

Knoxville Convention Center

Bride's Checklist

It doesn't necessarily take more than six months to plan a wedding, but most brides say that the earlier you make your decisions, the more likely you are to be able to schedule the locations and suppliers of your choice.

6 – 12 months before your wedding day

- *Shop with your fiancé for your wedding ring*
- *Announce your engagement to family and friends*
- *Research sites and availability for the wedding ceremony and reception*
- *Decide whether you will plan the wedding yourself or hire a consultant*
- *Meet with and confirm availability of the person who will perform the ceremony*
- *Set a date for the wedding*
- *Prepare and send your engagement announcement to your local newspaper*
- *Create a budget and determine who will pay for what*
- *Reserve locations; making deposits and returning contracts according to terms specified*
- *Determine the style of your wedding (formal, semiformal, informal)*
- *Determine the size of your guest list*
- *Ask both families to draw up their tentative guest lists*
- *Select members of your wedding party*
- *Meet with your stylist to discuss your best colors and wedding "look"*
- *Decide on your wedding color scheme*
- *Select your dress, headpiece and accessories*
- *Shop for bridesmaids' dresses*
- *Interview the professionals and contract for their services:*
 - Photographers*
 - Videographers*
 - Caterers*
 - Bakers*
 - Florists*
 - Musicians*
 - Rentals*
- *Schedule initial fittings for you and your bridesmaids*
- *Check out special transportation choices such as horse and carriage or special limousines*
- *Choose invitations and stationery*

- *Discuss honeymoon plans with your fiancé. Pre-book honeymoon if possible*
- *Begin looking at china, silver and crystal choices*

4 months before your wedding day

- *Follow up with key professionals who will help you with your wedding and contract for their services*
- *Locate hotels and put a temporary hold on a block of rooms for out-of-town guests to make reservations*
- *Make menu selection with the caterer or chef*
- *Choose wedding cake and groom's cake*
- *Decide on song selection with musicians*
- *Sign up for dance lessons*
- *Begin flower selections for bouquet, corsages, boutonnieres and room decorations*
- *Proofread invitations before they are printed*
- *Register for gifts at your favorite stores*
- *Find out how to get a marriage license. Make appointments for a medical exam and blood tests, if necessary.*
- *Apply for passports, if needed, for your honeymoon*
- *Select wedding rings*
- *Send thank you notes for shower gifts*
- *Decide whether or not to hire a calligrapher to handle invitation writing.*
- *Visit your dentist for a teeth cleaning/whitening*

2 months before your wedding day

- *Address and stamp invitations*
- *Send out invitations*
- *Discuss rehearsal dinner plans with groom's family*
- *Schedule wedding rehearsal*
- *Meet with your clergy*
- *Double check all details with wedding vendors*

- *Make salon appointments for yourself and bridesmaids for the day of the wedding*
- *Arrange for wedding day transportation*

1 month before your wedding day

- *Shop for honeymoon wardrobe*
- *Meet with the wedding guild chairperson from your church if you are planning a church wedding*
- *Get forms for name change (Social Security and driver's license, etc.)*
- *Send change of address form to post office if necessary*
- *Prepare wedding announcements to be mailed if appropriate*
- *Purchase gifts for the wedding party*
- *Purchase groom's gift*
- *Record wedding gifts as they arrive, and write thank you notes*
- *Attend final dress fittings*
- *Select a guest book*
- *Ask a friend to handle the guest book at the wedding*
- *Make arrangements for flowers and gown preservation*

1 week before your wedding day

- *Call guests who have not responded*
- *Double check with your wedding professionals*
- *Try out the hairstyle and makeup for your wedding day*
- *Plan a seating arrangement for the reception*
- *Prepare reception place cards*
- *Discuss ceremony seating with the best man*
- *Prepare and send wedding announcement to the paper*
- *Check to be sure you have all the details*
 - Ring pillow*
 - Cake knife and toasting goblets*
 - Favors for guests*
 - Flower petals or confetti for guests to throw*
 - Directions from church to reception*
- *Invite bridesmaids out for a luncheon*
- *Pack suitcases for honeymoon*
- *Confirm logistics of getting flowers to the preservation artist*

Day before your wedding

- *Have your hair and nails done*
- *Attend the rehearsal and dinner*
- *Get a good night's sleep*

Your wedding day

- *Have your hair and makeup done for the wedding*
- *Enjoy the anticipation and allow yourself plenty of time*
- *Make an entrance, say "I do" and enjoy this wonderful occasion*

After the honeymoon

- *Have your gown cleaned and readied for storage*
- *Finish your thank you notes*
- *Finalize photo album choices*

Responsibilities of the Maid of honor or Matron of honor

- *Help the bride organize her attendants, getting their dresses fitted and to the ceremony and reception on time*
- *May also assist with addressing invitations, shopping or making favors*
- *Pays for own attire, travel expenses and a wedding gift*
- *Attends all pre-wedding parties, she may throw a shower herself, often with other attendants.*
- *Holds the groom's ring during the ceremony. She may also arrange the bride's train at the altar and hold her flowers*
- *Witness the marriage certificate*
- *Is part of the receiving line and is seated in a place of honor at the reception*

Responsibilities of the Bridesmaids

- *Help with pre-wedding tasks such as addressing invitations or running errands*
- *Pay for own attire, travel expenses and a wedding gift*
- *Attend all pre-wedding parties, she may throw one with other attendants*

To help you get started organizing for your wedding...these two planning tools can make the process a lot easier...

- 1. A Planning Notebook*
- 2. A Card File for guests names, responses and gift information*

As you plan your wedding you'll find yourself referring to these two resources time and again. Once you have your notebook set up, you will want to keep it with you all the time so that you can add information whenever you receive it. The card file also is easily transportable. You probably want to take it with you when you sit down with your family or your fiancé's family to review guest responses and last minute follow-up calls.

Start with a big notebook with 2 1/2 to 3" rings.

Get at least enough tabs so that you can have a tab for each of the following (arrange alphabetically for easy access)

Accessories

*Attendants' Dresses
Attendants' Gifts
Bridal Registry
Ceremony
Favors
Flowers
Food and Caterers
Gowns
Groom's "stuff"
Guest List
Honeymoon Ideas
Invitations*

Legal

*Music
Newspaper Announcements
Photography
Reception Sites
Rentals
Stationery Items
Thank You Notes
Transportation
Valet Parking
Videography*

Add a three-hole punched 9"X12" envelope behind each tab. These envelopes are your keys to keeping all the brochures, magazine clippings, fabric swatches and odd-sized notes that you accumulate organized by category.

Put Several sheets of lined notebook paper behind the envelope in each tab with an extra supply of paper at the back of the notebook for fill-in as you need it for certain categories. You will want to use a separate piece of paper to keep notes from each person you talk to about a particular wedding item. For example, you might head one sheet for each bridal salon visited. You can take notes, staple the associate's card to the page, and keep all your thoughts organized. Brides who have gone through the process warn: don't trust your memory. Write everything down, including notes from lunch break calls.

Next add to the back of each section any items that you have saved that are large enough to be three-hole punched. This could include magazine pages, planning pages, flyers and other printed materials that you have saved from bridal shows and publications, etc. Now you are ready to plan your wedding. It's a big job, but if you go at it bit by bit, it will be totally enjoyable.