Wedding Timeline Checklist

A countdown planning timeline from twelve months out to an hour-by-hour wedding day schedule.

12 to 9 Months Out

- [ ] Set your budget and decide who is contributing.
- [ ] Draft a rough guest list to estimate the size of your wedding.
- [ ] Choose a season or a few possible dates.
- [ ] Tour and book your ceremony and reception venues.
- [ ] Book your photographer, caterer, and any must-have vendors that fill early.
  Top photographers and venues book peak dates a year ahead, so secure these first.
- [ ] Hire a wedding planner or coordinator if you want one.

8 to 6 Months Out

- [ ] Send save-the-dates to your guest list.
- [ ] Book florals, music, officiant, and transportation.
- [ ] Begin shopping for wedding attire and start fittings.
- [ ] Reserve a room block at nearby hotels for guests.
- [ ] Register for gifts and set up your wedding website.
- [ ] Plan and book any pre-wedding events such as the rehearsal dinner.

5 to 3 Months Out

- [ ] Order invitations and stationery.
- [ ] Schedule and attend menu and cake tastings.
- [ ] Finalize the ceremony order and any readings or vows.
- [ ] Arrange hair and makeup trials.
- [ ] Purchase wedding rings and arrange resizing.
- [ ] Confirm wedding party attire and accessories.

2 Months to 2 Weeks Out

- [ ] Mail invitations and set a clear RSVP deadline.
- [ ] Apply for your marriage license within its validity window.
  Check local rules for waiting periods and how long the license stays valid.
- [ ] Attend final attire fittings.
- [ ] Confirm the timeline, headcount, and details with every vendor.
- [ ] Build the seating chart and prepare escort or place cards.
- [ ] Write your vows and toasts.

The Final Week

- [ ] Give the final guest count to the caterer and venue.
- [ ] Reconfirm arrival times with all vendors.
- [ ] Pick up attire and try on the complete outfit.

- [ ] Prepare labeled tip and final-payment envelopes.
- [ ] Pack an emergency kit and a bag for the wedding night.
- [ ] Distribute the day-of timeline to vendors and the wedding party.

Wedding Day Morning

- [ ] Eat a real breakfast and stay hydrated.
- [ ] Begin hair and makeup with a generous time cushion.
  Getting-ready photos look best with good light, so start early.
- [ ] Lay out attire, rings, vows, and accessories in one place.
- [ ] Greet vendors as they arrive and confirm load-in.
- [ ] Capture getting-ready and detail photos.
- [ ] Complete any first-look or pre-ceremony portraits.

Ceremony to Send-Off

- [ ] Hold the ceremony, then move guests to cocktail hour.
- [ ] Take family and group portraits during cocktail hour.
- [ ] Make your grand entrance into the reception.
- [ ] Serve dinner, then move into toasts and the first dance.
- [ ] Cut the cake and open the floor for dancing.
- [ ] Gather guests for the send-off and confirm transportation home.