

WHEN YOU'RE NEWLY ENGAGED

- You're engaged!—have some bubbly, bliss out
- Tell people the big news
- Avoid jumping right into planning ...
- Start pondering over what are your wedding priorities eg look and feel, budget, number of guests and destination
- Celebrate your engagement, this too is part of your journey
- Decide if you want to elope and ditch the rest of this list

12 MONTHS BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

- Create your master plan ... keep it simple and to yourselves as much as possible, unless you welcome lots of input!
- Begin your budget spreadsheet – decide who is paying for what, from here decide what is a priority and what is not.
- Create your checklist spreadsheet, often the small things get forgotten.
- Decide whether you require a wedding planner. If you do, find one who shares your wedding values!
- Decide formality and overall theme. Now's the time to sit down and have another heart-to-heart conversation with your partner. After all, the vibe of your wedding needs to be a mutual decision between the two guests of honour. What's important to you and why? What do you value?
- Start your venue list.....Remember, this is about what YOU want as a couple and then about pleasing your guests. Trust us: Choosing the venue is one of the most important decisions you'll make right now. Seriously, the location affects almost everything else, from how many people you invite to what kind of flowers go on the table. Explore your options, visit the top contenders, and ultimately select a place that fits your guest count, style, and budget. But when push comes to shove: Throw out that pros and cons list and trust your gut. This decision is about how you feel when you're there. You will know....
- Sit down and have your first of many guest lists chats and don't forget to ask your parents for *their* lists. Figure out how you're going to divvy up the list.
- Select your bridal party and ensure they are all available.

11 months to go

- Choose your look and feel for overall design. Turn to your Pinterest boards! Select a colour palette, and create a mood board. If you are struggling, look around you....your Instagram pages, your home etc... these are about you

- Hire vendors who book up quickly, especially your photographer, videographer, DJ, and band. Ensure you connect with these dream-makers! These are the people who will make your night fun—and lasting memories. Research, meet and research again!

10 Months to go

- Begin shopping for your wedding attire...especially yours! You may not know what it is that you want and that is OK...but just make a start!
- Book hotel-room blocks for guests. It's a thoughtful gesture to block out rooms for your guests.
- Create your wedding website now as you will need to put the URL on save-the-dates next month. Make it super user friendly. Take engagement photos.
- Start looking at invitations. The wedding invitation is your guest's first glimpse of your beautiful day! If you're going custom, start working with a graphic designer or stationer now to create your dream stationery, otherwise if you are going for a less involved route, you can wait until the six months to go. (Invites will be sent out just six to eight weeks prior to the big day.)

9 Months to go

- Finalise your wedding dress design. It's time to say, "yes to the dress" to avoid last minute additional charges.
- Send save-the-dates. Let everyone officially know when and where you're making it official.

8 Months Out

- Register for gifts. This is a must do for both of your involvement. Your home, your life together. When registering, it's smart to ask for staples—like sheets and pots and pans, and so on—but it's even more genius to think about what you really want. Are you adventurers? Aspiring chefs? Charity givers? Consider your hobbies and tailor your registry to your soon-to-be-married lifestyle.
- Select the bridal party attire and schedule fittings within the month. Take them shopping with you, ask their input. After all...they also need to feel comfortable.
- Meet with potential florists and décor companies. Much like hiring your other suppliers, you must have a connection. It is important that you find someone who is able to deliver on your look and feel.

7 Months to go

- Book the pre-wedding dinner venue.
- Hire the ceremony musicians. Go personal, make it your own from the procession all the way through to the last dance
- Order rental items, such as specialty chairs, linens, draping, lounge furniture, etc.
- You will need to hire an officiator to make it official. Couples can use a professional or take a more intimate approach and ask a close friend or family member to do the honours.

6 Months Out

- Check on bridal party attire progress

5 Months to go

- Book transportation for guests, if needed
- Book the bride and groom's transportation (limo, specialty car, etc.)
- Book the honeymoon
- Begin premarital counselling. Whether you come from a religious background or not, pre-marital counseling has worked wonders for countless couples. (The experts say so, and so do the couples.).

4 Months to go

- Begin menu decision making. Stick with seasonal, locally sourced!! Book menu tasting date.
- Choose your cake
- Buy wedding bands
- Think about Hair and makeup trial. Help your stylists help you by researching some particulars before you come in for your trials.

3 Months Out

- Order the invitations. Order enough of them and account for some mistakes, make sure they will arrive in time, set up a system for recording RSVP replies, and confirm all addresses and spelling.
- Final menu
- Brainstorm guest favours . You don't have to do favours or gift bags, but now's the time to decide.

- Book a photo-booth rental/lawn games/guest activities
- Write your vows
- Select readings
- Meet with the officiant
- Start crafting any DIY items if you haven't already

2 Months to go

- Send the wedding invitations (with RSVPs due one month before the wedding)
- Send out pre-wedding dinner invitations (these can be included with the wedding invitations if you like)
- First dress fitting. Just a note, your first fitting should be anywhere between two to three months after ordering, and your second one around the six-week mark
- Pick up your marriage license
- Buy wedding-party gifts
- Check in with ALL suppliers
- Give the song selections to your band or DJ
- Buy all small items. Just off the top of our heads, those include table numbers, cake topper, cake stand, cake knife, guest book, card box, ring-bearer accessories, flower-girl accessories, a cute hanger for your dress, and a garter. Also consider purchasing pashminas, flip-flops, and/or sunglasses for guests to change into at the reception, as well as baskets to hold them. Then, don't forget your signs ("Welcome," "Guest Book," "Dancing Shoes," etc.)!

1 Month Out

- Assemble gift bags (favours)
- Follow the same guidelines as you did for your DIY projects to ensure this task is fun, not frustrating.
- Pay your vendors in full. If there are some vendors who must be paid the day, assign a trusted individual
- Create your seating chart

- Have a final venue walk-through. Make a list of questions beforehand, and bring your planner or another close friend or family member to bring up anything you forget.
- Break in your wedding shoes. Walk around your hallways! Dance in your kitchen! Do everything in your power to avoid painful blisters on your wedding night.

Final Week

- Refreshing your hair colour
- Getting your eyebrows done
- Manicure/pedicure
- Getting a massage (why not make it a couple's massage?)
- Final dress fitting (a friend or bridesmaid should come with you so she can learn how to bustle if your dress requires it.)
- Pack your bags for the honeymoon (don't forget your passport if you're leaving the country!), and confirm your travel arrangements
- Clean your engagement ring (head to your jeweller to get your engagement ring professionally clean so it's extra sparkly on your wedding day.)
- Chase any RSVP stragglers and deliver the final head count
- Clear your work to-do list so you can only focus on wedding festivities and take it all in!
- Practice your vows out loud
- Eat a healthy meal
- Pack a clutch or small bag of personal items
- Drink water
- Get a good night's sleep