

HELPFUL HINTS FOR YOUR WEDDING DAY

Six To Twelve Months Before Your Wedding

- *Announce engagement. Use formal printed announcements and/or the newspaper.*
- *Select a wedding date and time.*
- *Choose size and style of wedding-formal, informal, special theme.*
- *Set a preliminary budget.*
- *Schedule a meeting with both sets of parents to openly discuss wedding expectations, costs, and responsibilities.*
- *Hire wedding consultant if you plan to use one.*
- *Buy a wedding planner or a notebook to remain organized and record decisions.*
- *Invite attendants to be in your wedding.*
- *Reserve the ceremony location.*
- *Choose the officiant for the ceremony.*
- *Reserve the reception site. Find out what services are included or available.*
- *Interview caterers, florists, photographers, videographers, musicians, etc. Be sure to taste food options, see the work of florists, photographers and videographers. Listen to or watch tapes of musicians. Ask for references and discuss deposit requirements and the cancellation policy. Hire as soon as possible.*
- *Create a preliminary guest list, including addresses. Ask all parents to do the same. Include the relationship (friend, uncle), this helps if the list needs to be shortened.*
- *Begin planning the wedding ceremony and reception.*
- *Write out directions and or a map to be included on a separate card with invitation.*
- *Shop for a wedding gown and accessories. Order your dress at least 6-8 months in advance.*
- *Choose and order attire and accessories for bridesmaids. Keep in mind the time of year and style of wedding.*
- *Start planning the honeymoon. If you are leaving the country, make sure your passport is up to date and verify any visa requirements.*
- *Register for wedding gifts.*
- *Develop a system for recording gifts as they arrive and for recording when you wrote the thank-you note.*

Three To Six Months Before Your Wedding

- *Finalize guest list. Write each guest's name and address on an index card and use these to track responses.*
- *Order wedding and reception invitations, response cards, place cards, announcements, thank you notes, informals, at home cards, hold the date cards and accessories. Always order extra invitations and envelopes to allow for addressing mistakes and surprise guests. It is less expensive to order extras from the start.*
- *Send out Hold the Date Cards so your guests can reserve your special day on their calendar.*
- *Address invitations and announcements as soon as possible.*
- *Arrange to have someone mail the wedding announcements the day of the wedding.*
- *Start making final decisions and arrangements for the ceremony and reception, including food, music, flowers and any rental equipment.*
- *Sign contracts and place deposits with caterer, photographer, videographer, florist, musicians and other service providers if you have not already done so.*
- *Plan rehearsal dinner. Time, menu and guest list.*
- *Arrange for wedding day transportation for important guests and wedding party.*
- *Reserve a block of hotel rooms for out-of-town members of the wedding party and guests. It is nice to provide a list of local restaurants and attractions.*



- Order wedding rings and make arrangements for engraving.
- Have both mothers select their wedding attire.
- Confirm the delivery date for the wedding gown and bridesmaids dresses. Schedule fittings.
- Choose and order formal wear for groomsmen. Remind men to submit their measurements to your formal wear provider.
- Finalize honeymoon plans.
- Shop for trousseau and special attire for parties, showers and honeymoon.
- Write thank-you notes as gifts are received. If you are using preprinted thank you notes to immediately acknowledge that a gift was received, be sure to send a hand written thank you on your informal notes within two months after the wedding.

One Week Before Your Wedding

- Verify final details with all service providers. Inform them of any changes.
- Finalize the guest count, making necessary changes to seating chart.
- Confirm transportation for the wedding party.
- Confirm that the photographer understands the list of pictures you have requested.
- Confirm that the videographer understands your specific requests.
- Verify that all wedding attire has been picked up and fits.
- Confirm that all attendants know when to arrive at the rehearsal, rehearsal dinner, and the wedding ceremony. Confirm that all attendants have a copy of the wedding schedule you created.
- Pack for your honeymoon.
- Stop mail and newspapers during honeymoon.
- Pay bills that will be due while you are away.
- Continue to write thank you notes, if possible.
- Pick up your marriage license.

The Wedding Day

- Be sure that both of you eat something.
- Try to relax and enjoy the day. If anything goes differently than planned, chances are you are the only ones who will notice.

ETIQUETTE QUESTIONS

Other than friends, the groom's family and my family, who should receive wedding invitations?

Send invitations to the members of the wedding party and their parents. It is also appropriate to include the officiant and his/her spouse. All children over the age of sixteen should receive their own invitation. Plan to order an additional twenty-five invitations to allow for the unexpected. It is less expensive to buy extras now.

Should I have a return address printed on the back flap of the invitation's outer envelope?

Yes! The U.S. Postal Service suggests that all first-class mail have a return address. It gives the wedding guest an address to which to send a reply (if you don't use reply cards) or a gift. Also, it ensures that you will know if the invitation does not reach its destination as it will be returned to the sender.

Is it acceptable to send gift registry cards with the invitation?

It is not proper to include with your wedding invitation any card that mentions gifts you expect to receive. Let friends and family spread the word on where you are registered.

My fiancé and I have had several showers and other parties given in our honor. Therefore, some friends have given us more than one gift. Can we write one thank you note to cover both gifts, or does each gift require a separate note?

Gifts given at separate parties require separate thank you notes. If you use preprinted thank you notes to immediately acknowledge that a gift was received, always follow up with a hand written note to the gift giver. These notes should be written no later than two months after the wedding.

How do you address the outer envelope of an invitation to a married couple if the woman has kept her maiden name?

If the woman kept her name, address the envelope with both names on the same line if space permits:

Mr. William Greenberg and Ms. Laura Vargas

28 Brookview Avenue

For an invitation to an unmarried couple living together, list their names alphabetically on separate lines without "and":

Mr. William Greenberg

Ms. Laura Vargas

28 Brookview Avenue

WEDDING EXPENSES

The expenses listed below are divided according to tradition. There may be variations due to local customs or special circumstances.

Bride (or her family)

- *Wedding invitations (including Response Cards, Reception Cards etc.), all stationery and announcements.*
- *Wedding consultant*
- *Wedding cake*
- *Wedding gown, accessories and trousseau*
- *Engagement and wedding photographs*
- *Ceremony expenses (excluding officiant's fee)*
- *Reception expenses*
- *Flowers for ceremony, reception and brides attendants*
- *Transportation of wedding party to ceremony and reception site*
- *Lodging for out-of-town bridal attendants*
- *Groom's ring*
- *Gifts for bride's attendants and groom*
- *Bridal luncheon (optional)*

Groom (or his family)

- *Bride's engagement and wedding rings*
- *Personal wedding attire and traveling expenses*
- *Marriage license*
- *Officiant's fee*
- *Transportation of groomsmen and groom to ceremony; bride and groom to ceremony*
- *Rehearsal dinner expenses*
- *Bride's bouquet and going away corsage; corsages for both mothers*
- *Boutonnieres for groomsmen*
- *Gifts for groomsmen and bride*
- *All honeymoon expenses*
- *Lodging arrangements for out-of-town groomsmen*
- *Bachelor's dinner (optional)*

Attendants

- *Wedding attire*
- *Traveling expenses*
- *Wedding gift*

Bride and Groom

- *Gifts for attendants*
- *Thank you gifts for parents and others who helped with the wedding*

