



The following checklist is provided as a basic guideline for wedding planning. Please feel free to modify this checklist to meet the specific needs of your ceremony. We welcome your ideas for future improvements to the checklist. Please contact Jclare Studios with your suggestions. Thank you!

Essential Wedding Checklist

The sudden rush of overwhelming excitement and anxiety begins. You want every single detail for your wedding to be perfect. Here's a timeline checklist for getting it all accomplished.

Immediately following the proposal / 12-18 months in advance:

- Set the date: _____
- Determine the type of wedding:
 - Church
 - Outdoor
 - Destination
 - Other: _____
- Determine the style of wedding:
 - Traditional
 - Formal
 - Casual
- Meet with Bride and Groom's Parents to discuss plans and financial contributions
- Determine the budget: _____
- Determine the number of guests to invite: _____
- Choose and secure a wedding site: _____
- Choose and secure a reception site: _____
- Select and book an Officiate: _____
- Order "Save the Date" Reminders
- Select your Wedding Party Attendants:

Maid/Matron of Honor: _____

Groomsmen: _____

Best Man: _____

Bridesmaids: _____

Ushers: _____

Flower Girl: _____

Ring Bearer: _____

- Start searching for a Wedding Gown.



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9 – 12 months in advance:

- Select Wedding color(s): _____

- Order your Wedding Gown
- Order your accessories (veil, shoes, garter, etc.)
- Order your bridesmaid dresses
- Create the guest list
- Send "Save the Date" reminders
- Book jclare studios – *the professional crew at jclare studios will accommodate your wishes, like taking the type and number of shots you want, attending both the ceremony and reception and providing the style of album you select.*
- Select a caterer and determine the menu
- Select a band or DJ for your reception

6-8 months in advance:

- Select a florist and choose floral arrangements
- Select a Wedding cake and baker
- Select ceremony music
- Register for wedding gifts
- Reserve party rental equipment
- Order Wedding invitations and announcements
- Determine accommodations for out-of-town guests
- Select and book Honeymoon



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3-5 months in advance:

- Address Wedding Invitations
- Finalize details with florist and caterer
- Confirm dates for delivery of dresses and schedule fittings:
Fitting Appointment: _____
Fitting Appointment: _____
- Purchase Wedding bands
- Reserve Groom's Tuxedo and Groomsmen's Attire
- Book the hotel room for your Wedding night
- Acquire passports if needed for your Honeymoon
- Confirm classes or counseling schedule if required by your church
- Prepare and submit your engagement announcement to area newspapers – *don't forget to send your jclare engagement photo along also.*

2 months in advance:

- Select ceremony readings and finalize vows
- Have final dress and tux fittings
- Purchase attendants gifts
- Order ceremony programs
- Confirm all arrangements with vendors
- Stamp and mail invitations
- Schedule ceremony rehearsal with family, attendants, and officiate
- Make reservations for rehearsal dinner



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1 month in advance:

- Pick up your Wedding gown
- Have jclare studios take your Wedding portrait
- Plan reception seating chart
- Coordinate wedding day details (schedule, transportation, and assign specific responsibilities)
- Supply request list to band or DJ
- Schedule hair, makeup, and manicure appointments
- Complete all forms to process your name change (bank accounts, Post Office, Social Security, credit cards, driver's license, etc.)

2 weeks before ceremony:

- Confirm all attire and accessories are ready
- Confirm rehearsal time/date with wedding party
- Prepare place cards for reception
- Prepare toasts for rehearsal dinner and reception
- Confirm Honeymoon reservations
- Address Wedding announcements (to be mailed on your Wedding day)
- Meet with jclare photographer to review shots for the day (preparation/dressing, ceremony, and reception)
- Prepare Wedding announcement for area newspapers



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1 week before ceremony:

- Submit final guest count to caterer for reception
- Have final conversations with vendors (officiate, DJ/Band, florist, caterer, equipment rentals)
- Pack for Honeymoon
- Have manicure and pedicure
- Create marked envelopes for officiate payment and vendor tips and give to best man
- Confirm beauty appointments for morning of Wedding

1 day before ceremony:

- Attend ceremony rehearsal and dinner
- Get a good night's rest for the big day
- Make sure passports, plane tickets, and travel itineraries are together in a safe place for Honeymoon
- Review the list of responsibilities with attendants: returning rented tuxedos, returning rented equipment, transporting Wedding gifts, mailing Wedding announcements, submitting Wedding announcement to area newspapers (along with jclare wedding portrait), paying vendors, etc.

Day of Wedding ceremony:

- Visit salon for hair and makeup
- Allow plenty of time to dress
- Make sure wedding certificate is signed by witnesses, officiant, bride, and groom
- Relax and enjoy the day. The jclare photography crew will be there to capture every special moment.



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The Ring

The perfect engagement ring is one that reflects the bride's sense of style. Remember, a bride wears this ring every day so it should be her absolute favorite piece of jewelry.

Whether the groom selects the ring himself or the bride chooses, there are many factors to consider.

The cut or shape of the gem stone is the top priority for most brides. Each person has a preference: brilliant (round), princess (square), emerald (rectangular), pear shaped, marquise, or the newly resurgent Asscher cut. White diamonds are the most popular gem for engagement rings, however, if you love colored stones, go for it – it's all about what the bride likes.

The second most important component is the metal choice. Platinum and white gold settings are more popular with brides these days than traditional yellow gold. However, statistics show that grooms still favor yellow gold when selecting engagement rings.

Another consideration is how your engagement ring will work with your wedding band. Ideally, both rings should be worn together, so consider the band shape when selecting your rings.

Finally, prices are determined by the type of metal used in the ring and size and quality of the stones. Your jeweler can help you determine the best value for your budget.

Tips for guys who want to select the perfect ring:

- 1) Look at her other jewelry pieces to determine her preferences. Is her jewelry elegant and traditional or does it make more of a statement. What metal does she most often select?
- 2) Ask her best friend or sister. They can help point you in the right direction.
- 3) Pick the ring that most reminds you of her. You'll know it when you see it.

The Wedding Party

Being selected as a member of the Wedding party is a great honor and with the honor comes varying levels of responsibility depending on the role each person will be undertaking.

Maid/Matron of Honor:

The Maid or Matron of Honor handles a great number of details for the bride and is very active in the wedding planning process. The Maid of Honor coordinates many things for the bride and wedding party to help reduce stress on the bride. Typically the Maid of Honor is a role filled by a sister or best friend. Maid of Honor duties include:

- Shopping for the wedding dress with the bride
- Hosting the bridal shower
- Organizing the bachelorette party
- Coordinating the bridal party gift for the bride
- Assisting in addressing invitations and announcements
- Making sure the bridesmaids are aware of dress fittings
- Assisting the bride with dressing for the ceremony
- Assisting the bride with her train and bouquet during the ceremony
- Holding the groom's ring during the ceremony
- Witnessing and signing the marriage certificate
- Helping the bride and groom depart for the Honeymoon
- Returning the wedding gown to the bride's home or to be cleaned

Best Man

The best man has numerous responsibilities to ensure the couple has a perfect wedding day, including:

- Planning the bachelor party
- Overseeing groomsmen to make sure they are on time and properly dressed
- Assisting the groom with dressing for the ceremony
- Holding the bride's wedding ring during the ceremony
- Delivering payments to the officiate, reception site, vendors, and handling other financial details
- Arranging transportation for the newlyweds following the ceremony
- Ensuring the groom has the marriage license, witnessing, and signing the certificate
- Issuing a toast at the reception
- Returning the groom's and groomsmen's tuxedos
- Dances with the Maid of Honor at the reception

Bridesmaids

In addition to walking in the wedding procession, bridesmaids may also take on specific responsibilities including:

- Assisting with wedding vendors
- Helping address invitations and announcements
- Attending and assisting with the bridal shower
- Attending the bachelorette party
- Providing assistance to the bride during the ceremony and reception



Groomsmen

Groomsmen are the counterparts to bridesmaids which have nearly identical roles. Additionally, groomsmen may also serve as ushers for guests arriving at the ceremony.

Flower Girl

Because flower girls are usually very young, their responsibilities are limited to caring a basket of flowers during the wedding processional and tossing petals along the path to mark to the bride's entrance.

Ring Bearer

The Ring Bearer is a very young boy chosen to carry a pillow with rings sewn on it during the processional. Many couples choose to have the Flower Girl and Ring Bearer walk together.

The Wedding Gown

As the most important garment women will ever wear, a bride's wedding gown is a reflection of her personal style.

Shopping for a wedding gown can be daunting. With thousands of styles and options, it can be hard for a bride to choose. To make it a bit easier, begin by looking through a few bridal magazines to determine the style and cut of dress you prefer. Perhaps you're partial to beading and sequens, or maybe you like a more understated style. Ball gown; mermaid; slip dress; a-line; cathedral train; when it comes to wedding gowns, the sky is the limit.

Set a reasonable budget before trying on the first dress. Remember, the price of the dress does not include the additional fees for tailoring and alterations which can add hundreds to the overall costs. You will also need to budget for your veil, shoes, accessories, underpinnings, and your departure outfit as well.

When shopping for your dress, it's customary to invite your maid of honor as well as your mother. The more people you involve in the process, the more confusing it can become. Limit this special time to those most important. Let everyone else be amazed when you walk down the aisle.

Your veil, shoes, and jewelry pieces can help convey your distinct style. Try on different veil lengths and styles until you find the one that fits both your dress and your personality. Though it may be just a piece of lace, a veil can make a bride feel and look like she is truly getting married.

Wedding Gown Checklist

Gown Option 1:

Store: _____
Designer or Label: _____
Style Number: _____
Size: _____
Color: _____
Dress Price: _____
Alteration Price: _____
Total Price: _____



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□Gown Option 2:

Store: _____
Designer or Label: _____
Style Number: _____
Size: _____
Color: _____
Dress Price: _____
Alteration Price: _____
Total Price: _____

□Gown Option 3:

Store: _____
Designer or Label: _____
Style Number: _____
Size: _____
Color: _____
Dress Price: _____
Alteration Price: _____
Total Price: _____

Gown Selected: _____
Initial Fitting Date: _____
Final Fitting Date: _____

The Bridal Shower

Who should host the shower?

Typically, the bridal shower is hosted by the maid of honor. Brides may receive more than one shower (bride's friends and family, groom's friends and family, church and/or work) depending on each situation.

Who should be invited?

The bride, bridesmaids, friends of the bride, the mother of the bride, future mother-in-law, future sisters-in-law, other relatives, and close family friends should be invited. Not everyone invited to the wedding needs a shower invitation.

When should the shower take place?

Most bridal showers occur during the month preceding the ceremony.

Where is the best place for the shower?

A friend's home, a boutique bed and breakfast, or banquet room at a local hotel is a great choice for a bridal shower. You want the bride and her friends to be comfortable in their surroundings, so select the location based on the bride's tastes.

The bridal shower decorations should feature the colors and flowers to be used in the wedding.



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The Flowers

One of the most beautiful and noticeable parts of the wedding are the floral arrangements. The right choice of flowers can add a special touch to your perfect day. The wrong choice of flowers can distract from the occasion. To help ensure your wedding flowers complement your wedding décor, follow these tips:

- Consult a friend who recently tied the knot to learn the scoop on which florist has the best price or does the best work.
- Ask the staff of the reception hall or ceremony site. They deal with florists regularly and can be a valuable resource.
- Ask to see the florist's portfolio. If the florist is a professional, he/she should have a photo portfolio of past wedding arrangements. Some florist may even offer to design a sample bouquet for your consideration.
- Be prepared. When visiting florists, bring a photo of your wedding gown and a photo of your bridesmaid's dresses (a sample of the fabric color is best). This will be a great help in selecting flowers to coordinate. Also, know exactly how many bouquets, boutonnieres, coursages, and floral arrangements you'll need. Ask for an itemized estimate so there's no surprises on your final bill.
- Ask about using in-season flowers. This can be a great money saver. Using flowers that are in season and readily available in your area will help you stay within budget.
- Understand the delivery arrangements before you sign the contract. Make sure you know if the florist will move the arrangements from the wedding location and rearrange them at the reception or if you'll need to have someone else take care of that task.

The Invitations & Announcements

Your wedding invitation sets the tone for the style of your ceremony. From the paper weight, wording, and color of the invitations, your guests will gain clues to the type of event you'll be hosting.

Traditionally, wedding invitations are issued by those hosting the event (financially responsible for the wedding). In the past, the bride's parents primarily issued the invitations. Today, many couples elect to pay for the wedding themselves and therefore, issue the invitations. No matter who issues the invitation, it should always be written in third person.

Here are some sample invitation phrases depending on the issuing party:

Bride's Parents Host:

Mr. & Mrs. John Doe
request the honor of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Katherine Elizabeth Doe to
Mr. John David Smith
son of
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Smith



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Both Families Host:

Mr. & Mrs. John Doe
and Mr. & Mrs. Robert Smith
request the honor of your presence
at the marriage of
Katherine Elizabeth Doe to
Mr. John David Smith

Bride & Groom Host:

The honor of your presence is request
at the wedding of
Katherine Elizabeth Doe to
Mr. John David Smith

Invitations should include the location, day, and time of the ceremony along with reception information and R.S.V.P. requests if required.

Envelopes should be hand addressed or professionally calligraphed. Mailing labels or typewritten envelopes are not used in a formal wedding. In most cases, the invitation is inserted within an inner envelope. On the interior envelope you may write the informal names of recipients (Aunt Lucy, Uncle Stan, etc.) This inner envelope is then placed within the larger mailing envelope. On the outer envelope, only use formal names of the recipients.

Don't use abbreviations except for Mr., Mrs. or Ms. The word Doctor should always be written out. For attorneys, Esq. follows the individual's name. For unmarried couples, list each person individually.

R.S.V.P. cards and envelopes may also be included in the invitation to ensure your guests reply.

Wedding announcements are traditionally sent following the ceremony. These cards are customarily single panel cards announcing the couple's marriage. Modern announcement cards can include photos of the happy couple, swatches of color, and interesting finishes. Formal, hand-addressed envelopes are still a must.

The Groom

From selecting the ring to planning the honeymoon, the groom handles many details of the wedding planning. Some prospective grooms want to be involved in the selection of colors, flowers, and invitations, while others allow their brides-to-be to handle these selections.

Whether your groom is hands-on or not, there are some tasks he can certainly handle:

- Selecting the best man and the groomsmen
- Finding a band or DJ for the reception
- Scouting locations for the wedding and reception
- Assisting with equipment rental and arranging returns as needed
- Selecting a tux that coordinates with the wedding gown (based on your suggestions)
- Choosing the first dance
- Planning the Honeymoon
- Arranging the limo or car service from the house to the ceremony and on to the reception

Allow your groom to be as involved as he'd like to be. After all, this is his big day too!

The Parents

Traditionally, parents of the bride-to-be and prospective groom had certain responsibilities. The bride's parents paid for the ceremony and the groom's parents hosted the rehearsal dinner. .

Today, as the marrying age increases, more couples are financially able to pay for their own ceremony and reception. The couple's parents can still contribute toward the wedding expenses as they wish.

Parents of the Bride

The bride's parents may be responsible for hosting the wedding, if they will be completely financially responsible for the event. The father of the bride escorts his daughter down the aisle. The bride may elect to have both parents escort her if she wishes. The mother of the bride may assist with the bridal shower. The bride's parents may also host an engagement party or dinner to meet the groom's family.

The mother of the bride is the second most important women at the wedding ceremony. Her attire should complement the bride's gown and bridesmaid dresses without competing or clashing. The mother of the bride may wear a suit or formal dress depending on her preference, but final approval of the mother's dress should be given by the bride.

Parents of the Groom

The groom's parents traditionally host the rehearsal dinner. They may also choose to contribute toward the wedding if they wish. Traditionally, the groom's parents are not as active in the wedding planning process, but may be involved as much as the bride and groom wishes. The groom's mother should confer with the bride's mother regarding their dresses to avoid wearing the same shade. The groom's parents traditionally walk down the aisle immediately preceding the procession to take their seats.



Engagement Announcement Form

Include this info in your engagement announcement when submitting to area newspapers along with your engagement photo from jclare studios.

Your Name: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Name of Bride's Parents: _____ of

City, State: _____,

announce the engagement and approaching marriage of their daughter

Bride's Full Name: _____ to

Groom's Full Name: _____ son of

Groom's Parent's Names: _____ of

City, State: _____.

The bride-elect is the granddaughter of

Bride's Maternal grandparents: _____ of

City, State: _____ and

Bride's Paternal grandparents: _____ of

City, State: _____

She is a graduate of

College/University: _____

and is currently employed at

Employer: _____

The prospective groom is the grandson of

Groom's Maternal grandparents: _____ of

City, State: _____ and

Groom's Paternal grandparents: _____ of

City, State: _____

He is a graduate of

College/University: _____

and is currently employed at

Employer: _____

The wedding is planned for

Time: _____ Day: _____ Date: _____ at

Location: _____ in

City, State: _____

The wedding is by invitation only OR friends and family are invited to attend.



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Wedding Announcement

Submit the following information along with your jclare wedding portrait to area newspapers following the ceremony.

Your Name: _____
Home Phone: _____
Work Phone: _____

Bride's Full Name: _____ and
Groom's Full Name: _____ were united in marriage on
Date: _____ at Time: _____ at
Location (church, etc.) _____ in
City, State: _____

Officiate: _____ officiated the ceremony.

The bride is the daughter of
Parents: _____ of
City, State: _____ and
the granddaughter of
Bride's Maternal grandparents: _____ of
City, State: _____ and
Bride's Paternal grandparents: _____ of
City, State: _____

The groom is the son of
Parents: _____ of
City, State: _____ and
the grandson of
Groom's Maternal grandparents: _____ of
City, State: _____ and
Groom's Paternal grandparents: _____ of
City, State: _____

The bride was attended by:
Maid of Honor: _____ and
Bridesmaids: _____ (list names and city,state).
The bride wore a gown of : _____
_____ and
Carried a bouquet of : _____.
The bridesmaids wore gowns of: _____
and carried bouquets of: _____.



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The best man was: _____ and

_____ (list names and city, state)
served as groomsmen.

The reception was held at: _____.

Following their honeymoon trip to: _____,
the couple will reside in _____ (city, state).