Wedding Planning Checklist

A month-by-month wedding planning checklist that walks you from engagement through the week of your wedding.

12+ Months Out: Foundation

- [ ] Set your overall wedding budget and agree on who is contributing.
- [ ] Draft a rough guest count to guide venue size and catering.
  Even a ballpark number shapes nearly every cost, so settle it early.
- [ ] Choose three or four possible wedding dates.
- [ ] Tour and book your ceremony and reception venues.
- [ ] Decide whether to hire a wedding planner or coordinator.
- [ ] Start a shared folder or binder to keep contracts and ideas in one place.

9 to 11 Months Out: Key Vendors

- [ ] Book your photographer and videographer.
- [ ] Secure your caterer or confirm in-house catering options.
- [ ] Reserve your band or DJ for the reception.
- [ ] Hire your florist and discuss a seasonal palette.
- [ ] Begin shopping for the wedding dress and any attire that needs lead time.
  Bridal gowns often take four to six months to order and alter.
- [ ] Send save-the-dates once your date and venue are locked.

6 to 8 Months Out: Details Take Shape

- [ ] Book your officiant and confirm any ceremony requirements.
- [ ] Reserve a block of hotel rooms for out-of-town guests.
- [ ] Order or design your invitation suite.
- [ ] Plan your honeymoon and check passport expiration dates.
- [ ] Choose attire for the wedding party and groom.
- [ ] Register for gifts and set up your wedding website.

3 to 5 Months Out: Locking It In

- [ ] Finalize the menu and schedule a tasting with your caterer.
- [ ] Order the wedding cake or dessert.
- [ ] Choose your ceremony readings, vows, and music.
- [ ] Buy or rent wedding rings and arrange engraving.
- [ ] Book transportation for the couple and guests if needed.
- [ ] Mail invitations six to eight weeks before the date.
  Set your RSVP deadline about three weeks before the wedding.

1 to 2 Months Out: Confirmations

- [ ] Apply for your marriage license within the valid window for your state.
- [ ] Attend your final dress fitting and pick up the gown.

- [ ] Confirm details, arrival times, and balances with every vendor.
- [ ] Create the day-of timeline and share it with the wedding party.
- [ ] Build the seating chart once RSVPs are in.
- [ ] Write thank-you notes for any gifts received early.

Week Of: Final Stretch

- [ ] Give your caterer and venue the final guest count.
- [ ] Pick up rentals, attire, and any final orders.
- [ ] Pack an emergency kit and the honeymoon bags.
- [ ] Confirm hair and makeup appointment times.
- [ ] Prepare vendor tips and final payments in labeled envelopes.
  Hand the envelopes to a trusted person to distribute on the day.
- [ ] Run through the timeline at the rehearsal and delegate day-of tasks.
- [ ] Step back, rest, and trust your planning.