



YOUR ULTIMATE WEDDING DAY CHECKLIST



YOU'VE SAID YES! NOW IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE IT.

Whether you're hosting a cozy backyard ceremony, a sunlit gathering under the redwoods, or an intimate celebration surrounded by your favorite people, this guide was created to help you plan it all.

Inside, you'll find a timeline of what to do and when, plus gentle reminders to breathe, let go, and focus on what this day is really about: marrying your person.

This isn't about perfection. It's about intention. Because the best moments are the ones that unfold naturally, surrounded by love, laughter, and a touch of chaos that makes it uniquely yours.



12+ MONTHS BEFORE

BUDGET, GUEST LIST & VENUE

- Set your budget
- Figure out how much you can save per month
- Break down budget by costs and research averages
- Compile guest list
- Check with parents to make sure you got all family (if applicable)
- Gather addresses
- Research and visit venues
- Reach out for pricing
- Schedule venue tours and meetings
- Sign venue contract & pay deposit
- Start organizing vendor info in Google Sheets or a wedding planning folder
- Choose your wedding party
- Buy and give wedding party proposal gifts
- Book key vendors (Photographer, DJ, Videographer, Officiant, Day-of-Coordinator)



10-11 MONTHS BEFORE

BOOKING VENDORS & WEBSITE SETUP

- Continue booking remaining major vendors:
 1. Florist
 2. Hair & makeup
 3. Transportation
 4. Lighting
 5. Photo booth
 6. Food truck (if applicable)
- Sign contracts and pay deposits for each
- Book engagement session with photographer
- Take engagement photos
- Create and launch your wedding website
- Write your story and bios (include photos!)
- Add engagement photos, hotel info, FAQ
- Begin gown shopping
- Research honeymoon destinations and passport renewals if needed



8-9 MONTHS BEFORE

SAVE THE DATES, ATTIRE & HOTELS

- Design and order save-the-dates
- Print, address, and mail save-the-dates
- Research hotel blocks and book accommodations for guests
- Start bridesmaid and groomsmen attire planning
- Shop for bridal accessories and shoes
- Start researching dance lessons
- Draft ceremony readings and choose readers
- Begin DIY planning (logos, monograms, signage concepts)



6-7 MONTHS BEFORE

FOOD, CAKE & DECOR PLANNING

- Cake tasting + finalize design
- Finalize catering/menu tasting with venue
- Research and plan décor or DIY projects (programs, signs, lanterns, favors)
- Create a music list for DJ or band
- Book honeymoon flights and hotel (watch prices!)
- Begin rehearsal dinner planning and booking
- Schedule gown alterations
- Book dance lessons and start practicing



5 MONTHS BEFORE

INVITATIONS & DETAILS

- Design and order invitations
- Buy stamps, address, and mail invitations
- Track RSVPs as they arrive
- Finalize florist details (bouquet, boutonniere, corsage, etc.)
- Start working on ceremony details (unity glass, vow books, etc.)
- Order guest book and signage materials
- Finalize makeup/hair trial date
- Begin DIY elements (card box, signage, paper flowers, etc.)



4 MONTHS BEFORE

ATTIRE FINALIZATION & VENDOR CHECK INS

- Confirm attire for wedding party and family
- Choose groomsmen gifts, bridesmaid gifts, and family gifts
- Book hotel for photographers (if needed)
- Review song choices with DJ
- Confirm transportation details and finalize shuttles
- Begin honeymoon itinerary planning



3 MONTHS BEFORE

FINALIZING TIMELINE & DECOR

- Finalize seating chart rough draft
- Meet with day-of coordinator for venue walkthrough
- Create vendor contact list and payment schedule
- Design menus, table numbers, and place cards
- Finalize DIY signage and décor
- Finalize rehearsal dinner menu
- Apply for marriage license (valid for 6 months)
- Confirm ceremony details and readings



2 MONTHS BEFORE

PAYMENTS, FINAL TOUCHES & BEAUTY PREP

- Pay 50% venue balance
- Confirm all vendor contracts and payment due dates
- Create gratuity envelopes for vendors
- Finalize wedding timeline
- Send vendor timelines and contact lists
- Start final fittings for dress and suit/tux
- Schedule beauty appointments (nails, brows, hair color touch-ups)
- Buy or make favors
- Prepare welcome baskets for guests



1 MONTH BEFORE

FINAL CONFIRMATIONS

- Final venue meeting to confirm linens, menu, and layout
- Provide final headcount to venue and caterer
- Review and finalize music choices
- Finalize vows and print in vow books
- Organize wedding day items (rings, unity items, signage, etc.)
- Check honeymoon details (flights, hotel, excursions, packing list)



WEEK OF WEDDING

PACK, PREP & RELAX!

- Pack all wedding day items and attire
- Organize gratuity envelopes
- Double-check ceremony and reception décor boxes
- Get nails, hair, and brows done
- Review timeline with coordinator
- Confirm vendor arrival times
- Drop off items at venue if allowed
- Enjoy your rehearsal dinner!



WEDDING DAY

MORNING OF

Eat breakfast & drink water, even just a few bites helps!
Have all details ready for your photographer (rings, invites, perfume, etc.)
Schedule enough time for getting ready & travel

CEREMONY

Pause before walking down the aisle, take it in!
Make eye contact during vows, hold hands and don't lock your knees
Hug your people tight, you did it!

RECEPTION

Sneak away for sunset portraits
Actually eat your dinner!
Dance, laugh, be fully present



AFTER “I DO”

WRAP UP & GRATITUDE

- Pay any remaining vendor balances (food truck, trolley, etc.)
- Send thank-you notes
- Order prints, albums, and keepsakes from photographer
- Leave reviews for vendors
- Enjoy your honeymoon and married life!



WHILE YOU'RE HERE, TAKE A DEEP BREATH.

You're doing this. You're planning something beautiful, intentional, and completely your own.

And if you're still searching for a photographer who feels like a calm presence in the chaos, I'd love to be part of your day.

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