

Bridesmaids gifts, for the friends who've always been there for you.



WEDDING PLANNER

ANCIENT AND ARTISTIC, WARM AND RADIANT, ADORNMENTS OF TIMELESS STYLE AND BEAUTY.



YOUR WEDDING PLANNER

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- Budget Worksheet
- Gift Registry

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- Buying the Ring
- Personal Stories

MAKING PLANS

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- Points to Remember
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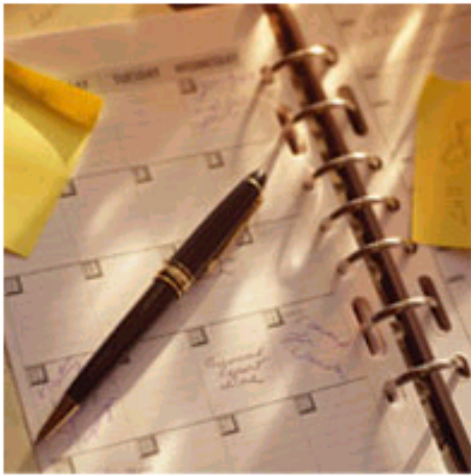
WEDDING PLANNER : Points to Remember



Bridesmaids gifts, for the friends who've always been there for you. [Images of jewelry]

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Book early! Many service providers are booked a year or more in advance - especially during the ever-popular months of June through September.
• Ask for referrals from everyone you know who has been involved in planning a recent wedding.
• Other good bets include professional organizations, the Better Business Bureau, your local chamber of commerce, the Internet and other wedding professionals.
• Always check with the Better Business Bureau if you have any questions or concerns about doing business with a certain vendor.
• Complete your Budget Worksheet before you begin meeting with anyone!
• Once you have some referrals, you'll want to interview your best prospects by phone.



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WEDDING COORDINATORS

Should you hire a wedding coordinator? It's a highly personal choice. Many couples enjoy being involved in every aspect of planning their wedding. They would find the very idea of a coordinator intrusive. Others say time is an all-too precious commodity and would not consider planning their wedding without one. You may find that you fall somewhere in between.

We can help by explaining the role a wedding consultant might play in your planning process. We can also offer advice on getting the most from the relationship. But the decision on whether or not to use one is all yours.

A good wedding coordinator - also known as a bridal advisor or wedding consultant - should have extensive knowledge of the bridal industry. They should be able to plan anything from a royal wedding event to a small, intimate affair.

If the services of a wedding coordinator make sense for you, book this professional first. Then, your consultant can advise you on all other aspects of your wedding planning.

Remember: The coordinator serves as your advisor, your financial planner - and perhaps most importantly - your advocate. Their job is to take the pressure off of you as the big day approaches. It's your wedding and you deserve to enjoy every minute of it!

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- Questions to Ask
- Questions to Ask
- Costs Involved
- The Contract



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DEPARTMENTS GIFT & SHOPPING IDEAS JEWELRY BASICS WEDDING PLANNER DESIGN YOUR OWN WISH LISTS

WEDDING PLANNER : Photographers



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PHOTOGRAPHER

Once your big day has come and gone, your wedding photos become one of your most precious keepsakes. You'll continue to relive the exciting moments as you show them off to family and friends. There is no doubt that they'll become part of your family's legacy over the years.

For these reasons choosing the right photographer is extremely important. This is not the time to cut corners. Have a professional, experienced wedding photographer take your once-in-a-lifetime pictures.

With that in mind, your first priority should be finding a p complement your sense of style as well as your photogra should also feel comfortable with this person. After all, yo of your private moments as well as the highlights of your them.

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VIDEOGRAPHER

You might think that a wedding video is a luxury that you can do without. But consider this: Only video will let you hear your loved one's vows or see your friends jump for the bouquet. A wedding video captures all the sights and sounds of what will be one of the most exciting days of your life.

Many couples who want a video try to save money by asking a relative or friend to tape the wedding. But, this can be a risky choice! Many amateurs don't have experience shooting weddings and have little knowledge about the ceremony or traditions involved. And that means there's a good chance they will miss important shots.

For example, consider the volunteer videographer who set up his camera on the far side of the wedding guests anticipating the bride's grand entrance. He had a beautiful view of the wedding procession. Unfortunately, he was completely unprepared when everyone stood at the bride's arrival and his great shot was blocked. By the time he'd shut down the camera and moved to a better location, he'd missed her walk down the aisle. Imagine the disappointment of everyone viewing that video.

Better to avoid such scenarios by following the advice of industry experts who say plan to spend as much on the wedding video as you do for your still photography. And it makes sense when you think about it. Your wedding day will become one of the greatest memories of your life together as a married couple. A video will keep the memory alive.

Speaking of memories, make sure that the person you have behind the video



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FLORIST

Floral arrangements have played an integral role in bridal traditions since ancient times. Brides have carried everything from beautiful bouquets of roses and ivy symbolizing never-ending love to noxious herbs meant to frighten evil spirits. Creative combinations of flowers and greenery continue to grace wedding ceremonies around the world to this day.

We can explain the traditions behind the selection of many popular blooms and offer you some ideas for getting the most out of your floral budget. But what you choose to enhance your wedding day is up to you.

Discuss wedding flowers with your intended, and determine what's important to you both. A simple bridal bouquet and perhaps a boutonniere for the groom are more than enough for some. Others see flowers as a major part of the celebration and have no problem with setting aside a large percentage of their wedding budget to cover floral expenses. You may find that the two of you fall on opposite ends of the spectrum. In that case, this is the perfect time to practice that all-important marriage skill: compromise!

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WEDDING PLANNER : Caterers



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CATERERS

Selecting your wedding caterer is a big, buttercream-frosted, served-on-a-silver-platter deal. And the more elaborate your wedding, the bigger a deal it becomes. Catering will usually account for your single largest wedding expense, so take extra care when selecting this professional.

Fortunately, caterers are expert party planners and can advise you on more than just a reception menu. They can organize all the mini-celebrations that come before and after the ceremony itself. For example, many couples rely on their caterer for help with their engagement party ... the rehearsal dinner ... perhaps a "morning-after" brunch following the wedding day. An intimate reception can benefit from the services of a professional.

If you are unsure of the type of affair you want to host, ask for suggestions. They should be able to steer you towards the style that fits your tastes as well as your budget.

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WEDDING PLANNER : Cake Designers



Bridesmaids gifts, for the friends who've always been there for you. [Images of jewelry: a necklace, a ring, two pearls, and earrings]

CAKE DESIGNERS

Selecting your wedding cake is one of the more enjoyable elements of the entire planning process. Don't be surprised if your intended is very enthusiastic about interviewing designers - and sampling their cakes!

And why not? Basic white is no longer the obligatory wedding flavor. You can choose from a wide variety of tastes: from lemon to carrot to angel food to deep, dark chocolate. And fillings can run the gamut from liqueurs to exotic fruit purees to mocha-flavored mousse. There are so many fabulous flavors to choose from that many couples are selecting different combinations for each layer.

You may choose to go with a traditional tiered or stacked cake, or you might opt for an elaborate multi-cake, multi-flavored design that covers an entire table instead. You might prefer a brilliant red icing trim to match your roses. Or perhaps the "champagne" frosting style of cream on cream or white on white is your idea of true elegance. Then again, maybe cream on white, or white on cream is more to your taste. You get the idea!

Cake design has developed into an art form restrained only by your budget - and your baker's style and technique. You can be as creative or as traditional as you like. Sit down with your intended and talk about your individual visions of the perfect wedding cake. What styles stimulate ideas, and which ones can you do without? What are your favorite flavor combinations? You may find that you have very similar ideas in mind. Then again, perhaps you'll decide that this will be your first separate "his" and "hers" purchase. The important thing is to enjoy the truly mouth-watering selection process. Bon appetit!



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MUSICIANS, SINGERS, AND DJ'S

Let's talk soundtrack. Because that's what your wedding and reception music will be. The soundtrack to the most romantic - and possibly the most exciting - day that the two of you will ever share. It had better be good!

Music will set the tone for your wedding and provide the energy for your celebration. It can be a blast. It can be awe-inspiring. And it can be deadly dull. So spend some time thinking about this one.

What mood or theme are you trying to create? What kind of music moves you? Do you love show tunes or reggae? Are you planning a garden party or a hoe-down? Do you weep at the sound of bag pipes or do you imagine heaven when you hear a harp? What about swing or ballroom dancing? Would a string quartet move you or would you need a rock band for that? What kind of music do the two of you like to listen to? Dance to? Reminisce to? Snuggle to?

These are all valid questions. And the answers will have everything to do with the kind of ambiance you hope to create. Sit down together and make a list of all your favorite music. The styles that make you want to dance. The songs that make you want to sing. Perhaps you envision traditional music for the ceremony, but want only the hottest pop music for the reception. Maybe you have another blend of styles in mind.

We can help you think through some of the issues that need to be considered, but this very personal choice is yours.

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Music Selections

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WEDDING PLANNER : Invitation Sources



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INVITATION SOURCES

Whether stamped with a royal seal during the Middle Ages or sent as puffs of smoke from a Native American's campfire, wedding invitations have always hinted at the type of celebration to come. And that remains a primary purpose today. Right next to letting people know who, what, when and where!

Think about it: Formal invitations engraved on heavy paper stock indicate one type of celebration, while a uniquely shaped card touting a funky theme will give another impression entirely. Both selections are equally acceptable. It's just a matter of finding the style that will best reflect the nature of your upcoming celebration.

Stationery stores are the most popular source for wedding invitations and an excellent place to start your search. You'll be able to go through a wide variety of catalogs and get a look at literally hundreds of styles. Another option is to order your invitations through the same department store that you register with. You can also order direct from the printing company. This can be a great source if you're looking for something really unusual. And it may be quicker and more affordable than placing a custom order.

On the other hand, you might want to go to an independent print shop for help designing a one-of-a-kind creation. You can also produce the invitations yourself. With the right desktop publishing software, you can create most anything you want at home. This option will save you money and offer you complete artistic freedom - if you have the equipment and the time. The possibilities are limitless!

WEDDING PLANNER : The Bride



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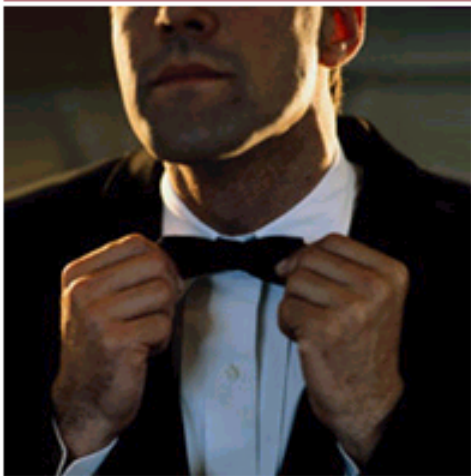
THE BRIDE

This is your time to shine in the spotlight - a glorious time to be the center of attention. Yes, planning a wedding is both a challenge and an exciting adventure. But with thorough preparation, you and your fiancé will think of everything and complete it all with time to spare. And that means that you'll have nothing to do on your wedding day but enjoy yourselves. May all your days together be filled with such joy and happiness!

Traditional Duties

- Making plans and finding the pros
- Select members of the wedding party
- Dress to Impress and find your perfect gown
- Select dresses for your attendants
- Buy attendants' gifts
- Ask your family for their guest list suggestions
- Be certain all necessary paperwork and health tests are completed
- See that all insurance policies will reflect your new status
- Find a wonderful wedding gift for your groom
- See that all attendants are aware of the place and time for

WEDDING PLANNER : The Groom



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THE GROOM

Long gone are the days when the groom simply showed up in a tux holding the ring and honeymoon tickets. Today's groom is a full co-star in The Great Event and that means getting involved in the decision-making process. Well, at least the cool stuff - like cake-testing and auditioning bands!

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Traditional Duties

- Buying the Ring and popping the question
Assist with making plans and finding the pros
Select your Best Man and Groomsmen
Pick out formalwear for your side of the aisle
Select a personal wedding gift for your bride
Ask your family for their guest list suggestions
Choose gifts for the best man, groomsman and the ushers



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MAID/MATRON OF HONOR

Your honor attendant is usually your closest friend or a sister. Her primary role is to help you with the wedding planning and to stand by your side as you say your vows. If your honor attendant is single, she's referred to as your maid of honor. A married attendant is referred to as a matron of honor. Unless, of course, you choose a male to stand with you - then you're back to honor attendant.

Some brides cannot choose just a single attendant and select two instead. Not only is this acceptable, it means twice as much help!

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Traditional Duties

- Plans and hosts the bridal shower and bachelorette party
- Gives a shower gift to bride
- Helps address wedding invitations



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BEST MAN

Like the bride's honor attendant, the Best Man serves as the groom's primary source of assistance and moral support during one of the most exciting times of his life. This attendant is usually the groom's best friend or a close relative such as his brother or father. In less traditional weddings, the Best Man may even be a close female relative or friend. It's the "best" part that counts!

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Traditional Duties

- Plans and hosts the bachelor's party
- Gives a gift to the groom
- Provides for own wedding attire
- Briefs the ushers on any special seating arrangements
- Keeps the wedding ring if there is no ring bearer



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BRIDESMAIDS

Bridesmaids are usually chosen from among your closest female friends and family. They will be your helpers throughout your wedding planning process and your support system on the big day. Pick these attendants carefully. Sure, you want your bridesmaids to be dependable. But you'll also want to enjoy spending time with them. After all, you'll be seeing a great deal of these women over the next several months!

Traditional Duties

- Assist with wedding planning
- Help address wedding invitations
- Run errands for the bride
- Assist in the planning and hosting of pre-wedding parties
- Help keep a record of gifts received
- Give a shower gift to bride
- Pay for wedding attire
- Join the receiving line
- Circulate and act as back-up hostesses during reception
- Dance with "partner" groomsmen
- Give a wedding gift to the bride and groom



Bridesmaids gifts, for the friends who've always been there for you. [Images of jewelry: a bracelet, a ring, two pearls, and two earrings]

GROOMSMEN/USHERS

The groomsmen are usually selected from among the groom's closest friends and relatives. Male family members of the bride are also a popular choice to round out this group. The groomsmen often serve multiple roles. They not only help the groom and best man with pre-wedding planning - okay, the bachelor party stuff - but they also serve as escorts for the bridesmaids and sometimes even double as wedding ushers.

And ushering is an important role in itself! It doesn't matter whether they are the groomsmen in disguise, or simply additional friends and family that are willing to help. Ushers make sure that all the guests are properly settled in plenty of time for the ceremony. And depending on the size of your guest list, that can be quite a job!

Traditional Duties

Groomsmen

- Run errands for the groom
- Assist in the planning and hosting of the bachelor dinner or party
- Pay for wedding attire
- Join the receiving line
- Circulate and act as back-up hosts during reception



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WEDDING PLANNER : Flower Child/Ring Bearer



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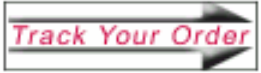
FLOWER CHILD/RING BEARER

Deciding to add a flower child and ring bearer to your wedding party can be a wonderful way to include younger children (ages 3 to 10) in your ceremony. But be aware that their roles are more dramatic than functional. The flower child's place is to look like a charming miniature bridesmaid or groomsman. And most ring bearers only carry a pillow with fake rings - just to be safe!

Most families will be thrilled to include their little ones. But be sure to ask them before mentioning the idea to the kids! The parents will be the ones making the commitments of time and expense. They will need to accompany their children to any rehearsals as well as to the ceremony. And the parents will also be financially responsible for the special bridal attire.

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WEDDING PLANNER : The Bridal Gown



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THE BRIDAL GOWN

If you're like most women, you have a vision of the "perfect" wedding gown in your mind. It may resemble a style you admired as a child or perhaps it's reminiscent of a breathtaking creation that looked exquisite on a favorite celebrity. But will that type of dress work for your style of wedding? Your body type? Or your budget?

Not to worry! The selection available today is truly astounding. We can jump start your search with important considerations, a quick lesson in bridal styles, and cost-saving tips as well. But finding that perfect dress will be up to you!

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- Considerations
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WEDDING PLANNER : Ceremony Survival



Bridesmaids gifts, for the friends who've always been there for you. [Images of jewelry: a bracelet, a ring, two pearls, and two earrings]

CEREMONY SURVIVAL

While most newlyweds agree their wedding was well worth the effort, few to none say it was easy. In fact, don't be surprised if making wedding plans is the most complex project you've ever undertaken as a couple.

Looking for ways to better enjoy this always-challenging, sometimes-crazy time in your life? We are here to help. Here are some tried-and-true survival tips to get you through your wedding day - from the start of planning to the ceremony.

Survival Tips

- Since much stress is money-related, plan your budget upfront and stick to it. Try not to start your life together in debt from your wedding!
- Take a breather from your wedding planning once in awhile. Schedule some get-away-from-it-all outings with your intended. Have a romantic dinner or take a bike ride - just don't discuss the wedding!
- Be flexible! You can't have your way on every wedding detail, so don't try. Compromise on the less-important aspects.
- Remember that brides are almost always more interested in the details than grooms. And don't get so crazy over every