

Wedding Planning Time Line

One Year Before

- Announce your engagement to friends and family.
- Choose your wedding style and formality.
- Set a tentative date for your wedding (this may change according to the availability of the vendors in which you are interested).
- Work out your budget – Know how much you have to spend before you start hiring vendors. Consider hiring a bridal consultant to help you plan.
- Attend some Bridal Expos for all the latest trends and get helpful tips from vendors.
- Start shopping for wedding rings.
- Prepare your provisional guest list to determine the size of your wedding.
- Select your bridal party and assign a friend or family member, not in the wedding party, to be your “wedding assistant” for the day of your wedding and discuss important events they will all need to attend.
- Decide on a ceremony site. You need to know where you will exchange vows.
- Choose and reserve your officiant. Make future appointments to plan music and discuss ceremony.
- Search for a reception location and secure your date with a deposit.
- Choose a caterer if one is not available at your reception location.
- Decide where to book your rehearsal dinner location. This could be the location where your reception will take place, a banquet facility, restaurant or at home.
- Check with your officiant's schedule for the rehearsal dinner.
- Shop for your dress – It can take several months for your dress to arrive, and then you may need several fittings.
- After you've found your dress, schedule your fittings and delivery date. Then select the bridesmaids' gowns.
- Start the search for your wedding vendors. Photographers, Videographers, Bands and DJ's get booked early, so start with them first.
- Select bakery and order wedding cake.
- Begin the search for your transportation, flowers, rentals and stationery.
- Speak to a travel agent about honeymoon destinations and update your passports and vaccinations if necessary.

9 Months Before

- Start finalizing the guest list and gathering addresses.
- Choose a Bridal Gift Registry and register at your favorite stores.
- Finalize all wedding vendors and secure your date by putting down deposits.
- Once you've chosen your wedding photographer, schedule your engagement photos to be taken and submit your announcement to the newspaper.
- Finalize the plans for your honeymoon.
- Reserve accommodations for out-of-town guests. Research things to do in Southwest Michigan during their stay.

6 Months Before

- Prepare all maps and directions for the ceremony and reception.
- Select and order your invitations including thank you cards. Also, order place cards for reception if doing assigned seating.
- Select and order groom's and attendants' attire. Decide whether to purchase or rent.
- Schedule fittings and pick-up or delivery date.
- Meet with your florist and choose floral arrangements for the ceremony and reception, as well as bouquets for you and your bridesmaids.
- Choose your music selections for the wedding ceremony.
- Meet with all your wedding vendors to finalize any orders and reservations.
- Schedule a tasting with your caterer.
- Plan your bridesmaids' luncheon and any other parties.
- Begin doing the research for your marriage license and blood tests.
- Meet with both sets of parents to coordinate their attire.

4 Months Before

- Order wedding rings.
- Arrange for final dress fittings.

- Purchase wedding guest book.
- Order your wedding favors, bridal party gifts and other wedding accessories (champagne glasses, ring bearer pillow, cake knife, etc.).

2 Months Before

- Address and send out your invitations and announcements. Include maps and directions as well as information regarding the accommodations.
- Make appointment with your beautician for wedding day hair styles for you and your bridal party. Set up any other appointments for pre-wedding cuts, colors or perms.
- Make appointments for you and your bridal party to get manicures, pedicures, massages, spa treatments, etc.
- Choose a make-up artist and schedule a trial.
- Start gathering your RSVPs.
- Finalize dates for your last-minute dress fittings.
- Purchase bridal party gifts and gift for your fiancé.
- Meet with your “wedding assistant” to cover details you will need help with.
- Schedule wedding ceremony rehearsal.

1 Month Before

- Finalize and confirm all ceremony & reception plans.
- Finalize rehearsal dinner details.
- Go over song lists and requests with your band or DJ.
- Give your photographer a “must-have list” – a list of posed photographs you want taken.
- Confirm when final payments need to be made to vendors.
- Call guests who have not responded.
- Draw up seating arrangements for the reception if doing assigned seats.
- Have a “practice” session with the hairstylists and make-up artists you will use on your wedding day.
- Start taking care of business such as name changes, address changes, etc.

2-3 Weeks Before

- Pick up wedding rings.
- Confirm all arrival times with vendors.
- Confirm hotel arrangements for out-of-town guests.
- Have your final dress fitting.
- Make a date with your fiancé to get your marriage license and blood tests.

1 Week Before

- Give the caterer your final guest count.
- Pack your bags for the honeymoon.
- Arrange for the pick-up of your bridal attire.
- Have final fittings for groom and groomsmen and schedule the return of the groom's tuxedo (usually the best man will return it for him).
- Ask your bridal party to help with post-wedding tasks.
- Give gifts to your wedding party, family and fiancé privately, or at the rehearsal dinner.
- Make arrangements for your wedding gifts to be brought to your "new" home.

1-2 Days Before

- Get a manicure and/or pedicure.
- Confirm all arrangements for the honeymoon.
- Compile a list of all your wedding vendors with phone numbers to ensure a stress-free wedding.
- Make payment envelopes for each vendor and give them to your wedding day assistant to take care of at the wedding.
- Arrange a get-away car for after the reception to include all your honeymoon essentials (luggage, tickets, identification, passports, etc.).
- Put together a bridal emergency kit for your wedding day including stockings, sewing kit, safety pins, etc.
- Attend your rehearsal dinner.

- Get plenty of rest before the big day!

Your Wedding Day!

- Get your hair and make-up done early.
- Make sure you get plenty to eat and drink a lot of water. You don't want to faint.
- Remember the rings and marriage license.
- Relax and enjoy yourself after all the months of planning and preparation!