

12 to 18 months ahead of the wedding

- Determine your budget and the type of wedding (formal, informal)
- Choose a location for the wedding (banquet hall, church, etc)
- Visit your officiate (church) or clergyman/woman with your fiancée
- Agree with your spouse-to-be and your family on your wedding date
- Plan and attend several bridal shows for ideas
- Choose your attendants (wedding party/guest list)
- Hire a wedding planner/coordinator, if you choose
- Write up a tentative invitation list, for number of guests
- Select your entertainment: band or disc jockey (DJ)
- Choose your location for the reception; call around compare prices and services
- Plan the reception. Most services will require a deposit
- Plan and agree upon the rehearsal site
- Pick your date, determine day or evening, color schemes, etc.
- Enroll with a bridal registry at your local department store
- Look for your dress, veil, accessories; allow time for alterations/fittings
- Call up and select the bridesmaids
- Select your bridesmaid's dresses
- The groom consults with a formal wear specialist
- Agree on a date to order bridesmaids' dresses
- Choose a beautiful place for your honeymoon
- Select photographer and/or videographer
- Select a florist or floral supplier, determine fresh or artificial flowers
- Shop for a caterer
- Apply for passports and/or acquire appropriate proof of citizenship if needed

Four to six months ahead of the wedding

- Shop for and order invitations, calligraphy, announcements & thank you notes
- Order napkins, matchbooks and personalized favors
- Plan accommodations for out-of-town guests
- Arrange for your rehearsal dinner
- Select a baker for your wedding cake. Decide the configuration of the cake(s)
- Make airline & hotel reservations for the honeymoon
- Fine tune the guest list
- Shop for and order wedding favors
- Draw a time line for the wedding reception
- Call the photographer to set up a time for the bridal portrait
- Book a limousine company for transportation on your wedding day
- Shop for a Party rental place and make reservations for any rentals
- Agree on a caterer, a florist and place an order for the wedding cake
- Share and discuss the reception timeline with all parties involved

Two to four months ahead of the wedding

- Address, stuff and seal wedding announcements
- Draw up a seating plan for invited guests
- If you're planning on a custom-made wedding cake top, order at this time
- Select music for your church service (if any)

- Choose and purchase gifts for your attendants (bridal party)
- Buy your wedding rings together
- Make a date to get your marriage license
- Make a map to the church and reception hall, for local and out-of-town guests
- Mail wedding announcement to guests living abroad

One to two months ahead of the wedding

- Buy wedding gift for your future spouse
- Make appointment with hairstylist, manicurist, etc.
- Have final dress fitting, bride and bridesmaids
- Groom verify all groomsmen have been fitted for their outfits
- Mail all other invitations
- Visit the photographer to have formal wedding portrait taken
- Pick up your wedding rings
- Confirm with all hired professionals correct dates and times
- Discuss with the officiate the specifics of the wedding ceremony
- Set a date and time for the rehearsal dinner
- Choose gifts for the groom and the attendants
- Make final alterations and fittings for the wedding gown
- Contact out of town guests and make necessary hotel reservations

Two weeks ahead of the wedding

- Send your wedding announcement and photo to local newspaper
- Review seating plan for reception
- Confirm your honeymoon arrangements
- Meet with DJ to select music and special events during the reception.
- Make reservations for bridesmaids' luncheon.
- Send reminders to the rehearsal dinner attendees about the location & time
- Fill out and submit application for the marriage license
- Finalize music list and no-play list with band or DJ
- Attend showers

One week ahead of the wedding

- Have final consultation with caterer and florist
- Write checks (or get cash) for hired professionals, give to best man to distribute
- Verify tickets and seating (if flying), make sure all travel documents are handy
- Start packing for your honeymoon - try to do most of it
- Discuss final details of the ceremony and reception with the pertinent parties
- Get final guest counts to necessary hired service professionals

The day before...

- Visit the beauty salon for manicure and pedicure
- Attend the rehearsal and dinner

- Make sure the ushers have the final guest list

The wedding day...

- Make sure you eat something
- Visit the beauty salon for hair styling & make-up (bring veil/headpiece)
- Make sure your wedding gown is pressed and steamed
- Bring a change of clothes if you are leaving for your honeymoon
- Try to relax... unwind yourself... and savor your special day