

**Immediately Following Engagement:**

- Help orchestrate a meeting of your parents and future in-laws
- Discuss all aspects of the wedding with your families (budget, color scheme, size, style-black tie, semi-format, casual, etc.).
- Decide who will pay for what.
- Decide on location of wedding - church, home, outdoors, etc.
- Make lists of and discuss various ceremony and reception sites. Go to view them as soon as possible as many will book months in advance.
- Draft invitation list to figure guest count
- Set the date (this may be determined by the availability of the wedding site)
- Buy a wedding planner and memory album.
- Send announcements of your engagement to your fiancé's and your hometown newspapers, and the newspapers in the town where you both now live
- Meet with your clergy member to schedule premarital counseling.
- Begin looking at caterers and ask for estimates from those you are considering.
- Begin looking at bakers for your wedding cake and ask for estimates from those you are considering.
- Begin discussing honeymoon plans. Make a final decision as soon as possible as booking months in advance will save you money over waiting.
- Begin discussing your post-wedding living arrangements.
- Interview photographers & videographers - remembering that these are the items that you will look back on for memories. View samples.
- Choose bridal party (remember you can't un-ask someone, so be careful with your choice) When selecting ushers, use one usher for every 40-50 guests.
- Start shopping for wedding gown and bridesmaids outfits.
- Select and order a wedding gown. Leave yourself time so that any needed alterations can be made in a timely fashion without rush charges.
- Make your final honeymoon plans. Contact a travel agent to make reservations and purchase tickets.
- Choose a musician(s) for your ceremony music.
- Choose music for reception. If you want a band be sure to visit some of their performances.
- Select and register wedding gift patterns: china, crystal, flatware, bed, bath and table linens, cookware and appliances, furniture and decorative accessories
- Select your dress and headpiece, and schedule appointments for custom fitting
- Choose the bridesmaids' gowns with the help of your honor attendant (remember to get a fabric sample if the bridesmaids will need to dye shoes to match)
- Develop your own record-keeping system for invitations, gifts and thank-you notes
- Book photographer & have engagement photographs taken

- Reserve rental items (tents, arches, canopy, tables, linens)
- Mail save-the-date cards for destination weddings

### **3 to 6 Months Before the Wedding**

- Book wedding night accommodation.
- Reserve a block of hotel rooms for your guests traveling from out of town.
- Order wedding cake
- Order wedding invitations and "thank you" cards.
- Meet with your minister or rabbi to discuss the service and any premarital counseling.
- Consider writing some parts of your own marriage ceremony or select a favorite reading to be included in the service
- Compile the guest list
- The groom's family should make plans and reservations for the rehearsal dinner (if there are out-of-town guests who are not in the bridal party, you may want to arrange for them to be entertained, and it is certainly appropriate for them to come to the rehearsal dinner)
- Choose and order your wedding bands, and have them engraved
- Help both mothers select their dresses for the wedding
- Choose and purchase decorations and favors for your reception
- If traveling outside the U.S. for your honeymoon, apply for your passports. These can take as long as 90 days to process. Forms can be picked up at the post office.
- Finalize your post-wedding living arrangements.
- Arrange limousine service to transport you, your immediate families and the wedding party to the ceremony and reception
- Contact florists and get estimates for floral arrangements for the ceremony and reception. Meet with the florist. Make arrangements to preserve your bouquet as a special keepsake
- Reserve a Disc Jockey/ M.C. for your reception.

### **2 to 3 Months Before the Wedding**

- Address the invitations and the announcements
- As soon as the wedding gown is delivered, sit for a formal black-and-white photograph to appear with the wedding announcement
- Visit a formalwear shop with your fiancé to help him choose the attire for the men of the wedding party
- Purchase gifts for attendants
- Plan the bridesmaids' luncheon
- Ask special friends and relatives who are not members of the wedding party to register guests at the wedding

- Make an appointment with a hairdresser for the bride and bridesmaids
- Buy a gift for your spouse
- Send wedding announcement to newspapers.
- Order men's formal wear.
- Inform band or dj a list of songs you wish to be played.

#### **4 to 6 Weeks Before the Wedding**

- Mail the invitations
- Write thank-you notes as gifts arrive
- Arrange a display of wedding gifts
- Design your wedding program
- Open a joint savings and checking account
- Finalize accommodations for out-of-town guests and arrange for hospitality baskets to be delivered to their hotel
- Schedule a pre-wedding appointment with your hair and makeup stylist
- Schedule a meeting with your bridal registrar and update your gift list
- Design a special groom's cake to surprise your new husband
- Sign-up for instructions at a professional dance studio
- Schedule appointments for you and your bridesmaids to pamper yourselves just before the wedding day
- Finalize plans for your rehearsal dinner
- Finalize choices for all bridal gown accessories (shoes, lingerie, earrings, etc.).
- Have final fitting for bridal gown & headpiece, as well as the bridesmaids dresses.
- Schedule bridesmaid's lunch. This is when the bride gives them their gifts.
- Confirm hotel reservations for all guests and for you and your spouse.
- Send invitations to those who will be attending the rehearsal dinner, informing them of the exact time, place and date.
- Finalize seating arrangements for the reception.
- Have pre-wedding parties.
- Choose Master of Ceremonies (MC)
- Select friends or family to participate in ceremony by making a speech.
- Select ceremony accessories: ring pillow, ceremony programs
- Select reception accessories: guest book, cake knife, etc.

## **TWO - FOUR WEEKS**

- Purchase marriage license.
- Send invitations for rehearsal dinner
- Plan reception seating and order place cards
- Record gifts as you receive them; write thank-you notes
- Confirm all honeymoon arrangements.
- Purchase traveler's checks for the honeymoon.

## **At Least 1 Week Before**

- Give a final head count, seating arrangements, and place cards to the caterer.
- Review wedding ceremony details and procedures with your wedding party. Pick out the clothes you'll wear after you leave the reception.
- Assign a trusted person to act as "troubleshooter" for all last minute problems and details. Rely on this person to help you as you get closer to the final day.
- Plan a fun, relaxing day shared with family or friends.
- Go over final details with florist, photographer and musicians
- Wrap gifts for bridal party and parents
- Attend the bridesmaids' luncheon (bridesmaids' gifts may be presented here or at the rehearsal dinner)
- Groom attends the bachelor dinner (gifts may be presented to the groomsmen here or at the rehearsal dinner)
- Make certain attendants have directions, that they know of accommodation arrangements, that they are being met as planned, and they know where to meet for any social events, etc.
- Confirm final rehearsal dinner plans
- Write as many thank-you notes before the wedding as possible
- Check that the bride's and bridesmaids' dressing room is equipped with an iron, ironing board, mirrors, sewing kit, etc.
- See your hairstylist for a last-minute trim
- Pick up wedding rings
- Remind men to pick up formalwear and shoes
- Prepare wedding schedule and distribute at rehearsal dinner
- Prepare wedding announcements. These are to be mailed 1-2 days before the actual ceremony.
- Break in your wedding shoes. Wear them around the house or where you can be sure they won't get dirty.
- Confirm: Officiant, church, reception, caterers, band, photographer, videographer, cars, florist, hairdresser, make-up.

- Confirm guest attendance
- Plan seating.
- Write out place cards
- Make payments for reservations.
- Have ceremony rehearsal.

### **The Day Before**

- Give wedding rings to the Best Man.
- Mail the wedding announcements.
- Place the fees for the limousine driver and the clergy or officiant into sealed envelopes. Give these to the Best Man to be handed out by him on the wedding day.
- Deliver the guest favors to the reception site
- Attend your rehearsal and dinner.
- GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP!!!! You've got an important day ahead of you tomorrow.
- Greet out-of-town guests as they arrive or arrange for them to be met and directed to their accommodations
- Assemble your "something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue"
- Pack everything you will need at the church or wedding site (make sure you have all bridal accessories, spare hosiery, safety pins and other emergency item
- Pamper yourself with a massage, manicure and pedicure
- Find a quiet moment to give your fiancé his wedding gift

### **Your Wedding Day**

- See your hair and makeup stylist for final beauty preparations
- Attend the wedding breakfast
- Forget any nagging details — anything forgotten in the rush will be forgiven
- Relax, smile and thank everyone for their help
- Most of all, enjoy the celebration you have worked so long and hard to plan!
- Sit and enjoy your hair and make-up (remember to wear a button up shirt!)
- Make sure you eat something.
- The day will go quick, so relax, and enjoy your special day spent with your family and friends!