



Wedding Costs

Couples Wedding Planning Questionnaire
Creating A Budget You Can Afford.
Who Pays For What?
Budget & Cost Sheets
Summary Of Costs

Couples Wedding Planning Questionnaire

When starting to plan a wedding, it's important to know that you and your sweetheart are on the same page. That way you will be able to make decisions independently, when necessary, knowing that it fits into the overall look and feel of the wedding. It will also help you avoid arguments with each other, and give you firm answers to tell those who will question your decisions.

You can choose to complete this questionnaire together as a couple, or print out two copies, fill out separately, and then compare answers. I suggest that you discuss the reasons for your choices thoroughly, as it will help you when making decisions later on. A disagreement now can help avoid a non-refundable disaster later.

If there is another person who will be an important decision-maker in the wedding, such as a parent, you may wish to get them to fill this out too, but I recommend that you start with the couple getting married.

Rate the following in order of importance (put a 1 next to the thing that is most important to you, through a 10 next to the thing that is least important to you):

- Food
- Liquor
- Apparel
- Aesthetics/Appearance (flowers, decorations, centerpieces, ambiance)
- Music
- Convenience
- Spirituality
- Photography
- Family and Friends

When I look back on our wedding, I want to most remember: (choose 1)

- How exciting everything was
- How romantic it was
- How beautiful it was
- How proper everything was
- How smoothly and easily everything went
- How happy my parents and family were

Circle two to three words that you think will describe your wedding:

Fun -- Romantic -- Classic -- Unique -- Loving -- Classy -- Tasteful -- Glamorous -- Elegant -- Funky -- Casual -- Relaxed -- Formal -- Themed -- Well-appointed -- Luxurious -- Decadent -- Old-fashioned -- Kitschy -- Preppy -- Sporty -- Morning -- Afternoon -- Evening -- Coordinated -- Cute -- Solemn -- Religious -- Secular -- Traditional -- Other

Even though you may not yet have put together a budget, or know who is contributing to your wedding, **select how much you think your wedding should cost: (choose 1)**

- Less than \$5000
- \$5000-\$10000
- \$10,000-\$20,000
- \$20,000-\$30,000
- \$30,000-\$50,000
- \$50,000-\$75,000
- more than \$75,000

I want to get married: (choose 1)

- in the spring
- in the summer
- in the fall
- in the winter
- on our anniversary
- on a holiday (Valentine's Day, New Years, Etc.)
- on my parents' wedding anniversary
- on another special date _____

Colors that might make good wedding colors (choose 3 or 4)

Red -- Green -- Yellow -- Blue -- Purple -- Lilac -- Amethyst -- Eggplant -- Lavender -- Wine -- Bordeaux -- Burgundy -- Sky blue -- Teal -- Royal Blue -- Navy -- Midnight Blue -- Raspberry -- Light Pink -- Hot Pink -- Fuschia -- Coral -- Magenta -- Peach -- Tangerine -- Apricot -- Pumpkin -- Orange -- Curry -- Mustard -- Brown -- Chocolate Brown -- Camel -- Tan -- Beige -- Apple Green -- Grass Green -- Kelly Green -- Mint Green -- Lime Green -- Moss -- Sapphire -- Deep Aqua -- Gold -- Silver -- White -- Black -- Bronze -- Copper -- Cream -- Champagne -- Vanilla -- Marigold -- Electric Blue -- Neon Yellow -- Blue Grey -- Grey -- Other _____

Once you have filled it out, use your answers to start planning your wedding. For example, you might use the budget number as a target to discuss with anyone who might help contribute to the wedding. If you both agree that flowers are more important to you than music, for example, you might choose to allocate a greater percentage of your budget to flowers, and save costs on music by having a dj or possibly foregoing the dance altogether..

Creating a budget that works for you!

Once you've finished basking in the glow of engagement, you'll find it very hard to get anything accomplished without a detailed wedding budget. This will give you an outline of what you should spend on each item, so as to ensure you don't spend more than you intend to overall. Here's how to create a wedding budget that you can afford.

Who's Paying for the Wedding

Although tradition says that the bride's parents pay for the whole thing, this is frequently untrue for today's couples. If you can pay for the whole shebang yourselves, you've got it easy. If you want your families to help you out, or pay for it all, you should have a frank discussion with them about it. You might say something like "Fiancé and I are starting to plan our wedding, and we wanted to ask you if you might help pay for it." You should be prepared for questions, such as "How much do you think the whole thing will cost" and some other questions that you might not know the answer to. You can say that the average wedding cost now is about \$25,000, but that you'll base your wedding budget on what is available to you.

There are several options:

Parents can say that they are contributing a specific dollar amount, and then the couple decides on a wedding budget and makes up any difference themselves.

Parents can say that they want to pay for specific items such as the bride's attire, the rehearsal dinner or the catering. The couple then has to figure out how to pay for everything else.

The couple can set a budget and then ask to split it evenly. This is particularly a good solution for divided families. For example, the couple, the mother of the bride, the father of the bride, and the groom's parents will each contribute \$5000, for a total of a \$20,000 wedding budget.

How Much Do You Really Need?

Depending on your area, budgeting about \$100 per wedding guest will give you a good start. This allows for \$50 a head for catering, and the remaining \$50 goes towards everything else – flowers, attire, etc. Of course, if you are only having 10 guests, you may have trouble paying for everything else with only \$500, but it is a good starting point. This starting point fits with the general rule of the more guests, the more formal and lavish the wedding. It is also certainly possible to throw a wedding on a shoestring.

Figuring Out a Basic Wedding Budget

Start off by using a wedding budget planning worksheet to figure out the basics. If you already know some of the costs, such as the hall rental, put in the actual numbers, and adjust the other numbers to make up for it. You can ask other brides who have gotten married in your area what they spent on vendors to figure out if these numbers are realistic, or need to be adjusted.

Making Room for What Matters in Your Wedding Budget

Prioritize what's important to you, choosing 2 to 3 "most important" items. Filling out the Couples Wedding Questionnaire may help in this process. You may decide that you want to have an amazing photographer, but you're happy to hunt for a bargain on the dress. If you're having a small wedding, your catering bill won't be as big a percentage of the budget. You can adjust your budget numbers to reflect your priorities.

Ways to Save on Your Wedding Budget

Start by looking through the budget and crossing off anything that you don't need. For example if you're having both the ceremony and reception at one location, you might not need to include transportation. Use your contacts. Don't be afraid to ask recently married friends who they used and what they paid. Ask friends in the wedding industry to help you out, and give you a discount if possible. If the numbers still aren't working out, ask yourself what's really important to you. Perhaps it's better to have a small wedding now, and then renew your wedding vows in five or ten years when you can save for the big party.

Once you've set a budget, stick to it. Easier said than done, but an important thing to do.

Who Pays For What?

The following is a list indicating who traditionally pays for what. This should be treated as a suggestion and not a hard and fast rule.

Since many couples are opting to marry later in life, they often cover the expenses of their weddings themselves.

The **BRIDE** traditionally pays for:

- Groom's ring
- Wedding gift
- Bridesmaids gift

GROOM traditionally pays for:

- Bride's wedding ring
- Wedding gift
- Gift for Best Man
- Gift for Ushers
- Flowers for the bride
- Flowers for the ushers
- Flowers for the parents
- Flowers for other special guests
- Marriage license
- Officiant fee

BRIDE'S FAMILY traditionally pays for:

- Invitations
- Reception
- Wedding Photographs
- DJ or Band
- Bride's gown and accessories
- Bride's trousseau
- Flowers for the ceremony
- Flowers for the bridesmaids
- Transportation
- Bridesmaid's party

GROOM'S FAMILY traditionally pays for:

- Rehearsal Dinner

BRIDESMAIDS traditionally pays for:

- Bridal Shower/Bachelorette Party
- Bridesmaid's dresses and accessories
- Wedding gift

USHERS traditionally pays for:

- Bachelor Party
- Tuxes

Wedding Budget

Pre Wedding Costs

ITEM	BUDGETED	QTY	UNIT COST	COST	TAX	TOTAL w/ TAX
Newspaper Engagement Announcement						
Newspaper Wedding Announcement						
Marriage License						
Wedding Consultant						
Wedding Planning Booklet						

Subtotal	
Total Tax	
Total	

Pre Wedding Costs

Invitations & Stationary

ITEM	BUDGETED	QTY	UNIT COST	COST	TAX	TOTAL w/ TAX
Invitations						
Response Cards						
Reception Cards						
Inner Envelopes						
Seating/Place Cards						
Maps/Directions Cards						
Ceremony Programs						
Save The Date Cards						
Announcements						
Thank-you Notes						
Stamps						
Calligraphy						
Matchbooks						
Personalized Napkins						

Subtotal	
Total Tax	
Total	

Invitations & Stationary

Transportation Costs

ITEM	BUDGETED	QTY	UNIT COST	COST	TAX	TOTAL w/ TAX
Bride & Groom's Limo						
Wedding Party Limo						
Parents Limo						
Other						

Subtotal	
Total Tax	
Total	

Transportation Costs

Ceremony Costs

ITEM	BUDGETED	QUANTITY	UNIT COST	COST	TAX	TOTAL w/ TAX
Ceremony Site Fee						
Officiant Fee						
Officiant Gratuity						
Guest Book & Pen Set						
Ceremony Musicians						
Ring Bearer Pillow						
Flower Girl Basket						
Unity Candle & Tapers						
Unity Candle Stand						
Misc. Ceremony Accessories						

Subtotal	
Total Tax	
Total	

Ceremony Costs

Bride & Grooms Attire

ITEM	BUDGETED	QTY	UNIT COST	COST	TAX	TOTAL w/ TAX
Bridal Gown						
Alterations						
Headpiece & Veil						
Gloves						
Bridal Jewelry						
Stockings						
Bridal Slip						
Bridal Undergarments						
Bride's Handkerchief						
Garter						
Bridal Shoes						
Hair Stylist						
Makeup Artist						
Manicure/Pedicure						
Groom's Attire						
Gown Preservation						

Subtotal	
Total Tax	
Total	

Bride & Grooms Costs

Photography Costs

ITEM	BUDGETED	QTY	UNIT COST	COST	TAX	TOTAL w/TAX
Bride & Groom's Album						
Parents Album						
Extra Prints						
Proofs						
Engagement Photograph						
Formal Bridal Portrait						
Studio Fee						
Location Fee						
Retouching Fee						
Photographer's Gratuity						

Subtotal	
Total Tax	
Total	

Photography Costs

Videography Costs

ITEM	BUDGETED	QTY	UNIT COST	COST	TAX	TOTAL w/ TAX
Main Video						
Subtitles						
Special Effects						
Extra Hours						
Photo Montage						
Additional Copies						
DVD						

Subtotal	
Total Tax	
Total	

Videography Costs

Reception Costs

ITEM	BUDGETED	QTY	UNIT COST	COST	TAX	TOTAL w/ TAX
Reception Site Fee						
Tent						
Tables						
Chairs						
Linens/Tableware						
Reception Décor Professional						
Reception Décor Do It Yourself						
Centerpieces						
Party Favors						
Hor D'Oeuvres						
Meal						
Deserts						
Service Providers Meals						
Gratuity						
Liquor/Beverages						
Bartenders Fee						
Bartenders Gratuity						
Toasting Glasses						
Wedding Cake						
Cake Cutting Fee						
Cake Topper						
Cake Knife & Serving Set						
Reception Entertainment						
Dance Floor						
Parking Fee						
Security Fee						

Subtotal	
Total Tax	
Total	

Reception Costs

Wedding Flowers

ITEM	BUDGETED	QTY	UNIT COST	COST	TAX	TOTAL w/ TAX
Bride's Bouquet						
Maid of Honor Bouquet						
Bridesmaid's Bouquet						
Tossing Bouquet						
Groom's Boutonniere						
Groomsmen's Boutonnieres						
Usher's Boutonnieres						
Father's Boutonnieres						
Grandfather's Boutonnieres						
Other VIP Boutonnieres						
Mother's Corsages						
Grandmother's Corsages						
Other VIP Corsages						
Flower Girl's Hairpiece						
Flower Girl's Flowers						
Altar Flowers						
Altar Candelabra						
Aisle Flowers						
Aisle Candelabras						
Guest Book Table Flowers						
Ceremony Entry Way Flowers						
Reception Entry Way Flowers						
Head Table Flowers						
Guest Table Flowers						
Buffet Table Flowers						
Cake Table Flowers						
Gift Table Flowers						
Aisle Runner						
Bouquet Preservation						

Subtotal	
Total Tax	
Total	

Wedding Flower Costs

Parties Costs

ITEM	BUDGETED	QTY	UNIT COST	COST	TAX	TOTAL w/ TAX
Bride's Maid Luncheon						
Luncheon Meal						
Luncheon Beverages						
Luncheon Favors						
Luncheon Facility Rental Fee						
Rehearsal Dinner						
Rehearsal Meal						
Rehearsal Beverages						
Rehearsal Dinner Facility Fee						

Subtotal	
Total Tax	
Total	

Parties Cost

Gifts

ITEM	BUDGETED	QTY	UNIT COST	COST	TAX	TOTAL w/ TAX
Bride's Gift						
Groom's Gift						
Maid of Honor's Gift						
Bridesmaid's Gift						
Best Man's Gift						
Groomsmen's Gifts						
Usher's Gifts						
Bride's Parents Gifts						
Bride's Grandparents Gifts						
Groom's Parents Gifts						
Groom's Grandparents Gifts						
Flower Girl's Gift						
Ring Bearer Gift						
Guest Book Attendant's Gift						
Other VIP Gifts						

Subtotal	
Total Tax	
Total	

Cost Of Gifts

SUMMARY OF COSTS

	BUDGTED	ACTUAL
Pre Wedding Costs		
Invitations & Stationary		
Transportation Costs		
Ceremony Costs		
Bride & Grooms Attire		
Videographer Cost		
Photography Cost		
Reception Cost		
Wedding Flowers		
Parties Cost		
Gifts		
Any Other Misc. Costs		
TOTALS		