

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.