

Details

Checklist: Planning for a perfect day

The success of any wedding rests in the planning. With all the details that go into that special day, most brides find it necessary to keep months of planning perspective with tentative deadlines for certain tasks to be completed to help ensure that everything falls into place. The groom has responsibilities to take care of, too, during those months before the big day. These checklists were inspired by Bride's and Modern Bride magazines.

For the bride

Nine to 12 months before the wedding:

- Decide on a day, time, size and type of wedding.
- Reserve the church or ceremony location and reception hall.
- Set a tentative budget and decide how expenses will be shared.
- Talk to your clergyman or officiant.

- Purchase the rings.
- Reserve a photographer and/or videotaping company.
- Select the wedding gown.
- Begin planning the honeymoon.
- Select a caterer.
- Select a florist.
- Book the musicians and decide on the music.

Six to nine months before the wedding:

- Choose a color scheme for the wedding.
- Announce your engagement in the newspaper.
- Choose your attendants.
- Begin a guest list.
- Start looking for an apartment or house.
- Sign up with bridal registries.
- Begin shopping for men's attire and reserving correct sizes.
- Order your bridesmaids' attire or arrange to have dresses made.

Four to six months before the wedding:

- Finalize the guest list.
- Order wedding invitations, announcements and stationery.
- Check blood test and marriage license requirements.
- Begin shopping for your trousseau.
- Shop for the mothers' wedding attire.
- Arrange for attendants' fittings.
- Finalize all details of the reception.
- Make your honeymoon reservations.
- Sign a lease on your new residence.
- Order the wedding cake, groom's cake and mints.

Two to three months before the wedding:

- Begin addressing invitations.
- Reserve rental equipment, if any.
- Arrange for the wedding portrait to

- be taken at your final fitting.
- Plan rehearsal, rehearsal dinner and attendants' parties.
- Buy presents for the groom and wedding participants.

One month before the wedding:

- Apply for a marriage license.
- Finalize orders on flowers for the wedding and reception.
- Shop for shoes.
- Decide on jewelry.
- Finish addressing and mailing invitations four weeks before the wedding.
- Get blood tests and marriage license.
- Have final fittings for members of the wedding party.
- Go for final gown fitting and formal wedding portrait.
- Plan bachelor party and bridesmaids' party.
- Make hotel reservations and lodging arrangements for out-of-town guests.
- Arrange transportation for the bridal party.
- Purchase going-away outfit.
- Send wedding announcement and bridal portrait to your local paper.
- Look into new insurance coverage or make necessary policy changes.

Two weeks before the wedding:

- Address announcements to be mailed on your wedding day.
- Confirm the final guest list with the caterer.
- Decide on seating arrangement for the reception. Write place cards.
- Try on your wedding gown and veil with wedding hairdo and makeup.
- If you are taking your husband's name, change your name and address on all credit cards, charge accounts, bank accounts and important documents.
- Notify the post office of your new

- address.
- Set your new home in order.
- Confirm honeymoon reservations.

One week before the wedding:

- Finalize all details with caterer, musicians, florist, baker, photographer and limousine service.
- Tell your attendants the date and time of the rehearsal and dinner.
- Inform the best man and matron of honor of any special responsibilities.
- Check to see that attendants' wedding attire is satisfactory.
- Prepare the wedding announcements for mailing on wedding day.
- Start packing for your honeymoon.
- Have the bachelor and bridesmaids parties.

On your wedding day:

- Give the best man the officiant's fee for delivery after the ceremony.
- Remember to bring the wedding rings and the marriage license to the ceremony with you.
- Relax and enjoy.

For the groom:

Six months before the wedding:

- Pick up the bride's engagement ring from the jewelry store.
- Arrange a visit with clergy member, justice of the peace or judge to discuss the ceremony.
- Discuss with the bride how many ushers you'll need and select them.
- Discuss honeymoon plans with the bride. Consult a travel agent for ideas.
- If you will be traveling abroad, update your passport, arrange for visas and international drivers license, if needed, and check on inoculations.
- Visit wedding gift registry with the bride.

Three months before the wedding:

- Complete the guest list. Give it to the bride.
- Arrange transportation for the wedding party to the ceremony and reception.
- Complete honeymoon plans. Buy tickets.
- Arrange to pay for the bride's bouquet, boutonnieres for the men in the wedding party and corsages for the mothers if desired.
- Buy presents for the bride and wedding participants.

One month before the wedding:

- Consult with the bride to arrange lodging for relatives and ushers from out of town.
- Select gifts for the groomsmen.
- Make sure all necessary documents—legal, medical and religious—are in order.
- Check on arrangements for the bachelor party, if you are giving it.
- Pick up wedding ring for engraving.
- Help bride with wedding announcements and thank-you notes.
- Arrange with the best man for transportation from the reception to the airport or wherever you plan to leave on your honeymoon.
- Double-check honeymoon reservations.

One week before the wedding:

- Explain any special seating arrangements for family or disabled guests to the head usher.
- Put the officiant's fee in an envelope and give it to the best man, who will deliver it after the ceremony.
- Get your going-away clothes ready, so you can change after the reception.
- Pack for your honeymoon.
- Remind the best man and ushers of the rehearsal and rehearsal dinner details.
- Present gifts to attendants.

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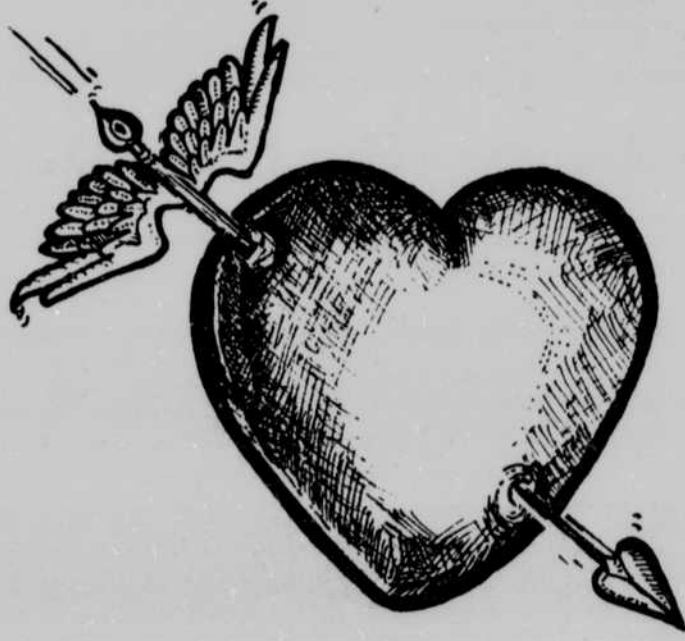
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