The Ultimate Wedding-Planning Checklist and Timeline

This year has been stressful enough in and of itself. So, in our never-ending quest to make every bride's experience fantastic, we have come up with a 12-month guide to help you plan your wedding on time and have fun doing it. Plus, read to the end for a free printable version of our checklist!

12 Months: Start Your Research, Make a Budget

Now that you're officially engaged, the first thing you'll have to tick off your wedding to-do list, is research. In order to make a budget, you'll have to know what everything costs in general. Browse online shops, bridal magazines and stores to get an idea for prices. You can also get a feel for how much a venue, various vendors, and your honeymoon might cost by requesting quotes.

Once you have an idea of what costs will be, it's just a matter of deciding what's most important for you and your wedding day, and assigning a budget accordingly.

11 Months: Book Your Venue and Hire Your Vendors

We know it seems like 11 months out seems a bit pre-emptive, but there's a good reason for it. The further in advance that you're able to book your venue and hire your vendors, the more leeway and time you'll be giving yourself to account for any unexpected surprises or changes that may have to be executed before the big day.

Depending on your budget, you'll have to contact caterers, florists, alcohol distributors, and various others. So remember to keep a list of all of your bookings and paid deposits as you make your arrangements.

10 Months: Buy Your Wedding Dress, Accessories, & Rings

In an ideal world, the best time to purchase your dress is around 10 months before the wedding. That way, you have ample time for any alterations or last minute changes, should you need it. At New York City Bride, however, you can order your dress online and receive your tailored, designer wedding dress in as little as two months, straight to your door.

Additionally, once you've chosen your dress, you can go ahead and pick out your matching veil, hair accessories, jacket or wrap, and whatever else you may need for your wedding day ensemble.

8 Months: Buy Your Flower Girl's Dress & Pick Out Attire for the Wedding Party

Traditionally, it's up to the bride to pick out and buy the dress for the flower girl. And depending on how old your flower girl is, you may have to specutaviley size up for a good fit on the day of. If you purchase your flower girl dress from New York City Bride, though, you can just use this time to pick out the dress you like most and defer the timing of the order until 2 months before the wedding date to ensure it arrives on time.

At this point, you may also want to consider meeting up with your wedding party to assist in picking out attire to suit your wedding theme. Chose a day that works for you, your spouse, and your respective bridesmaids and groomsmen, and make an evening of it. This way, you don't have to worry about bridesmaids' dresses, tuxedos, or any other outfits until you go to put it on!

6 Months: Reserve Your Honeymoon

With 6 months to go until the big day, it is time to luxuriate a bit and celebrate all that you've already accomplished in your planning. Grab yourself a glass of wine, or whatever else curries your fancy, and spend an afternoon with your spouse deciding how and where you'd like to spend your honeymoon.

By reserving in advance, you'll give yourself plenty of time to get any paperwork you may need in order. Or, if you're travelling outside of the country, to get passports and learn the laws and customs of wherever you're going.

5 Months: Taste and Order Your Cake

Keep the party going into the next month of planning and think only the sweetest of thoughts. It's cake tasting time. Use this month to find a bakery you like and talk with the owner or manager to schedule a tasting. By the end of this month, you should have your cake all designed and your flavor profile ready to go so that everything is ready for a seamless wedding day delivery.

4 Months: Plan Your Make-Up and Hair

Remember playing dress-up when you were little? Tap into your inner child and take the fourth month before your wedding to practice getting your hair and make-up right. Even if you're having a cosmetologist come in, you can use this month for figuring out your look for your wedding reception or whatever else you may have planned for after the wedding ceremony itself.

3 Months: Send Out Your Invitations

With only three months to go, it's time to make your guest list. And as much as we would all love to invite everyone we've ever met to join us on our happiest day, it's just not feasible. So it's time to do some evaluating to decide who you'd like to be in attendance and where you'd like

everyone seated at the reception.

After you've got your guest list sorted out, you can go ahead and start making and mailing out your invitations. By giving your guests a three month window to make the date, you'll be able to better accommodate your guests' schedules, and more people will be able to attend.

2 Months: Write Your Vows

At this stage in your wedding planning, you may be starting to feel a bit run down or overwhelmed with all of your planning. That's why we recommend taking this month to slow down, reflect, and remind yourself what your wedding is actually all about: celebrating the love in your life. And one of the best ways to do so, while still getting knocking another item off your wedding to-do list, is to write your vows.

Remember, your vows can be whatever you want them to be. They're your own special way of expressing your love for your partner to them, as well as to those in attendance. Try not to overthink this part, nobody expects you to write the next great American novel, just be honest and speak your truth.

1 Month: Get Your Final Dress Fitting

With a month left to go, it's time to get any last minute dress details sorted and done with. Scheduling your dress fitting about a month in advance of your wedding day should provide you and your tailor with ample time to finish up any final touches or last minute alterations you may require.

If you purchase your dress online from us here at New York City Bride, you don't have to worry about this step thanks to our bridal team who ensures a perfect fit before your dress arrives. That means you can use this time to relax and focus on what's next.

2 Weeks: Finalize the Logistics of Your Venue

The last item on your wedding to-do list is almost like an evaluation of all the planning you've already done. Give your checklist a quick run-through to make sure that everything is in order and ready to go for the big day. Check in with your caterers, baker, and any other vendors to make sure that they have any information they might need.

You can also use this time to finalize any out-going payments for services and to deal with any last minute arrangements for your flowers, decorations, venue, etc.

1 Week: You're Ready with Time to Spare

Congratulations! You've officially planned a wedding, and with time to spare! With only a week before your wedding left, take this time to enjoy yourself and celebrate all of your hard work. You've earned it!

Don't Forget

Planning a wedding is far from easy and can often be more stressful than not. However, if you start planning your wedding with a positive attitude, and the intent to enjoy the process, then we promise, it can actually be a lot more fun than you'd think.

For a free, printable version of The Ultimate Wedding-Planning Checklist, click here. And, for the rest of your bridal needs, feel free to check us out online at New York City Bride by clicking here.