

Announcing the Engagement

In today's Society we encounter various forms of weddings, each with different requirements.

- There are weddings of couples where both partners marry for the first time.
- There are weddings of couples where one or both have been married before, but have no children.
- There are weddings of couples where one or both have been married before, and have children.
- There are weddings of couples with children, who decided to have a renewal of vows wedding and
- There are December weddings of couples over 50 years old that often have children and grandchildren.

We'll begin with the wedding announcement of brides and grooms, having a Family Wedding that includes children.

Brides and grooms, who do not have children, should skip number 1.

Who do you tell first, second and...

It is no secret that you are bursting in the seam wanting to share your happy news with those closest to you.

Sharing the news in person is not always practical. When it is not, a phone call is appropriate.

1. **Your Children;**
If either or both of you have children, they should be the first to hear of your engagement. You do not want them to hear it from anyone else.
2. **Your Parents;**
Usually the parents of the bride are told first, following immediately by the parents of the groom.
3. **Siblings, Grandparents, and Other Close Relatives;**
4. **Your Closest Friends;**
5. **Everyone else;**

How to announce your engagement to everyone else?

You have a few options. Most brides and grooms utilize at least some if not all of them.

- Mail printed announcements. They do not have to be expensive. Purchase blank invitation kits and print them on your computer printer. If you plan to have a wedding ceremony and reception, send announcements only to people you intend to invite.
- Invite your friends and family to an engagement party.
- Publish an announcement in your local newspaper.
- Create a Wedding Website.
- Once you secure your wedding date and location, send out Save-The-Date cards.

We Got Engaged! Now What?

Our First Things To-Do List

Using the worksheets that follow

1. Announce your engagement.
2. Have your fiancé spend time with your family. This will give them the opportunity to get to know him or her better. He or she will become a part of the family and you want him or her to be welcomed.
3. Be prepared to answer many questions
4. Prepare for an engagement party. It is customary for parents to have an engagement party.
5. Decide how much time you need to plan your wedding.
6. Use the PERSONALIZED “**Our Wedding – Wedding Planning Organizer**” It will guide you, so you can easily plan your wedding from start to finish, no matter how casual or lavish. This personalized wedding planning workbook comes in a 3 ring binder, so you can print any page and have as many copies as you need. This is a very comprehensive personalized planner that includes articles, tips, budgeting worksheets, planning worksheets, hiring worksheets and many checklists. It even includes Contract Checklist forms to assure that every detail is covered.
7. Read the articles you are interested in and use the worksheets and checklists.
8. Find out if your families will participate by contributing funds or by covering the costs of specific needs.
9. Set your budget. (See Tips Page.)
10. Set your priorities. 1. Must have 2. Would like to have 3. Will have only if it is within our budget.
11. Open a wedding specific checking account and get an awards credit card dedicated exclusively to wedding expenses.
12. Research wedding magazines and attend Bridal Shows.
13. Always carry a notebook and pen so you can add ideas, details, things to check, and notes.
14. Your wedding planning 3 rings binder includes closeable folders and sheet protectors for brochures, contracts, receipts, magazine articles, pictures, menu ideas, fabric swatches, stationery ideas and samples, photos, etc. Use them.
15. Make the first draft of your Guest List. You may need to tailor it to fit within your budget.
16. Choose possible dates.
17. Choose time of day for ceremony.
18. Coordinate a date from your chosen dates with, and book an Officiant.
19. Choose time of day for reception.
20. Decide what style of reception you want. This may depend on your budget and number of guests.
21. Start looking for a reception venue.
22. Check your budget and the number of guests against the basic venue reception costs.
23. Trim your original Guest List if necessary.
24. Now that you know who will be invited, send out Save the Date cards.
25. Choose your wedding colors.
26. Choose and invite the people you want as your Wedding Attendants.
27. Consider friends and family members who may be willing to contribute their talents to your wedding. Do you know anyone who: Does flower arrangements? Decorates special cakes? Can design centerpieces? Plays an instrument and/or Sing? Etc.
28. Jot down all the do-able tasks and all deadlines and set your personal time table.
29. Contact those who you believe are reliable, to whom you could delegate tasks.
30. Mark each task, deadline, interview, appointment, meeting and follow-up on your calendar.
31. Relax and enjoy each other as you plan your wedding together.

Suggestions and Tips Page

Ask for referrals

Once you have decided whether you want to be married by a clergy, a non-denominational officiant or a public official, and you don't have somebody in mind, ask for recommendations.

Interfaith couples

Speak to clergy from both of your religions and ask if they are open to co-officiate. If either one or both will not officiate with a clergy of another religion, ask them to refer you to clergy who will, or contact various houses of worship of the religious affiliations you need.

Qualifications

For a civil ceremony, make sure the officiant is licensed to perform a marriage ceremony by being a county clerk, a Mayor, a Superior Court clerk, a Judge, a Magistrate or a Justice of the Peace.

Consult with your clergy

To assure that you may write your own vows and include specific readings or music to express yourselves. Find out if you have to follow specific guidelines. Once all is set, meet with your officiant even before your rehearsal, to go over and get an ok for every part of your ceremony.

Before making decisions:

- Consider your total available funds and create your wedding budget before you start planning.
- Have a budget contingency plan.
- Make sure to have a reserve. Budget to spend only up-to 90% of your available funds.
- Make the 90% the highest amount you are willing to spend.
- When calculating your expenses, be sure you include **taxes, gratuities** and other miscellaneous expenses. They add up quickly.
- Every aspect of your wedding comes with a price tag.
- Be ready to prioritize so that you'll have your dream wedding without going into debt.
- Look at various alternatives and choose those that are within your budget. This holds true about items as well as vendors and services. Do not sign a contract with any vendor or service provider unless you are sure it is within your budget.
- Go to <http://www.a-weddingday.com/archives/articles.html>
- Read as many articles as possible. Being well informed may save you money.
- Click on and Read the article: "**Stretch Your Wedding Budget**"
- Click on and Read the article: "**A Home Dream Wedding or Party on a budget**"
- Click on and Read the article: "**On a Budget? Have you Considered A Friday Evening Wedding?**"
- Click on and Read the articles: "**Preparing for your Wedding Part 1 and part 2**"
- Envision your dream wedding and be sure both of you agree on what you want.
- Plan your wedding together.
- Plan to have both of you present when interviewing wedding professionals, vendors and service providers.
- Be sure that the better negotiator does the negotiations. It may save you money and/or get you a better deal.

Bride's Name: _____ **Groom's Name:** _____ **Wedding Date:** _____

Things to consider:

- Formality: The more formal the wedding, the more expensive it is.
- Certain months, weekends (especially Saturday) and times of day (evening) are in high demand, thus tend to be pricier.
- Choose a weekday (Friday is becoming quite popular) and afternoon instead of evening and you may save as much as 30%. Additionally Since professionals, vendors and service providers are not in as high a demand, they want your business. Most will work with you to provide what you want within your budget.
- Food: A sit down dinner is the most expensive. It costs more than a buffet and much more than a breakfast or a lunch. To save on sit down evening reception, offer a chicken and vegetarian menu instead of Salmon and expensive steaks.
- Before you buy or book *anything*, go over every aspect of the wedding. Decide what you must have, what you want to have and what is nice to have.
- Based on your total budget, figure out how much or what percentage you are going to allocate to each area. Take into consideration that your allocations are not set in stone and that you may need to be flexible and willing to adjust.
- It's time to honor family and friends and pick your wedding attendants.
- The earlier you ask, the earlier you can enlist their help.
- Choose people who mean most to you, those you want to be a part of your special day. Most appropriate of course, are: Your children, siblings, best friends, childhood buddies, school mates, nieces and nephews.
- Keep in mind that as part of your wedding, the attendants will incur expenses and give you their precious time. So, keep them abreast of all your plans and progress, and show them a good time.
- Budget for special gifts for your attendants. Make sure that they know how much they mean to you and how much you appreciate them.

Choosing a wedding date* Consider:

- Your total available planning time as it relates to your work and/or school schedule(s)
- That the months of the year that will save you money, because wedding vendors are less busy, depend on the geographical location. November, January, February and March, excluding Thanksgiving, and Valentine's Day are considered slow months for most of the country. However, in hot climate regions summer is slower. Sunday or any weekday will save you money too, as will a daytime reception.
- Creating no conflict with Holidays, seasons, special family occasions such as birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, pre planned parties, etc.
- The geographical location of your wedding and the weather it offers at the various times of year
- The availability of your chosen Officiant(s)
- If you plan to have your wedding at your place of worship, make sure it will be available.
- Using your wedding budget before choosing your date to determine if to choose:
 - ✓ A local or a destination wedding
 - ✓ A formal, semi formal, informal or casual wedding
 - ✓ A Saturday, a Sunday or a weekday
 - ✓ A morning, afternoon or evening
 - ✓ Indoor or outdoor
 - ✓ Your wedding theme.

* After taking all of the above into consideration, select at least 3 alternative dates to choose from.

Budget Notes and Comments:

Bride's Name: _____ Groom's Name: _____ Wedding Date: _____

We Got Engaged

Sharing our exciting news in the order listed:

We Shared Our News With:	Date	Bride, Groom, or Both of us together	If in person, where	By phone, by Note, by Email
Bride's Children				
Groom's Children				
Bride's Parents				
Groom's Parents				
The rest of the Bride's Family				
The rest of the Groom's Family				
Our Closest Friends				
Friends' names				
the newspaper We sent an announcement				

Bride's Name: _____ **Groom's Name:** _____ **Wedding Date:** _____

About the Engagement Announcement Format

You may have your engagement announcement published soon after you decided on a wedding date or at least a month prior to your wedding.

The newspaper publisher uses the information you provide on the form to write the announcement.

Photo requirements

Send a professional, vertically shot, preferably a glossy black and whites 5x7 photo. Some publications accept color and emailed photos as well, but most publishers agree that black and white photos are best for reproduction as they produce a sharper image. Be sure to put your name on the back of the photo. Some, not all publishers will return your photos providing a request and a self addressed envelope accompany the announcement form and photo.

The form

Type the relevant information so it is legible and check it out to assure accuracy and correct spelling of names and places.

Our Photo

Bride's Name: _____ **Groom's Name:** _____ **Wedding Date:** _____

The following format is the best way to submit an upcoming wedding announcement to your local newspaper.

It is usually addressed to the Society, or Local News Editor

Full name of bride: _____

City and State of residence: _____

Education; Schools and colleges with degrees achieved: _____

Occupation: _____

Employed by: _____

Daughter of: _____

address(es) of parents: _____

Full name of groom: _____

Education; Schools and colleges with degrees achieved: _____

Occupation: _____

Employed by: _____

Son of: _____

address(es) of parents: _____

Date and location of wedding: _____

Additional information and – or instructions: _____

This information may be confirmed by calling Name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Relation to bride or groom: _____

Date of publication: _____

Name of photographer: _____

Signature

Date

Wedding Planning Lists

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GUESTS

First draft guest list

- The first draft guest list should include all of your relatives, co-workers, family, friends and people your parents wish to include, especially if they pay for the wedding.
- Decide on your budget and the style of reception you want.
- Get estimates as to the costs per person.
- Add all the other costs that are applicable to your wedding.
- Can you still accommodate all the guests you listed? If not, you need to trim your first draft guest list.
- When figuring out the number of guests, count in your service providers' meals as they expect to be fed.

Trimming your list

- Add **all** the wedding related expenses you anticipate and subtract them from your total wedding budget, to determine your reception budget.
- Divide this budget by the estimated per-person cost to arrive at the number of guests you can invite.
- With this information on hand, go over your first draft guest list. How many guests are listed there? Can you invite everyone?
- To find out who you can accommodate within your budget, make a 3 column chart. In column one put: **no**, in column two put: **maybe** and in column three put: **Invited Guests**.
- Place each guest listed in your first draft in the appropriate column.
- Check off everyone listed in the first column as they will not be invited.
- Copy the name of everyone listed in the third column to your invited guests list.
- Now check your budget again. Can you add guests and still stay within your assigned budget? If so,
- Go over the list in column two and choose who should be added to the list of invited guests.
- On your Invitations list, list all the guests from column three and those from column two who are to be invited.
- Your Invitations list is a great wedding planning tool for seating arrangements, favors, the actual invitations, RSVPs, etc.

Seating Assignments (See chapter about guests)

Favor ideas (See chapter about guests)

Notes and Comments:

Wedding Planning Lists

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OTHER IMPORTANT LISTS

Budget

- After you set your budget, make a list of all your wedding related expenses.
- Use the list to help you to figure out which expenses you will handle and which expenses will be paid by others.
- Remember to leave at least 10% as a cushion to cover unexpected expenses.
- Decide on the style of food you plan to serve. Formal, sit down, buffet, etc.
- Make a list of various menu options and mark each with its per-person cost.
- This list will help you figure out which menu to use and how many guests you can invite and still stay within your budget.

Attendants list

- List your attendants,
- List each of their roles and responsibilities,
- List all the components of each of their attire,
- List and record the gifts you plan to give each of them.

Pre wedding celebrations

Your list of pre-wedding celebrations must include the hosts, date, time and location of each.

Gifts for you

- Make a list of special items you want for your wedding and give a copy to the mothers and hosts. You may be surprised by how many guests to pre-wedding celebrations want to give wedding items that will become cherished keepsakes.
- Make a list of gifts you received and from whom.
- Use this list to send appropriate Thank You notes to each giver, as soon as you possibly can.

Gifts from you

- Make a list of special personalized gifts you plan to give to your children if you have a family wedding, to your parents, family members, special friends, helpers and wedding attendants.
- Next to each gift put the phone number, email address, store and web site of the location where it can be purchased.

Notes and Comments:

Wedding Planning Lists

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Wedding professionals, vendors and service providers

- Make a list of all the wedding professionals, vendors and service providers you plan to work with.
- Include their contact information and place their Business cards in your business card holder page for easy reference.
- Make a separate list for each professional, vendor and service provider.
- The list should include what items and/or services you expect each to fulfill and time schedules.
For example: **florist list:** The following list is exaggerated so you get the ideas.
 - ✓ Contacting florist by phone to set an interview appointment.
 - ✓ Meeting florist for an in person interview - Place, date, and time.
 - ✓ Florist - Contract signed, dated and delivered; place, date, and time.
 - ✓ Choose flowers for engagement party; place, date, and time. Ordered by phone, by email, in person. Time frame florist needs to set up flower arrangements.
 - ✓ Choose flowers for wedding shower; place, date, and time. Ordered by phone, by email, in person. Time frame florist needs to set up flower arrangements.
 - ✓ Choose flowers for wedding rehearsal dinner; place, date, and time. Ordered by phone, by email, in person. Time frame florist needs to set up flower arrangements.
 - ✓ Flowers to be delivered to wedding rehearsal dinner; place, date, and time. Ordered by phone, by email, in person. Time frame florist needs to set up flower arrangements.
 - ✓ Choose flowers for wedding ceremony; place, date, and time. Ordered by phone, by email, in person. Time frame florist needs to set up flower arrangements.
 - ✓ Flowers to be delivered to wedding ceremony; place, date, and time. Ordered by phone, by email, in person. Time frame florist needs to set up flower arrangements.
 - ✓ Choose flowers for wedding reception; place, date, and time. Ordered by phone, by email, in person. Time frame florist needs to set up flower arrangements.
 - ✓ Clean up if necessary; place, date, and time. Time frame florist needs.

Other lists

- Make a list of tasks that need to be accomplished and their time frame. Decide who is responsible for each task and be sure to mark its completion after it has been fulfilled. This will make planning your dream wedding easy and fun and keep you organized.
- Use and mark the checklist of items you need to bring to the ceremony and to the reception.
- Use and mark the checklist of items you need to take with you on your honeymoon.

Notes and Comments:

Wedding Planning Check List - Done

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Task	Person Responsible	Phone	Done	Date	Comments
Preliminaries					
Announced Engagement					
Selected a Wedding Date					
Decided on Wedding style					
Decided on Wedding Location					
Decided on Wedding Formality					
Decided on Wedding Time of Day					
Decided on Theme for Wedding					
Decided on Wedding Colors					
Determined our Budget					
Chose our Wedding Attendants					
Determined Who Will Pay for What					
Copy of Budget Planner Page for each Contributor to enter Their Task, Accessory contribution, Given					
Copy of each Monthly Calendar Page for each Attendant to Mark Important Activities, Given.					
Decided on Number of Guests. It may be changed					
Decided if We Want to Invite Children					
The Bride's Guest List, Compiled					
The Groom's Guest List, Compiled					
Both Guest Lists Combined					
We Need to, Start Trimming					
A List of Must Invite					
A List of May Invite					
A List of May not Invite					
Finalized Guest List					
Deciding on What Kind of Ceremony we Want					
Selected Ceremony Site					
Secured an Officiant					
Purchased Wedding Bands					
Selected a Reception Site					
Sent an Announcement to Your Newspaper					
Sent Out Invitations					

Wedding Planning Check List - Done

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Task	Person Responsible	Phone	Done	Date	Comments
We Plan to have a Home Wedding. Arranged for Necessary Home improvements.					
We Plan to have a Garden Wedding Arranged for Necessary Landscape Improvements.					
Ordered the Bridal Gown or Dress					
Ordered the Bridal Head Pieces					
Ordered the Bride's Shoes					
Rehearsal					
Rehearsal Dinner					
Booked Our Vendors and Service Providers					
Caterers					
Bar Service					
Bakery					
Florist					
Music and Entertainment					
Photographer					
Videographer					
Rental and Supplies					
Valet Service					
Accommodations for Us Including Wedding Night Bridal Suite					
Accommodations for guests					
Transportation for Bride and Groom					
Transportation for guests					
Provided each of the Wedding Attendants with a copy of the Responsibilities Pages					
Met with Bridal Party to discuss their Attire.					
Shopped for the Bridesmaids Dresses and Shoes					
Arrangements made for Men's Attire					
Gifts from Groom to Bride					
Gifts from Bride to Groom					
Gifts for the Kids					
Gifts for family					
Gifts for attendants					

Bride's Name: _____ **Groom's Name:** _____ **Wedding Date:** _____

Destination Wedding and – or Honeymoon Planning Check List

Task	Person Responsible	Phone	Done	Date	Comments
Travel Arrangements					
Passport(s)					
Visa(s)					
Birth Certificate(s)					
License(s)					
Arrangements for Hotel, Resort, Cruise etc					
Arrangements for transportation at Destination					
Destination Wedding Ceremony - Officiant					
Destination Wedding Reception - Planner					
Destination Wedding Accommodations for guests					
Arrangements for Guest transportation at Destination					
Arrangements for Tours and Entertainment at Destination					

Notes and Comments:

Bride's Name: _____ Groom's Name: _____ Wedding Date: _____

Brain-storming as we begin to plan our wedding

Choosing the Date

Season	Pro	Con	Yes	No	Maybe
Fall					
Winter					
Spring					
Summer					
Month					
January					
February					
March					
April					
May					
June					
July					
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					
Day of the Week					
Sunday					
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					

Bride's Name: _____ Groom's Name: _____ Wedding Date: _____

Brain-storming as we begin to plan our wedding Choosing Our Ceremony Date, Time and Location

Time of Day	Pro	Con	Yes	No	Maybe
Morning					
Afternoon					
Evening					
Other					
Style of Ceremony					
Religious					
Civil ceremony.					
Location of the Ceremony					
Local					
Out of town Destination wedding _____					
House of worship: Church, chapel, synagogue, temple, mosque, other _____					
A General Location: a home, a club house, a hotel, a museum, a gallery. a beach, a park, ar ranch, other _____					
Officiant					
Officiant – Clergy Which denomination: _____					
Officiant – Clergy for Interfaith wedding ceremony Which denominations:*\n_____					
Officiant – Non-clergy Justice of the peace, other certified public official. Title of the Officiant: _____					

Bride's Name: _____ Groom's Name: _____ Wedding Date: _____

Brain-storming as we begin to plan our wedding

Choosing Our Reception Time and Location

Time of Day	Pro	Con	Yes	No	Maybe
Immediately following the ceremony					
Same date but not immediately following ceremony					
On a different date than wedding ceremony					
Location of the Reception					
Indoors					
Outdoors					
Possible indoors reception location ideas					
Possible Outdoors reception locations ideas					

Notes and Comments:

Bride's Name: _____ Groom's Name: _____ Wedding Date: _____

Brain-storming as we begin to plan our wedding

Choosing a Destination Wedding

Possible Location in the USA	Transportation Costs	Who Pays?	Accommodations Costs	Who Pays?
Possible Location outside the USA				
We would like a Cruise Wedding to:	Cruise Line	Cost per person	Who Pays for us	Who Pays for our guests
Who will help arrange our trip to the Destination (Travel Agent)	What they will arrange for us	Their Fee	Will we get a Contract?	Comments
Travel agent Information:				
Who will help us plan at the Destination?	What they will arrange for us	Their Fee	Will we get a Contract?	Comments
Local Planner Information:				
Who will join us listed by families Such as: Mr. & Mrs. or The ...Family	Who pays for their Transportation	Who pays for their Accommodations	Number of Adults	Number of Children
Ceremony Location at Destination				
Location of the Reception at Destination				

Bride's Name: _____ Groom's Name: _____ Wedding Date: _____

Brain-storming as we begin to plan our wedding Deciding on the Size and Formality of Our wedding

Our total wedding budget is: \$ _____

Size of ceremony	Pro	Con	Yes - No	Maybe
Approximate Number of guests				
Approximate Number of adult s				
Approximate Number of children				
No children at the ceremony				
Total Number of Wedding Attendants				
Number of Bridesmaids				
Number of groomsmen				
Number of other participants - Readers, greeters, guest book Other				
Size of reception				
Approximate Number of guests				
Approximate Number of adult s				
Approximate Number of children				
No children at the reception				
Reception – How formal				
Black Tie / White Tie				
Formal				
Semi-formal				
Informal				
Casual				
Very Casual				
Other				

Bride's Name: _____ Groom's Name: _____ Wedding Date: _____

Brain-storming as we begin to plan our wedding Choosing Our wedding Attendants

Name	Reliable Grade from 1-5	Accommodating Grade from 1-5	Helpful Grade from 1-5	Will Accept Yes or No
Best Man				
Maid of honor				
Bridesmaids				
Groomsmen				
Flower Girl or Boy				
Ring Bearer				
Ushers				
Guest book & Gifts Attendant				

Bride's Name: _____ **Groom's Name:** _____ **Wedding Date:** _____

Hiring the Vendors and Service Providers Who will Complement our Wedding and Accommodate Us and Our Guests

- Accommodations
- Bakery for wedding cakes and baked goods.
- Bar
- Beauty and health
- Caterer
- Ceremony site
- Dance instructor
- D.J - Music and entertainment providers
- Florist
- Formalwear for purchase or rental for the groom and his men
- Invitations and stationery
- Jeweler
- Limo
- Officiant
- Photographer
- Reception facility
- Transportation
- Videographer
- Wedding gown, dresses and accessories for the bride and her ladies
- Wedding and party rentals

We also need to obtain:

- The following wedding accessories: Cake top, Cake serving set, Flower basket, Flutes, Garter, Guest book, Pen set, Purse - Money Bag, Ring Pillow, Unity Candles and a Candle Holder.
- Centerpieces and table decorations
- Favors
- Gifts For each other, kids, parents and family, wedding party, others.
- Reception site Decorations
- Locking Treasure Chest for Gifts and Cards

Notes and Comments: