



Twelve+ Month Wedding Planning Checklist

12+ Months Before

1. Announce your engagement.
2. Arrange for both sets of parents to meet, unless they already have.
3. Envision your wedding and draw up a budget.
4. Interview and hire a wedding planner/consultant if you are using one.
5. Decide on the style of wedding you want (formal, informal, etc.)
6. Pick a wedding date and time. Select several options, then check with your venues, officiant, and important guests before finalizing.
7. Start planning the guest list.
8. Determine whom you want to have in your wedding party. Make calls and get their acceptances.
9. Select and book a reception location, caterer (if not included with the reception location, and a location for the ceremony.
10. Interview all your wedding professionals and make your selections:
 - Caterer/Bartender
 - Photographers
 - Videographers
 - Florists



- Musicians/DJ/Live Band
 - Bakery
 - Stationary
 - Wedding Dress Boutique
 - Men's Tux/Suits
 - Rings
 - Bridal Party Attire
 - Hair & Make-up Artists
 - Rentals
 - a. Tents
 - b. Chairs
 - c. Linens
 - d. Décor (ceremony arch, lighting, specialty items, etc.)
 - Officiant
 - Transportation company
 - Hotel Room Blocks
11. Make arrangements with the person that will be officiating your wedding.
12. Book the Church or other location where your ceremony will be held.
13. Make reservations for vehicles (ex. limo, carriage, party bus, etc.)
14. Select your wedding gown or tux/suit, accessories, and associated events clothing.
- Set a schedule with the shop(s) for subsequent fittings and pick up.



15. Remember to select shoes for the reception (ballet flats, sandals, sneakers, etc.)
16. Decide at which local hotel you want to book a block of rooms for your out-of-town guests (Note: Most hotels will block no more than 12 months in advance).
17. Optional: Have an engagement party. You may want to register beforehand for gifts.

10+ Months Before

1. Confirm with the members of your wedding party.
2. Have engagement photos taken.
3. Purchase and mail “Save the Date” cards to those guests on your primary list. This is a particularly good idea if you’re marrying during a tourist/holiday season or having a destination wedding.
4. Go for genetic testing if needed (note: This is not a requirement in Wisconsin).
5. Register at several stores, choosing items in a broad range of prices.
6. Start a list for gifts received and thank you notes sent.
7. Create a personal wedding website.
8. Research a wedding/event insurance policy to protect your deposits.

8+ Months Before

1. Order rentals (ex. tents, chairs, lighting, linens, dance floor, etc.)
2. Order bridesmaid’s dresses and/or groomsmen’s tuxes or suits.
3. Book ceremony musicians.



4. Shop for and order invitations, wedding announcements, programs, and other printed materials.
5. Select and order wedding bands.
6. Start planning honeymoon.

6+ Months Before

1. Attend pre-wedding counseling, if required.
2. Renew or get passports, if necessary.
3. Envision your wedding cake and research, interview, and book a baker/cake designer.
4. Meet with caterer to set the menu.
5. Purchase other wedding related items (ex. ring bearer pillow, flower girl basket, guest book, unity candle, sand/plant ceremony items, ketubah/chuppah for Jewish ceremony etc.)

3+ Months Before

1. Make your final guest list.
2. Hire a calligrapher, if you want your invitations professionally addressed.
3. Attend your bridal/groom shower. (It may be earlier, depending on when hosts decide to have it.)
4. Select guests for honors (ex. toasts, speeches, blessings/prayers, etc.)



5. Mail your invitations. If you are doing two rounds of invitations, then mail your first round earlier (4-5 months before), so you have time (3) three months before to send out the second round.

2+ Months Before

1. Write your vows if doing so.
2. Purchase gifts for parents, attendants, and each other.
3. Book your hair stylist and make-up artist trial run appointments as appropriate.
4. Confirm menu with caterer.
5. Confirm details with other wedding professionals (ex. florist/floral designer, photographer, videographer, band/DJ, etc.)
6. Get blood tests where required (note: This is not a requirement in Wisconsin).
7. Create ceremony order of procession/recession/pick out music and other ceremony items as needed.

1+ Month Before

1. Apply for a marriage license. Check with the local county clerk's office where you'll wed.
2. Create wedding day schedule of events.
3. Bride/Groom: Have final gown/tux/suit fitting. Bring your maid/matron of honor along to learn how to bustle your dress if needed. Have the dress/tux/suit pressed and bring it home.



4. Confirm with bridesmaids & groomsmen. Make sure they have their gowns/tuxes/suits and other items ready for the wedding.
5. Make last-minute adjustments with vendors.
6. Create & print a wedding program to hand out to guests.
7. Order and plan in-room welcome bags and/or welcome letters for out-of-town guests.
8. Mail/Email rehearsal dinner invitations if you're doing invites for this. If not, ensure each person that's invited to rehearsal and dinner knows the location and time.

2 +Weeks Before

1. Review final RSVP list and call any guests who have not yet sent a response.
2. Deliver must-have shot lists to photographer and videographer. Include who should be in formal portraits and determine when portraits will be taken.
3. Deliver final song list to your DJ or bandleader. Include special song requests and songs you don't want played.
4. Bride/Groom: Get your last pre-wedding haircut and color.
5. Bride/Groom: Get a "test" manicure and/or pedicure, and/or other beauty services. Then schedule each service for the day before or on your wedding day.

1 +Week Before

1. Give reception site/caterer final guest head count. Include vendors, such as the photographer, videographer, band members, DJ, who may want a meal. Ask how



many extra plates the caterer will prepare for very last-minute additions. (NOTE: this may need to occur at the two-week timeframe depending on the caterer).

2. Supply reception location manager with a list of vendor requests such as a table for DJ or setup space needed by florist.
3. Plan reception seating chart.
4. Print place and/or escort cards, or finalize list with the calligrapher you have hired to do so. (NOTE: While both Place and Escort Cards annotate meal selection, PLACE CARDS are more formal and annotate the particular place setting/chair at a table where a guest will be seated. ESCORT CARDS will direct guests to an assigned table. If there are no PLACE CARDS at the assigned table, the guest is free to select their particular place setting/chair).
5. Call all wedding vendors and confirm arrangements.
6. Give ceremony and reception site managers a schedule of vendor delivery and setup times, plus contact numbers.

2-3 Days Before

1. Bride: If you need to, have your gown pressed or steamed.
2. Groom: Go for final fitting and pick up your formalwear.
3. Groom: Ask the best man to make sure all groomsmen attend fittings and pick up their formalwear.



4. Hand off place cards, table number cards, menus, favors, and any other personal décor items to your day of coordinator or friend/family member that will take care of this.
5. Reconfirm final details with all vendors. Discuss any necessary last-minute substitutions.
6. Finalize limousine or bus company schedule for pickup times and locations.
7. Deliver welcome bags and/or welcome letters to the hotel concierge; make sure to include names and delivery instructions.

Day Before

1. Provide all wedding professionals with an emergency phone number to call on the day of the wedding. This would be your wedding planner/coordinator if you're using one.
2. Write checks and/or talk to wedding hosts (usually your parents, if not you) about any final balances to be paid at the end of the reception.

Night Before

1. Rehearse ceremony. Meet with wedding party, ceremony readers, immediate family, and your officiant at the ceremony site to rehearse and iron out details.
2. Bring unity candle, aisle runner, yarmulkes, ketubah or other ceremony accessories to your wedding planner or other person that will be responsible for bringing these the next day.
3. Give your marriage license to your officiant.



4. Attend rehearsal dinner.
5. Present attendants with gifts at the rehearsal dinner. You'll want to do this especially if the gifts are accessories to be worn during the wedding.

Day Of

1. Present parents and each other with gifts if not done the night prior.
2. Give wedding bands to the best man and/or the maid/matron of honor to hold during the ceremony.
3. Give best man or wedding planner the officiant's fee envelope (or other vendors fees), to be handed off after the ceremony.
4. Introduce your reception site manager to your wedding planner or maid of honor for questions or problems during the reception (Note: most wedding planners will introduce themselves prior to the day of)
5. Assign a family member or attendant to be the photographer's contact so s/he knows who is who.

Post Wedding

1. Prearrange for someone to return any rentals (florist centerpieces/décor, bakery display items, etc.) and/or donate floral to a local assisted living or other charity or non-profit that will take floral donations.
2. Preplan for attendants to take the bride's gown for cleaning and return the groom's tux/suit to the rental shop if needed.



3. Write and send thank-you notes to gift-bearing guests and vendors who were especially helpful (this can also be done as soon as possible after the honeymoon).
4. Go on your honeymoon.
5. Enjoy your happily-ever-after!