

12 Months to Your Special Day

10 to 12 MONTHS IN ADVANCE OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:

- *Discuss possible wedding dates and times. The larger and more formal the wedding, the longer in advance this must be done to have a good selection of locations for the ceremony and reception.*
 - *Groom and/or Bride and Groom select engagement ring.*
 - *Plan preliminary budget and how the expenses will be shared.*
 - *Discuss the type (religious/civil), size and formality of the wedding.*
 - *Contact your clergy member or other official to confirm the date and time and to schedule an appointment to discuss the ceremony.*
 - *Gather information to select site for the ceremony*
 - *Gather information to select site for the reception.*
 - *Discuss the size of the guest list.*
 - *Begin making honeymoon plans by contacting a travel agent and sending for brochures.*
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8 to 10 MONTHS in ADVANCE:

- *Begin drawing up the actual guest list. Have both sets of parents do the same.*
- *Reserve the site chosen for the ceremony, wedding rehearsal and reception.*
- *Finalize the wedding budget.*
- *Finalize selection of your wedding photography and videography packages.*
- *Arrange to have your engagement photographs taken. Black and white are best for newspaper announcements.*
- *Begin the selection process for a florist, caterer, wedding cake and the ceremony and reception music.*
- *Bride and Groom select attendants. A general rule of thumb is one usher for every 25 - 50 guests. It is not necessary to have the same number of ushers and bridesmaids.*
- *The Bride begins selecting her wedding gown, headpiece, veil and shoes.*
- *Choose the colour scheme for your attendants wear and the decorative accents used in the flowers and for the church, reception, etc.,.*
- *Send your Engagement announcement and photograph to your local newspaper(s).*

6 to 8 MONTHS IN ADVANCE:

- *Arrange the transportation for the wedding party to the church and reception. Friends and relatives may be able to provide this service, but you may wish to book limousines.*
- *Organize and arrange details of your rehearsal dinner or party. The immediate family, members of the wedding party and special out of town guests are normally included.*
- *Organize and arrange details of the bachelor and bachelorette parties. These are traditionally done by the best man for the Groom and the Maid of Honour for the Bride.*
- *Make arrangements (and reservations if necessary) for overnight accommodation for out of town guests. Also arrange transportation for them to the ceremony, the formal photography site, and the reception, if necessary.*
- *Contact the local District Registrar or Government Agent for a marriage license.*
- *Arrange for religious documents, If appropriate. Bride and Groom each plan a party or social event with their attendants.*
- - **Book the organist, soloist or other musicians for your ceremony.**
 - **Finalize the names and addresses of the guest list.**
 - **Have the engagement sequences done for your wedding video.**
 - **Book your florist.**
 - **Book your caterer.**
 - **Book your reception music - band or disc Jockey.**
 - **Finalize arrangements for your wedding cake.**
 - **Finalize selection of your wedding gown, headpiece, veil and shoes.**
 - **Bride begins selecting her garter, lingerie and going away outfit and accessories.**
 - **Begin selecting the gowns and men's formal wear for your attendants.**
 - **Bride and Groom shop for Bridal Registry selections then register your patterns, colours, etc. with the leading Bridal registries in your area.**
 - **If this is home or outdoor wedding, book garden furniture, tent, etc.**
 - **Finalize honeymoon plans and reservations.**
 - **Arrange for passports, visas, inoculations and medical insurance.**
 - **Book time off work for the honeymoon. Booking some time off the week before the wedding is strongly recommended.**
 - **Begin looking at wedding invitation and announcement styles that will complement your wedding style and degree of formality.**

5 to 6 MONTHS IN ADVANCE

- **Bride and Groom select the wedding ring(s). Traditionally the rings are engraved on the inside with the wedding date and the initials of the Bride and Groom.**
- **Finalize selection of gowns for your attendants. Schedule fittings and delivery. Include shoes at this time if they must be dyed to match.**
- **The mothers of the Bride and Groom begin shopping for their dresses and accessories. Traditionally, the Bride's mother has first choice and the Groom's mother's choice complements it in colour and degree of formality.**
- **Complete discussions with caterer regarding the number of guests, style of the service, time of the meal and menu.**
- **Decide which beverages will be served at the reception. If your reception will be in a hall or location where you will be organizing the beverages, you may wish to consult a wine and liquor representative to advise you on quantities. This free service usually includes the arrangement for liquor license and delivery of supplies as well. An alternative is the local liquor control board, who can provide information about obtaining your own license.**
- **Complete discussions with your florist regarding the floral bouquets, corsages, boutonnieres, church, and table arrangements.**
- **Finalize the selection of formal wear for the men.**
- **Order wedding invitations and announcements, matching note paper for thank you notes, printed napkins, match boxes, cake boxes, and order of service cards.**

3 to 4 MONTHS IN ADVANCE

- **Bride and Groom should spend some time together as a break from the wedding planning.**
- **The mothers of the Bride and Groom finalize clothing and accessory selections.**
- **Begin addressing wedding invitations and announcements.**
- **Make hand drawn maps to the locations of the ceremony, reception and the site of your formal photographs. These can be printed inexpensively and enclosed with your invitation. In addition, ushers may distribute further details at the ceremony site on the day of the wedding.**
- **Groom selects going away outfit and clothing for honeymoon.**
- **Register for your pre-marriage counseling course.**

- **Select your Master of Ceremonies for the Reception and arrange with the people who will be doing the speeches and toasts.**
 - **Finalize music selections for organist and soloist for the ceremony. Notify them of the choices.**
 - **Begin looking at gifts for your attendants and your new spouse.**
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2 MONTHS IN ADVANCE

- *Attend parties in your honour Showers normally are held one to two months in advance. Other parties may be closer to the wedding day. Schedule carefully so you do not end up overly tired by an excess of parties all at the last minute. Point this out to your maid/matron of honour and best man, too.*
 - *Mail invitations. Reply cards should be dated four weeks before the wedding date. Realize that if there are guests from out of town they will need extra time to make travel and accommodation arrangements. If this time span covers a holiday period (for example Christmas) even more time is necessary for mail delivery and personal arrangements.*
 - *Finalize selection of and purchase gifts for your attendants and new spouse.*
 - *Bride consults an esthetician for skin care and make up tips. Arrange for your make up and manicure to be done at your home on the wedding day.*
 - *Bride consults her hair stylist for hair care tips. Arrange for the hair stylist to come to your home on the wedding day.*
 - *If you intend to change your name, begin the process of having documents changed (driver's license, credit cards, Insurance bank accounts, Social insurance, etc.). It's easy to overlook minor details, so make lists of everything that must be changed and cross items off as they are completed.*
 - *Make arrangements for financial matters, i.e. insurance, bank accounts, safety deposit boxes, credit cards, wills, etc.*
 - *Plan a recording system for your wedding gifts. Start writing thank you notes as the gifts arrive. Save them to mail after the wedding.*
 - *Plan the party for the out-of-town guests. It is a good idea to hold it only a day or two before the wedding day so the greatest number of guests can attend. Select the relative or friend who will host the event.*
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1 MONTH IN ADVANCE.

- *Contact florist to finalize times and delivery places of the flowers.*
- *Arrange to have a display area if your gifts are to be displayed.*
- *Arrange for a neighbour or friend who is not attending the wedding to be at your home the whole time you are away for the wedding and reception. Unattended homes containing wedding gifts are easy targets for thieves.*

- *Arrange a floater policy to your household insurance covering the shower and wedding gifts.*
 - *The Bride has her hair styled and make up applied as she plans for the wedding. This will help avoid unhappy surprises as to the appearance of the style and time required on the wedding day. Be sure to have your headpiece with you*
 - *Go over final details with all professional services you have engaged - include cake maker, reception contact person, musicians, limousine, florist, jeweler etc.*
 - *Plan the details of your Receiving Line.*
 - *Make seating plans for the reception.*
 - *Develop the schedule of speakers for the reception and give It to the Master of Ceremonies*
 - *Wedding attendants plan decoration of reception hall and cars.*
 - *Make sure that you have all accessories: aisle carpet and canopy (coordinate this with your florist), ring pillow for ring bearer, toasting goblets, candles, decorations for the hall, garter, cake cutting knife, etc.*
 - *Arrange for the location of the guest book.*
 - *Notify all people who will be attending the Rehearsal and Rehearsal party of all the details.*
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3 WEEKS IN ADVANCE

- *Send announcements to the newspapers.*
 - *Have a Wrap the cake party if you are doing this task yourself.*
 - *Prepare address and stamp wedding announcements to be mailed following the wedding.*
 - *Exchange money or obtain travelers cheques for your honeymoon trip.*
 - *Break in any new shoes by wearing them indoors for a few hours each day.*
 - *Bachelor and Bachelorette parties held.*
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2 WEEKS IN ADVANCE.

- *Meet with your professional photographer and videographer to discuss details of your photography and video packages. Include a discussion of special shots you would like and contingency plans in case of rain.*
- *Begin packing for your honeymoon.*
- *Prepare envelopes with payments (gifts or donations) for ceremony site, officiator, clans, etc.*
- *Pick up tickets, medical Insurance forms and travel documents for the honeymoon.*

THE WEEK BEFORE

- *Bride and Groom each spend a quiet evening with their families.*
- *Plan the schedule for the wedding day. ensuring that everyone will have a relaxing day. Do this in writing and make sure that all principals have a copy*
- *Groom and Groom's men have final fittings for their formal wear. Arrange specific times for pick up and return of these items following the wedding as well as WHO WILL BE DOING IT.*
- *Pick up Bridal gown and attendants gowns.*
- *Pack an Emergency Kit to have along on the wedding day. Include safety pins. Corsage pins, bobby pins. needle and thread (a couple of colours that match the colour scheme), nail file, tissues, hankies, sanitary supplies, cosmetics to match (eye liner. eye shadow, lipstick, a compact with pressed powder, blush, perfume and nail polish), spare nylons or panty hose, snacks and beverages, scotch tape, masking tape, aspirin. comb, hairbrush, hair spray. mirror, breath mints, and antacids.*
- *Contact guests that have not responded to R.S.V.P. request.*
- *Give final guest count to the caterer.*
- *Pick up wedding rings. Make sure they fit.*
- *Groom, Groom's men and Ushers have hair trimmed. (Having the trim too close to the wedding day will produce a 'shaved' look in the photographs.)*
- *Attend Rehearsal and Rehearsal party. Present gifts to attendants*
- *Hold the party or social event for those guests coming from out or town.*

THE DAY BEFORE

- *Review the schedule for tomorrow and make sure everyone is aware of any changes. Ensure that all details are covered.*
- *Arrange for your honeymoon suitcases and going away outfits to be at the correct location.*
- *Give ushers the list of guests to be seated in the reserved section.*
- *Decorate the cars and the reception hall.*
- *Entrust payment envelopes and license to the Best Man.*
- *Entrust wedding rings to the Best Man and Maid of Honour or affix them to the ring bearer's pillow.*
- *Finish packing for the honeymoon. Include travel tickets and identification, etc.*
- *Assemble all accessories for tomorrow's dressing In one room. Double check everything.*
- *Get to bed early and get a good night's sleep.*

THE WEDDING DAY ITSELF

- *Be sure to have a substantial breakfast. Brides and Grooms have been known to faint.*
- *Bride has make up, manicure and hair appointments.*
- *Ensure that car keys, license, tickets, money and hotel confirmations are assembled and that someone is responsible for them.*
- *Arrange for the going away car to be at the reception hall.*
- *Bride transfers engagement ring to right hand.*
- *Ensure that all principals have allowed enough time to be dressed according to schedule. You can't be relaxed if you are rushing.*

AFTER THE WEDDING

- *Mail announcements.*
- *Bride and Groom send flowers with thank you notes or telegrams to both sets of parents to thank them for their help and support.*
- *Return borrowed and rented items.*
- *Have wedding dress cleaned and stored.*
- *Enjoy your honeymoon vacation.*
- *Write and mail thank you notes.*