

Planning A Wedding Reception

When planning an event as complicated as a wedding, a plan or schedule is necessary. There is almost always a tendency to procrastinate in the early months of planning. We encourage you to stick to some sort of schedule so that the last few weeks before the wedding are hassle free. Get the terms of every service or sales agreement in writing so there is no room for possible misunderstandings.

12 Months Ahead

- Announce Engagement
- Decide on kind of wedding
- Decide time of day
- Decide location
- Set a date
- Set a budget
- Reserve a venue for the reception – club, hotel, hall etc...
- Hire an event or wedding coordinator
- Select bridal party
- Plan colour scheme
- Start compiling the guest list

Once you have selected a date, reserving a venue for the wedding and reception is one of the most important tasks that you will face while planning this special day. It is critical that a venue is selected which will suit the kind of wedding you chose, size of wedding and of course the budget.

Please keep in mind the peak season for weddings is between April and October and that most weddings take place on the weekend. The number of venues available during these times will be more limited than if you are planning a mid-week event in February, for example.

If you are planning on using a wedding coordinator you should involve them in all your decisions, including the selection of a venue. An experienced coordinator will have a list of venues to recommend and may save you a lot of valuable time and effort.

6 Months Ahead

- Select rental company
- Select caterer
- Select musicians
- Select florist
- Select photographer
- Start planning reception details

Most weddings occur during the peak season we have already mentioned. It is important to select the companies that will provide your professional services at this stage of your planning because there will be competition for those that offer the best products and services. Selecting professional companies to supply your wedding will be critical to its success. Do not be afraid to ask for references or a tour of a supplier's facility. By making educated choices at this stage you will find that quality suppliers/professionals will make the planning process flow smoothly and reduce stress as your big day approaches.

3 Months Ahead

- Complete Guest List

- Select and order invitations. Always provide an address for the reception. Do not assume that all your guests will know where XYZ Country Club is without providing an actual street address for the venue
- Finalize reception arrangements – At this point you will not have the exact number of guests attending the reception. When making rental arrangements we recommend reserving for the maximum number of guests, numbers can be reduced once the final RSVP's arrive
- Confirm date and time with caterer
- Confirm date and time with florist
- Confirm date and time with photographer
- Confirm date and time with musicians
- Discuss transportation to ceremony and reception
- Order cake

2 Months Ahead

- Mail all invitations to allow time for RSVP's
- Arrange for marriage license

One Month Ahead

- Plan rehearsal and rehearsal dinner. The rehearsal dinner should be relaxed with no need for written invitations.
- The rehearsal can take place in a private home, restaurant or club – but pick a location convenient for everyone attending. Normally the rehearsal dinner is organized one or two days before the wedding. If the rehearsal dinner is held in a private home then make arrangements for rentals and a caterer at this stage.
- Schedule bridesmaids luncheon or party
- Arrange placement of guest book

2 Weeks Ahead

- Finalize wedding day transportation
- Arrange transport of flowers or décor items from ceremony (church) to reception
- Confirm accommodations for guests

One Week Before The Wedding

- Finalize number of guests with rental company
- Finalize number of guests with the caterer
- Double check all details with those providing professional services (florist, photographer, videographer, etc..)
- Plan seating arrangements
- Confirm receipt of marriage license
- Rehearsal / rehearsal dinner

One Day Before The Wedding

- Arrange for rental items to arrive so set up can begin (if the venue will allow it).
- If you are having the wedding in a private home or under a tent, then you will want to take advantage of this option

Your Wedding Day

- Rental equipment arrives (if you don't have access to the facility till the day of the event)
 - If the catering staff is setting up the rental equipment for you, please make sure the rentals arrive before the catering staff
 - Caterers arrive
 - Florist arrives
 - Photographer arrives
 - The festivities begin - Congratulations!
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