

The First Steps In
PLANNING A WEDDING



Part of the Wedding Day Collection
by *Jennifer Marie Studios*



LET'S GET THIS PARTY STARTED!

It's happening...you're ENGAGED!!! Congratulations!! What an exciting time for you! You have given your heart away and you have the bling to prove it. Now let the planning fun begin! However, if you are like my most of my couples, knowing where to start can feel overwhelming and daunting. If you are feeling similar, you are in the right place. Let's make an action plan for creating this fabulous celebration!

Get a Date.

Before you start searching for the perfect venue, you are going to need to have a date in mind. You should also keep in mind that not all venues will have your date available, so it is best to have a few options in mind. That way, if you do happen to find a venue that really speaks to you, you will have several different dates to choose from. Another option to keep in mind when selecting a wedding date and venue is to pick a day that is not a Saturday. Many vendors are willing to give a discount for booking on one of those days, versus the typical Saturday.

The Bigger Picture

Yes, the smaller details such as finding your dream dress and deciding on the flavor of your cake are all fun decisions to make, but before you even go there it is important to create an overall vision for your wedding. What style really speaks to you as a couple? What type of atmosphere do you want to create on the day? Are you going to have a theme, such as rustic, country, vintage, etc? What will your color scheme be? Creating a Pinterest board, where you can gather a few ideas to help with the bigger picture for your day, can alleviate some stress and help you narrow down your choices.

Have a Budget In Place

Your finances can very quickly get out of hand if you don't create a budget right from the start. Plus, you do not want to start your life together as a married couple drowning in debt. By setting a realistic budget before you start planning, you will make the entire process a lot less stressful. Looking up the average cost of each vendor you will want to employ for your wedding will also help you have a more realistic budget. You can then decide where you want to make cuts and where you think your money is best spent.

Draft Your Guest List

Not only will your guest list affect your budget, but it will also play a role in your venue search. Your guest list doesn't have to be final, but it helps to have a rough idea of how many people you think you will be inviting to your wedding. Be sure to discuss your draft with your family. They may have an opinion about who should be added to your guest list. Having that discussion at the beginning of planning your wedding could save you added stress and possible hurt feelings later in the planning process.

Become an Organizational Guru.

The more organized you are, the better your wedding planning experience will be. Keep a digital copy of all of your important documents, contracts and information in one file on your computer (or in the cloud), so that you can easily refer back to them when you need to. If you want to be able to bring important documents along to meetings with vendors, you can always create a wedding binder that contains all of the information you need. Plus it makes for a great backup copy too! Also, set aside one day a week to make your "wedding planning check-in day". Maybe you have nothing to get done that week, but checking in on your planning at least once a week will ensure that things do not pile up too quickly. Remember, a solid wedding planning foundation is key to designing the wedding of your dreams. So start the planning process off right!

Wedding Planning Prep

PRINT & GO CHECKLIST

- Choose a few possible dates for your wedding.

- Choose a wedding style/theme/color scheme.

- Create a Pinterest board to organize ideas.
 - Create a wedding budget.

- Draft a guest list and share it with family.

- Choose a venue based upon your wedding date/guest list/theme.

- Create a space to save all of your contracts/wedding vendor documents.

- Choose a day of the week that will serve as a “wedding planning check-in day.”