forget to ask about discounts like military or veteran. Many vendors will also offer discounts if you pay up front with cash!
10. **Limit the Extras:** Be cautious with add-ons and extras. While they can enhance the experience, they also add up quickly. Focus on the essentials and allocate funds accordingly.
11. **Use Wedding Apps and Tools:** Utilize budgeting apps and online tools to help you keep track of expenses. These tools can provide a visual representation of your spending and help you stay within budget.
12. **Consider All-Inclusive Packages:** All-inclusive packages from venues or vendors may offer cost savings compared to booking individual services separately. Evaluate these options to see if they align with your needs.
13. **Borrow or Rent:** For items like decor or attire, consider borrowing or renting instead of buying. This is especially useful for items that you may not use again.
14. **Be Mindful of Seasonal Sales:** Take advantage of sales and discounts, especially during post-holiday or end-of-season sales. This can be beneficial for purchasing attire, decor, or even booking services.
15. **Track Expenses Closely:** Regularly review and update your budget as you make decisions and payments. This ensures you stay on top of your spending and can make adjustments if needed.

Wedding Day *Flow*

Detailed Timeline and Coordination

Develop a detailed timeline for your wedding day, outlining key events, from the ceremony to the reception. Share this timeline with all vendors, including the photographer, caterer, and DJ, well in advance. Collaborate with a wedding coordinator or planner who can oversee the execution of the timeline, ensuring a smooth flow of events and handling any unexpected challenges that may arise.

Effective Communication with Vendors

Establish open and effective communication with all your vendors. Clearly communicate your expectations, preferences, and any specific details related to their services. Confirm logistics such as arrival times, setup requirements, and contact information. Having a clear line of communication minimizes the likelihood of misunderstandings and ensures that everyone is on the same page, contributing to a seamless execution of your wedding day plans.

Designate a Point Person

Designate a trusted friend, family member, or wedding coordinator as a point person on the day of the wedding. This individual can act as a liaison between you and the vendors, troubleshoot any minor issues, and ensure that everything is running according to plan. Having a designated point person allows you to focus on enjoying your special day while someone else handles the logistical details.





Questions to Ask
Your Wedding Planner

Experience & Style

- How long have you been a wedding planner, and how many weddings have you planned?
- Can you describe your planning style and approach to working with couples?

Availability

- Are you available on our desired wedding date?
- How many other weddings will you be working on around the same time as ours?

Services Offered

- What specific services do you offer, and are they customizable based on our needs?
- Can you assist with both full-service planning and day-of coordination?

References

- Can you provide references from past clients?
- Could you show us examples of weddings you've planned, including photos and testimonials?

Budget

- How do you handle budget management, and what is your experience with various budget ranges?
- Can you provide examples of cost-saving strategies you've implemented for previous clients?

Vendors

- Do you have preferred vendors, and how do you select them?
- How do you handle negotiations and contracts with vendors?

Communication

- What is your preferred method of communication, and how often can we expect updates?
- How do you handle last-minute changes or urgent issues?

Logistics & Timeline

- How do you approach the logistical aspects of wedding planning, including timeline creation?
- Can you provide a general timeline of planning milestones leading up to the wedding day?

Emergencies

- What measures do you have in place for handling unexpected emergencies or challenges?
- Can you share examples of how you've handled crises during previous weddings?

Ceremony & Reception

- How do you work with couples to create a personalized ceremony and reception?
- What is your process for coordinating the flow of events on the wedding day?

Guest Management

- How do you assist with guest list management, RSVPs, and seating arrangements?
- What strategies do you use to ensure a smooth check-in process for guests on the wedding day?

Legalities & Contracts

- How do you handle legal aspects and permits for weddings?
- What is your process for reviewing and managing vendor contracts?

Design & Decor

- How do you collaborate with couples on designing the overall aesthetic of the wedding?
- Can you provide examples of unique design elements you've incorporated in past weddings?

Transportation

- How do you coordinate transportation for the couple, bridal party, and guests on the wedding day?
- What contingency plans do you have in place for transportation issues?

Day-of Coordination

- How do you manage the day-of coordination, and what services are included?
- Can you provide examples of how you've handled unexpected issues on the wedding day?

Backup Plan

- What contingency plans do you have in place for inclement weather or other unexpected changes?
- How do you handle unexpected vendor cancellations or no-shows?

Payments

- How is your fee structured, and when are payments due?
- Are there any additional fees or costs we should be aware of?

Insurance & Liability

- Do you have liability insurance, and what does it cover?
- How do you handle situations where a vendor or guest encounters an issue during the wedding?

Personalization

- How do you ensure that the wedding reflects the couple's personality and preferences?
- Can you share examples of how you've incorporated unique and personalized elements into weddings?

Post-Wedding Services

- What post-wedding services do you provide, such as handling vendor payments or returning rental items?
- How do you ensure a smooth transition for the couple after the wedding day?

Tip: Bring this booklet with you to your initial appointment so you don’t forget any of these essential questions!



Creating Your *Wedding Timeline*

Crafting a well-thought-out wedding timeline is key to ensuring your big day unfolds seamlessly. Begin by identifying the key milestones, such as the ceremony, reception, and photo sessions, and work backward to determine a realistic start time for each. Allocate ample time for each activity, considering factors like travel, set-up, and potential delays. Be sure to consult with your vendors to synchronize their schedules with your timeline, ensuring everyone is on the same page.

Factor in buffer time throughout the day to account for unexpected delays or moments that may take longer than anticipated. This helps maintain a stress-free atmosphere and allows you to savor each moment without feeling rushed. Communicate the timeline clearly to your wedding party, family, and vendors, providing them with a detailed schedule well in advance. This fosters a sense of coordination and ensures everyone is prepared for their respective roles, contributing to a harmonious and well-organized celebration.

Remember that flexibility is key. While a timeline provides structure, be open to adjustments and go with the flow. Unexpected moments often become cherished memories, and a flexible approach allows you to fully embrace the joy and spontaneity of your wedding day.

Finding Your *Wedding Venue*

Setting the Scene

Before you start the venue search, clearly define your ideal wedding celebration. Consider the style, atmosphere, and size of the wedding you envision. Knowing your preferences will help narrow down the options and guide you to venues that align with your dream celebration. Whether it's a rustic barn, an elegant ballroom, or a beachfront setting, having a well-defined vision will streamline your search and make it easier to assess potential venues.

Consider Logistics and Amenities

Evaluate the logistics and amenities offered by each venue. Consider the location's accessibility for both you and your guests. If you're having a destination wedding, ensure that accommodations and transportation are convenient. Assess the venue's capacity to comfortably accommodate your guest list. Look into the services and amenities provided, such as catering options, audiovisual equipment, and on-site coordination. A venue with experienced staff and inclusive packages can significantly ease the planning process, allowing you to focus on other aspects of your wedding.

Visit and Ask Questions

Schedule visits to your shortlisted venues. Seeing the space in person will provide a better sense of its ambiance and layout. Come prepared with a list of questions, covering everything from pricing and available dates to any restrictions or rules imposed by the venue. Inquire about the flexibility of the space for customization and whether there are any hidden fees. Pay attention to the venue's responsiveness and willingness to address your concerns. A venue visit is not just about seeing the physical space but also about gauging the professionalism and cooperation of the venue's team, as they will play a crucial role in bringing your wedding vision to life.





Questions to Ask *Your Venue*

Availability and Capacity:

1. Is the venue available on our desired date?
2. What is the maximum capacity the venue can accommodate?

Cost and Payment Policies:

1. What is the rental fee, and what does it include?
2. Are there additional fees for services or amenities?
3. What is the payment schedule, and are there any cancellation policies?

Logistics and Set-Up:

1. Can we tour the venue to see the available spaces for the ceremony and reception?
2. How is the layout typically configured for weddings, and is there flexibility for customization?
3. Is there a designated space for the wedding party to get ready?

Vendor Policies:

1. Are there preferred vendors, and are we required to use them?
2. Are there any restrictions on outside catering, florists, or other vendors?

Time Restrictions:

1. What is the timeframe for the rental, and are there additional charges for overtime?
2. Are there noise restrictions or curfews that we need to be aware of?

Alcohol and Catering:

1. Does the venue provide in-house catering, and what are the menu options?
2. Can we bring in our own caterer, and if so, are there any associated fees?
3. What are the options for providing alcohol, and are there any corkage fees? Does the venue provide security guards?

Decor and Set-Up Time:

1. What is the policy regarding decorations, and are there any restrictions?
2. How much time is allocated for set-up and breakdown, and is there a designated staff to assist?

Parking and Transportation:

1. Is there ample parking for guests, and is it complimentary or paid?
2. What transportation options are available for guests, especially if it's a destination or remote venue?

Weather Contingency Plans:

1. Does the venue have indoor alternatives in case of inclement weather for outdoor ceremonies?
2. How do they handle sudden changes due to weather, and what is the process for decision-making?

Accessibility:

1. Is the venue wheelchair accessible, and are there facilities for guests with special needs?
2. What is the proximity to hotels, and are there lodging options nearby for out-of-town guests?

Insurance and Liability:

1. Does the venue require event liability insurance, and what coverage is needed?
2. How do they handle liability for damages or injuries during the event?

Restrictions and Rules:

1. Are there any specific rules or restrictions we should be aware of, such as open flame policies or noise limitations?
2. How do they handle unique requests or cultural/religious practices that might be part of the wedding?

Reminder

This list is not extensive, but these questions will provide you with an understanding of the venue's policies, capabilities, and potential challenges, helping you make an informed decision for your special day. Feel free to add in questions of your own!


TOGETHER WITH THEIR FAMILIES
KRISTINA MILLER
and
JORDAN RHODES
INVITE YOU TO JOIN THEM IN THE CELEBRATION OF THEIR MARRIAGE CEREMONY
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-THREE
AT FOUR-THIRTY IN THE AFTERNOON
WHITE ROSE CHAPEL
567 BROOKE AVENUE, CARLISLE PA
reception to follow
Details
FOR MORE DETAILS AND INFORMATION INCLUDING DIRECTIONS AND HOTEL ACCOMODATIONS, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEDDING WEBSITE
RHODESWEDDING.COM
GUESTS ARE WELCOME TO RSVP ONLINE
Respond
M
ACCEPT W/JOY
DECLINE W/REGRET
KINDLY RSVP BY MARCH 17
NO. OF GUESTS:



Finding Your *Wedding Stationery*

Unveil Your Style

Let your wedding stationery be a teaser for your story. Whether opting for custom designs that narrate your journey or editable templates that echo your style, infuse elements that mirror your vision. Make your invitations a sneak peek into your unique love story.

Budget with Creativity

As you explore stationery options, keep your budget in mind. Custom designs may offer a unique, personalized options but can be a bit pricey. Alternatively, editable templates give you affordability without skipping on style or quality (especially when you consider a quality printer). Prioritize elements that flow with your theme, ensuring your wedding stationery is budget conscious and a gorgeous addition to your big day.

Feel the Vibe

Order samples to get a tactile sense of your wedding stationery vibe. Custom designers will showcase their craftsmanship with samples. For those swaying to the beat of editable templates, platforms like Etsy will often let you demo the item before purchase. Ensure the design hits the right notes by evaluating layout, paper quality, and printing options. This step will make sure your invitations not only look fabulous but also flow with the vibe of your upcoming celebration.

Finding Your *Wedding Stationery*

In addition to wedding planners, Marie Thomas Paperie also has fully editable wedding & bridal templates. From invitations to signs to games we have a variety of options to choose from!



















See our complete selection here



Deciding on Your *Bridal Party + Attendants*

Selecting your bridal party is a meaningful and personal decision that reflects the significant relationships in your life. These individuals will play key roles in supporting you throughout the wedding planning process and celebrating your special day. Here are two essential tips to guide you in choosing your bridal party.

Consider Your Closest Bonds

When assembling your bridal party, prioritize individuals who share deep and meaningful connections with you. Consider family members, lifelong friends, or those who have been with you through various chapters of your life. Choosing individuals who know you well and have been a significant part of your journey ensures a genuine and heartfelt support system as you navigate the exciting but sometimes challenging aspects of wedding planning.

Roles and Responsibilities

Evaluate the responsibilities associated with each potential member of your wedding party. Consider their availability, willingness to participate in pre-wedding events, and their comfort level with potential responsibilities. Open communication about expectations ensures that everyone is on the same page and can contribute to creating a joyful and stress-free wedding experience. Choose individuals who are not only excited about being part of your celebration but are also prepared to play an active and positive role in your wedding journey.

Creating Your *Bridal Style*

Gather Inspiration

Start by immersing yourself in the world of bridal inspiration. Flip through wedding magazines, explore online platforms, and collect images that speak to your style. Add your favorites to your wedding planner, creating a visual storyboard that captures the essence of the looks you love.

Shape Your Vision

Reflect on your style and consider the overarching theme of your wedding. Whether it's a romantic garden, a beach escape, or a chic city celebration, align your bridal look with the atmosphere. Choose a dress silhouette and color palette that complement your vision, ensuring both comfort and elegance.



Personal Details

Elevate your bridal style by incorporating personal touches. Select accessories, jewelry, or elements like a custom veil that hold sentimental value. Consult with your florist to craft a bouquet that complements your overall look. Trust your instincts and infuse your style with authenticity, creating a bridal ensemble that feels uniquely and beautifully yours.

Remember, there are no strict rules when it comes to bridal style—focus on what makes you happy and confident, and your unique beauty will shine on your wedding day.

Questions to Ask
Your Bridal Shop

Appointment and Availability:

1. Do you require appointments, and how far in advance should I schedule?
2. What is the typical duration of an appointment, and do you offer weekend or evening slots?

Dress Selection and Styles:

1. Can you describe the range of wedding dress styles and designers you carry?
2. Are there options for customization or incorporating specific style preferences?

Pricing and Payment Policies:

1. What is the price range for your wedding dresses?
2. Are alterations included in the dress price, or is it an additional cost?
3. Can you provide details about the payment schedule, and are there any hidden fees?

Sample Sizes and Ordering Process:

1. What sizes are available for trying on in-store?
2. How does the ordering process work if I decide on a dress, and what is the expected delivery timeline?

Alterations and Tailoring:

1. Do you have an in-house seamstress, or do you recommend external tailors?
2. What is the process for alterations, and what is the typical timeframe?

Accessories and Veils:

1. Do you offer bridal accessories such as veils, headpieces, or jewelry?
2. Can you assist in coordinating accessories with the chosen dress?

Cancellation and Refund Policies:

1. What is your policy on cancellations, and are there any options for refunds?
2. How do you handle situations where the delivered dress has issues or does not meet expectations?

Trunk Shows and Discounts:

1. Do you host trunk shows, and are there discounts available during these events?
2. Are there promotions for purchasing accessories or multiple dresses?

Delivery and Storage:

1. How will my dress be delivered, and what is the packaging like?
2. Is there an option for you to store the dress until closer to the wedding, and is there a fee for this service?

Recommendations and Reviews:

1. Can you provide references or share reviews from past clients?
2. Do you have recommendations for local vendors providing alterations or other bridal services?

Dress Preservation Services:

1. Do you offer dress preservation services after the wedding?
2. What are the recommended care and storage instructions for the dress?

Emergency Alteration Policies:

1. In case of unexpected changes in body size or last-minute alterations, what are your emergency alteration policies?

Return Policy for Accessories:

1. If I purchase accessories but later decide to return them, what is the return policy for accessories?

Customization Options:

1. Are there options for customizing a dress, such as changing the neckline or adding sleeves?
2. How much flexibility do you offer in modifying existing designs?

Questions to Ask
Your Beauty Specialists

Hairstylist

1. Can you show me examples of bridal hairstyles you've done in the past?
2. Will you bring your own products (blow dryer/curling iron etc.) or will I be responsible for bringing them?
3. Do you have experience working with different hair types and lengths?
4. How do you ensure hairstyles stay in place throughout the day, especially for outdoor weddings or those with varied weather conditions?
5. Can you work with hair accessories or veils and incorporate them into the hairstyle?
6. What is your process for hair trials, and how many do you typically recommend before the wedding day?
7. Do you offer on-site services, and is there an additional fee for travel?
8. How long will it take to complete hairstyles for the bridal party?
9. What products do you typically use, and are they suitable for specific hair types?
10. How do you handle last-minute adjustments or changes on the wedding day?

Makeup Artist

1. Can you provide examples of bridal makeup looks you've done before, especially those similar to what I'm envisioning?
2. Do you specialize in certain makeup styles, such as natural, glamorous, or vintage?
3. How do you ensure makeup lasts throughout the day, including under various lighting conditions and temperatures?
4. What makeup brands do you use? Airbrush?
5. Can you create a customized makeup look?
6. How do you handle different skin tones, skin allergies or acne? Can you contour my face?
7. Will you provide a makeup trial, and is there an added cost? TIP: Bring your veil along.
8. Are false lashes included in the makeup application, and can they be customized to different styles?
9. How long does the makeup application process typically take for the bride, and how about for bridesmaids or other members of the bridal party?
10. What is your policy regarding touch-ups or adjustments on the wedding day?

General Questions

1. What is your pricing structure, and what services are included in the package?
2. Do you have a portfolio or website where I can view more of your work?
3. How far in advance should I book your services for my wedding date?
4. Can you accommodate a large bridal party, and is there an additional fee for multiple people?
5. What is your cancellation or rescheduling policy?
6. How do you handle any unforeseen issues on the wedding day, such as delays or emergencies?
7. Are there any additional fees for early morning services or late-night touch-ups?
8. Can you provide references from previous bridal clients?
9. How do you stay updated on current bridal hair and makeup trends?
10. What do you need from me before the trial or wedding day to ensure a successful experience?





Finding Your *Photographer*

Editing Style

Think of your wedding photographer as the editor and director of your visual narrative. Consider their portfolio as a gallery of curated moments, each photo framed and edited to tell the story of your love. Look for a photographer with a distinct editing style that resonates with your aesthetic preferences. Seek someone who not only captures poses but curates them into a visual storyline, ensuring your wedding album reflects the edited elegance and unique poses that define your celebration.

Capturing Your Day

Your wedding photographer's lens is a time machine, freezing moments that become timeless memories. Choose a photographer with the ability to transport you back to the emotions, laughter, and subtle glances of your special day. Seek someone who doesn't just take photos but curates a visual journey—a skilled photographer who weaves the essence of your celebration into a narrative that becomes a cherished part of your personal history.

Personality in Every Frame

Beyond technical skills, consider the photographer's personality as an important aspect of their offering. A wedding photographer is more than just a skilled professional; they're a collaborator, a vibe curator, and a calming presence. Look for someone whose energy aligns with yours, who seamlessly blends into the festivities, capturing candid moments and genuine expressions. Choose a photographer who adds a spark of personality to every shot, ensuring that your wedding album reflects not just the visuals but also the atmosphere and spirit of your joyous celebration.



Questions to Ask *Your Photographer*

Portfolio and Style:

- Can you show me examples of full wedding galleries you've captured?
- How would you describe your photography style?
- Are you comfortable with specific editing styles or filters if we have preferences?

Experience and Expertise:

- How many weddings have you photographed, and how long have you been a wedding photographer?
- Have you worked at our chosen venue or similar locations before?
- What challenges have you encountered at weddings, and how did you overcome them?

Availability and Logistics:

- Is our wedding date available, and how many other events will you be photographing around the same time?
- What is your approach to handling multiple events on the same day?
- Will you be the main photographer, or do you work with a team?

Packages and Pricing:

- What is included in your wedding photography packages?
- Can we customize a package based on our specific needs?
- Are there any additional costs we should be aware of, such as travel or accommodation fees?

Booking and Contract:

- How do we secure our wedding date with you?
- What is your cancellation and refund policy?
- Can you provide a detailed contract outlining the terms of our agreement?

Coverage and Hours:

- How many hours of coverage are included in your standard package?
- Can coverage be extended on the wedding day if needed?
- Do you charge additional fees for overtime?

Backup Plan and Equipment:

- What is your backup plan in case of unforeseen circumstances or equipment failure?
- Do you have backup cameras and lenses on hand?
- Are you insured?

Shot List and Poses:

- Can we provide a shot list, and do you work with one?
- How do you approach posing couples and directing group shots?
- Are you open to capturing specific moments or poses we have in mind?

Editing and Delivery:

- What is your editing process, and how long does it take to receive the final images?
- How many photos can we expect to receive, and will they be high resolution?
- Do we have the rights to print and share the images?

Timeline and Coordination:

- How do you plan the photography timeline on the wedding day?
- How do you coordinate with other vendors, such as the videographer or wedding planner?
- What information do you need from us to ensure a smooth workflow?

Questions to Ask
Your Videographer

1. **Portfolio and Style:**
   - Can you share examples of your previous wedding videos, and do you have a portfolio showcasing different styles?
   - How would you describe your videography style, and are you open to incorporating specific preferences or themes?
2. **Coverage and Team Size:**
   - How many videographers will be present on the wedding day?
   - What parts of the wedding do you typically cover, and are there options for additional coverage?
3. **Equipment and Backup Plans:**
   - What type of equipment do you use, and do you have backup equipment available?
   - What is your plan in case of unforeseen technical issues on the wedding day?
4. **Editing Process and Timeline:**
   - Can you walk us through your editing process, and how much input can we have in the final edit?
   - What is the expected timeline for receiving the edited wedding video?
5. **Music Licensing and Song Selection:**
   - How do you handle music licensing for the wedding video?
   - Can we suggest specific songs for the video, or do you have recommendations?
6. **Client Input and Communication:**
   - How do you involve clients in the creative process? Do you welcome input on specific shots or moments?
   - What is your preferred method of communication leading up to and on the wedding day?
7. **Delivery Format and Options:**
   - In what format will the final wedding video be delivered?
   - Are there options for additional copies or customized versions of the video?
8. **Experience with Venue:**
   - Have you worked at our chosen venue before, and does familiarity with the location impact the quality of the video?
   - If not, how do you prepare for shooting at a new venue?
9. **Coverage of Special Moments:**
   - How do you ensure coverage of key moments, such as vows, speeches, and special dances?
   - Can you provide examples of how you capture candid moments throughout the day?
10. **Additional Services and Packages:**
    - Do you offer additional services, such as drone footage or highlight reels?
    - What are the different packages available, and what do they include?
11. **Testimonials and References:**
    - Can you provide testimonials from previous clients or references we can contact?
    - How do you handle feedback or requests for adjustments after the video is delivered?
12. **Payment and Contract:**
    - What is your payment schedule, and are there any hidden fees?
    - Can you provide a detailed contract outlining services, deliverables, and terms of agreement?



Deciding on Your *Wedding Flowers*

Define Your Style and Theme

Before diving into the world of wedding flowers and decor, define your style and wedding theme. Consider the overall aesthetic you envision, whether it's romantic, rustic, modern, or bohemian. This clarity will guide your choices when selecting flowers, colors, and decor elements. Look for inspiration in wedding magazines, Pinterest, and real weddings to pinpoint styles that resonate with you.

Collaborate With Your Florist

Partner with a skilled florist who understands your vision and can bring it to life. Look for florists with experience in wedding decor and a portfolio that aligns with your style. Schedule consultations to discuss your ideas, share your color palette, and explore flower options. A talented florist can offer creative suggestions, recommend seasonal blooms, and help you optimize your budget for maximum impact.

Prioritize Key Elements

While it's tempting to imagine flowers and decor throughout the entire venue, prioritize key areas that will have the most impact. Focus on areas like the ceremony backdrop, reception tables, and the bridal bouquet. Allocating your budget strategically ensures that these focal points are beautifully adorned, creating a visually stunning atmosphere without unnecessary expenses.



Consider Sustainability

Explore sustainable and eco-friendly options for your wedding flowers and decor. Consider using locally sourced blooms, repurposing ceremony flowers for the reception, or opting for potted plants that can be taken home by guests as wedding favors. This not only aligns with eco-conscious practices but also adds a meaningful touch to your celebration.

Questions to Ask *Your Florist*

1. Is our wedding date available?
2. Do you have other events on the same day, and how do you manage multiple commitments?
3. How many weddings have you designed for, and can you share examples from your portfolio?
4. Can you work within my budget, and what strategies do you use to maximize it?
5. Will you personally design my arrangements, or will someone else from your team be handling it?
6. Do you offer customizable options, or are there specific package deals available?
7. How do you work to maximize the impact of floral arrangements within a given budget?
8. Can you provide references from recent clients who had a similar vision or budget?
9. When do you create the arrangements, and how are they stored leading up to the wedding?
10. How will the flowers be transported to the venue to ensure freshness?
11. What flowers are in season during the month of my wedding?
12. If I share a picture of an arrangement I like, can you recreate it, or do you offer a similar style?
13. Which flowers can be substituted to align with my budget without compromising the overall look?
14. How would you describe your design style? (e.g., rustic, modern, organic, traditional)
15. Based on my color scheme and flower choices, what lighting do you recommend?
16. Do you have a minimum floral budget requirement?
17. Is there a delivery fee, and how do you handle the transportation of delicate arrangements?
18. Is there an extra charge for the setup of the arrangements, and how long is needed for setup?
19. Do you charge differently for mixed arrangements compared to those with a single flower type?
20. Do you provide additional decorative items (e.g., vases), and is there an extra cost?
21. Do you provide sketches or mockups of the arrangements, and is there an additional cost for this service?
22. What is your cancellation and refund policy in case of unforeseen changes or emergencies?
23. Are you insured, and what contingency plans do you have in place for unexpected circumstances?
24. How do you prefer to communicate, and what is the process for updates or changes leading up to the wedding day?
25. How do you coordinate with other vendors, such as the wedding planner or venue, to ensure a seamless floral experience?
26. Do you offer any recommendations or services for preserving or repurposing wedding flowers after the event?

Reminder

These questions are not fully extensive. Be sure to ask the questions particular to your event and cover the details you are wanting to include in your special day!



Entertainment *and Music*

Selecting the entertainment and music for your wedding is a pivotal decision that sets the tone for the entire celebration. Start by considering the overall vibe you want to create—whether it's a lively dance party, a romantic ambiance, or a mix of both. Begin the process by researching and reaching out to potential entertainers or bands. Look for those with a diverse repertoire that can cater to different tastes among your guests. A versatile band or DJ is often a great choice as they can seamlessly transition between genres and moods, ensuring that everyone finds something to enjoy.

When selecting your music, consider personal touches that reflect your journey as a couple. Choose songs that hold sentimental value, such as the one playing during your first date or the song that marks a special moment in your relationship. Work closely with your chosen entertainment to curate a playlist that complements key moments like the ceremony, first dance, and cake cutting. Additionally, don't forget to communicate any cultural or regional preferences that could enhance the overall experience. Creating a diverse yet cohesive musical journey ensures that your wedding entertainment becomes a memorable highlight, leaving a lasting impression on both you and your guests.

Questions to Ask
Your DJ/Live Band

Experience and Style:

1. How long have you been performing at weddings, and can you provide samples of your work or performances?
2. What is your music style, and how do you tailor your playlist to suit different preferences?

Song Selection and Requests:

1. How much input can we have in selecting songs for our wedding playlist?
2. Do you take song requests from guests during the event?

Emcee Services:

1. Will you also be serving as the emcee for the event?
2. How do you engage with the audience and make announcements?

Equipment and Setup:

1. What type of equipment do you use, and do you have backup systems in case of technical issues?
2. How long does it typically take for you to set up before the event?

Performance Time and Breaks:

1. How many hours of performance are included in your package, and how are breaks managed?
2. Is there an additional fee for overtime if the event extends beyond the agreed-upon time?

Song Transition and Flow:

1. How do you handle transitions between songs to maintain a seamless flow?
2. Can you provide examples of how you structure the music throughout the event?

Backup Musicians or Vocalists:

1. In the case of illness or unexpected issues, do you have backup musicians or vocalists available?
2. How would you handle unforeseen circumstances affecting the performance?

Lighting and Atmosphere:

1. Do you provide lighting equipment, and how do you use it to enhance the atmosphere?
2. Can you create specific lighting effects or color schemes to match the wedding theme?

Interactive Elements:

1. Are there interactive elements or games you incorporate into your performance?
2. How do you engage with the audience to create a lively and enjoyable atmosphere?

Client Input and Communication:

1. How do you involve clients in the music selection process, and what is your preferred method of communication leading up to the event?
2. Can we provide a "do not play" list for songs we'd prefer not to be included?

Contracts and Payments:

1. Can you provide a detailed contract outlining your services, including performance hours, equipment, and fees?
2. What is your payment schedule, and are there any additional fees we should be aware of?

Experience with Venue:

1. Have you worked at our chosen venue before, and does familiarity with the location impact the quality of the performance?
2. If not, how do you prepare for performing at a new venue?

Testimonials and References:

1. Can you provide testimonials from previous clients or references we can contact?
2. How do you handle feedback or requests for adjustments after the event?

Contingency Plans for Outdoor Events:

1. If our wedding is an outdoor event, what are your contingency plans in case of adverse weather conditions?
2. How do you protect your equipment and ensure the safety of both performers and guests?

Planning a *Meaningful Ceremony*

Personalize Your Vows

Infuse your vows with personal anecdotes, promises, and sentiments that resonate with your relationship. Reflect on the journey you've shared and express your intentions for the future. Personalized vows add authenticity and depth to the ceremony, making it a heartfelt and memorable experience.

Create a Meaningful Ceremony Structure

Design a ceremony structure that holds significance for both you and your partner. Incorporate rituals, readings, or cultural elements that reflect your shared values. Whether it's a unity ceremony, a special song, or a symbolic gesture, these details contribute to a ceremony that is uniquely yours.



Collaborate with Your Officiant

Work closely with your officiant to create a ceremony that aligns with your vision. Communicate your preferences, share your story, and discuss any specific elements you want to include. A collaborative approach ensures that the ceremony is a true representation of your relationship and sets the tone for a joyous celebration.

These elements create a ceremony that authentically tells your unique love story, making it a deeply resonant and emotionally charged experience for both you and your guests.

Steps to Writing *Your Vows*

1. **Reflect on Your Relationship:** Take a moment to reflect on your journey as a couple. Consider the significant moments, challenges, and joys that have shaped your relationship.
2. **Define Your Style:** Determine the tone of your vows. Whether it's heartfelt and romantic, humorous and light-hearted, or a mix of both, choose a style that aligns with your personalities.
3. **Note Key Qualities:** Identify the key qualities and characteristics you love about your partner. What makes them unique and special to you? Highlight these in your vows.
4. **Recall Shared Experiences:** Recall shared experiences and memories that hold sentimental value. Incorporate anecdotes or references that showcase the depth of your connection.
5. **Express Your Promises:** Clearly express the promises and commitments you are making to your partner. Be sincere and specific about the ways you intend to support and cherish them.
6. **Consider Length:** Consider the length of your vows. Aim for a balance—long enough to convey heartfelt sentiments but concise enough to maintain engagement.
7. **Seek Inspiration:** Seek inspiration from poems, literature, or even quotes that resonate with your feelings. Incorporate these elements to add richness to your vows.
8. **Write a Draft:** Start writing a draft of your vows. Don't worry about perfection initially; the key is to get your thoughts and emotions on paper.
9. **Edit and Refine:** Edit and refine your vows. Ensure they flow smoothly and convey your sentiments authentically. Eliminate unnecessary details and focus on the essence of your message.
10. **Practice Aloud:** Practice saying your vows aloud. This helps you gauge the flow, identify any stumbling points, and ensures you are comfortable expressing these words during the ceremony.

Reminder

Your wedding vows are a personal expression of your love and commitment. Let your authentic feelings guide the process, and don't be afraid to infuse your unique personalities into this special moment.

Planning The Menu

Diverse Preferences

Consider the diverse preferences of your guests when planning the wedding menu. Opt for a well-balanced selection that accommodates various dietary restrictions, including vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options. This ensures that every guest can enjoy a satisfying and delicious meal.



Seasonal and Fresh Ingredients

Prioritize seasonal and fresh ingredients in your menu choices. This not only enhances the flavors but also ensures that the dishes are at their peak in terms of quality and taste. Seasonal choices often align with the time of year, contributing to a cohesive and thoughtful culinary experience for your guests.

Cohesiveness with Theme and Setting

Ensure that the menu cohesively aligns with the overall theme and setting of your wedding. Whether it's a formal sit-down dinner, a casual buffet, or a unique food station setup, the menu should complement the atmosphere you're creating. Consistency in style enhances the overall dining experience and adds to the cohesive feel of your celebration.

Questions to Ask *Your Caterer*

Availability and Booking:
- Is our wedding date available for catering services?
- What is the booking process, and when is the deadline for confirmation?

Experience and References:
- How many weddings have you catered, and can you provide references?
- Do you have experience catering at our chosen venue?

Cuisine and Menu Options:
- What types of cuisine do you specialize in?
- Can you customize the menu to accommodate dietary restrictions and preferences?

Tasting Session:
- Do you offer a tasting session, and how does it work?
- Are there any additional costs associated with the tasting?

Service Staff:
- Will your team provide service staff, and how many will be present?
- What is the staff-to-guest ratio?

Menu Flexibility:
- How flexible are you with menu changes and substitutions?
- Can we incorporate family recipes or special requests into the menu?

Allergies and Dietary Restrictions:
- How do you handle allergies and dietary restrictions among guests?
- Can you accommodate specific dietary needs, such as vegan or gluten-free options?

Logistics and Setup:
- How much time will your team need for setup before the event?
- Will you coordinate with other vendors, such as the venue or planner, for logistics?

Tentative Menu Timeline:
- When do you need final menu selections, and when is the final guest count due?
- How do you handle last-minute changes or additions?

Beverage Services:
- Do you provide beverage services, including alcohol?
- How is the cost of beverages calculated, and what are the options for a bar setup?

Portion Sizes and Buffet Style:
- How do you determine portion sizes for each guest?
- If we opt for a buffet, how do you manage portion control and variety?

Leftovers and Packaging:
- What is your policy on handling and packaging leftovers?
- Can guests take home leftover food?

Catering Equipment:
- Do you provide catering equipment, such as tables, linens, and dinnerware?
- Are there additional charges for these items?

Cancellation and Refund Policy:
- What is your cancellation policy, and what are the refund terms?
- How far in advance can we make changes to the catering plan?

Vendor Meals:
- Do you provide meals for the vendors (photographer, DJ, etc.)?
- Is there a separate menu or pricing for vendor meals?

Insurance Coverage:
- Are you insured, and can you provide a certificate of insurance?
- What type of coverage does your insurance include?

Additional Fees:
- Are there any additional fees we should be aware of, such as service charges or gratuity?
- How do you handle overtime charges if the event extends beyond the agreed-upon time?

Coordination with Other Vendors:
- How do you coordinate with other vendors on the wedding day?
- Will you communicate with the venue or wedding planner to ensure a smooth flow?

Backup Plan:
- What is your backup plan in case of unexpected issues, such as equipment failure or a shortage of ingredients?
- How do you handle unexpected increases in guest count?

License and Permits:
- Do you have the necessary licenses and permits to cater at our chosen venue?
- How do you handle alcohol licenses, if applicable?

Payment Schedule:
- What is the payment schedule, and are there any installment options?
- When is the final payment due?

After-Event Cleanup:
- How do you handle cleanup after the event?
- Is there an additional fee for cleanup services?



Creative Wedding Ideas

1. **Themed Photo Booth:** Set up a photo booth with props and backdrops that match your wedding theme. It's a fun way for guests to capture candid and entertaining moments, and it provides you with a unique collection of memories.
2. **Interactive Food Stations:** Incorporate interactive food stations, such as a DIY taco bar, a sushi rolling station, or a dessert bar where guests can customize their treats. It adds an element of fun and engagement to the dining experience.
3. **Memory Lane:** Create a timeline or display that showcases significant moments in your relationship. Include photos, mementos, and anecdotes to take guests on a journey through your shared history.
4. **Dance Floor Games:** Spice up the dance floor with interactive games like musical chairs, dance-offs, or a shoe game where you and your partner answer questions about each other.
5. **Late-Night Snack Surprise:** Surprise your guests with a late-night snack or food truck. It could be anything from gourmet sliders to a mobile ice cream station to keep the energy high on the dance floor.
6. **Wishing Well:** Set up a wishing well where guests can leave notes of advice, well wishes, or even date night ideas. It becomes a cherished keepsake filled with love and wisdom.
7. **Live Entertainment:** Bring in live entertainment beyond the DJ or band. Consider hiring a magician, caricature artist, or a surprise performance that aligns with your interests or theme.
8. **DIY Cocktail Bar:** Set up a DIY cocktail bar where guests can create their signature drinks. Provide a variety of mixers, garnishes, and spirits for a personalized and interactive beverage experience.
9. **Fireworks Display:** End the night with a bang by organizing a surprise fireworks display. It adds a magical touch to your celebration and creates a memorable finale for you and your guests.
10. **Fun Wedding Favours:** Give your guests unique and playful wedding favors, such as personalized mini board games, custom-made cookies, or quirky items that reflect your personalities as a couple.
11. **Interactive Guestbook Art:** Provide a large canvas or puzzle where guests can leave their thumbprints, signatures, or messages. After the wedding, you'll have a unique piece of art that symbolizes the collective love and presence of your guests.
12. **Outdoor Movie Night:** If your venue allows, consider organizing an outdoor movie night under the stars. Set up a cozy seating area with blankets, cushions and screen a film that holds sentimental value for you as a couple. It's a relaxed and intimate way to enjoy some downtime with your loved ones.

Wedding Gifts *and Registry*

Thoughtful Registry Curation

Curate a wedding registry that reflects both your practical needs and aspirational desires as a couple. Include a diverse mix of traditional and modern items that resonate with your personalities. Consider adding experiences or charitable contributions that hold sentimental value, allowing your guests to contribute to your journey in meaningful ways.

Gratitude-Centric Thank-You Cards

As you receive gifts, prioritize expressing heartfelt gratitude through handwritten thank-you cards. Personalize each note by mentioning the specific gift and conveying your genuine thanks for the presence of your guests in your life. Sending these tokens of appreciation in a timely manner after the wedding enhances the sincerity and depth of your gratitude.

Embrace Gift Alternatives

For couples seeking alternatives to traditional gifts, explore options like honeymoon funds, charitable donations, or unique experiences. Openly embrace these alternatives with the understanding that the true value lies in the sentiment behind the gesture. By welcoming diverse ways for guests to share in your joy, you create a more inclusive and personalized celebration of generosity.



Post Wedding *To Dos*

Expressing Gratitude

Begin your post-wedding journey by extending heartfelt thanks to those who shared in your joy. Send out personalized thank-you cards, expressing gratitude for the love and generosity showered upon you. Take the time to acknowledge each gift and the presence of your loved ones with sincerity.

Financial and Legal Housekeeping

Address any outstanding financial matters to ensure a smooth transition into married life. This includes updating insurance policies, considering the merging of bank accounts, and making any necessary adjustments to tax filings. Review and finalize your wedding budget, accounting for any last-minute expenses or unutilized funds. Initiate the process of notifying relevant institutions about any name changes resulting from the marriage.



Preserving Memories

Take time to organize and share the beautiful memories captured during your wedding day. Create photo albums, share videos, and relive those precious moments. This not only preserves the memories for yourselves but also allows you to share the joy with friends and family. Reflect on the entire wedding planning process, discussing lessons learned, what worked well, and areas for improvement. Use this reflection as a foundation for future decision-making and communication.



Tips for *Honeymoon Planning*

Define Your Honeymoon Priorities

Before diving into the planning process, discuss and define your honeymoon priorities as a couple. Determine whether you're seeking relaxation on a beach, adventurous activities, cultural exploration, or a mix of everything. Understanding each other's preferences helps tailor the honeymoon to create a memorable and enjoyable experience for both

Plan Well in Advance

Honeymoon planning should ideally start well in advance of your wedding date. This allows you to secure desirable accommodations, flights, and activities. Research potential destinations, consider the weather, and be mindful of any peak tourist seasons. Planning ahead also gives you the flexibility to take advantage of early booking discounts and ensures a smoother and stress-free travel experience.

Budget Wisely and Consider All Costs

Establish a realistic budget for your honeymoon and consider all associated costs, including flights, accommodations, meals, activities, and transportation. Be transparent about your budget constraints and prioritize experiences that align with your financial plan. Look for honeymoon packages, all-inclusive deals, or special offers to maximize value without compromising on the quality of your experience.

Final Thoughts

As you reach the end of this planning guide, take a moment to reflect on the journey you're about to embark on. The journey ahead is not just about the meticulous coordination of details but a celebration of your love. Cherish every moment of this process. Your wedding is not just an event—it's a chapter in the story of your shared life, marked by the generosity of those who surround you.

As you stand on the precipice of this milestone, remember that perfection lies not in flawless execution but in the genuine moments and connections forged during this time. It's the laughter shared during registry selection, the warmth conveyed through handwritten thank-you cards, and the embrace of alternative gifts that truly make your celebration unique.

Thank you so much for allowing me to play a small part in your wonderful celebration! May your wedding day be filled with love, laughter, and moments that stick with you forever. As you say "I do," remember that this is not just the end of the planning process; it's the beginning of a beautiful chapter in your life.

Here's to the joyous celebration of your union and the exciting adventures that await you beyond the wedding day. Cheers to love, laughter, and a lifetime of shared happiness!



xo, Brianna

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