

Bells & Bowties Bridal Booklet 2025

Free!

ESTABLISHED IN 1866

THE BELTON  JOURNAL

How to pick a wedding date

After announcing their engagement, couples may need to get used to being asked if they have chosen a date to tie the knot. Friends and family members who are thrilled for the happy couple may want to know when the partnership will become official, but choosing a date is not always so simple.

A host of variables must be considered before couples pick a wedding date. Though the choice of date is ultimately a couple's decision to make, consideration of the following variables can help engaged individuals make the most informed choice.

• **Season:** Time of year is an important consideration when picking a wedding date. Summer was once the season-of-choice when tying the knot, but data from the online wedding resource The Knot indicates that has changed a little in recent years. The most popular day to get married in 2024 was Saturday, September 21, which the experts at The Knot note reflects a notable shift in couples' preferences that began in 2015. Since then, fall has been the

most popular season to tie the knot. Moderate temperatures and less rainfall likely contribute to that popularity. Before picking a date, couples can consider which time of year they prefer to get married.

• **Convenience:** The convenience of a particular date won't be the same for everyone, but couples may want to consider a date or season that is amenable to as many bridal party members and guests as possible. Couples planning to invite children to the wedding may learn from parents that fall, winter and spring are tough times of year due to youngsters' hectic school and activities schedules. Summer may be more convenient, but it's also likely that some guests with preexisting vacation plans may not make it if the date chosen coincides with their trips. There's no way to accommodate everyone, and couples should make their own preferences their top priority. But those with no such preference may want to look for a time of year when traveling to and from the wedding is convenient for as many guests as possible.

• **Holidays:** Holidays are another

variable to consider. Travel and accommodations tend to be more expensive on holiday weekends, and roadways also can be crowded during three-day weekends. In addition, many people look forward to their own traditions during the holiday season and other notable events, such as July Fourth and Labor Day. Before choosing a wedding date that coincides with a holiday, it might be a good idea to get some feedback from bridal party members and other trusted confidantes.

• **Local event schedule:** It's common for couples to inquire about other events a wedding venue may be hosting when shopping for ceremony and reception sites. But it can be equally important to consider events in the area where you plan to get married on and around the days you're

considering. For example, tying the knot on the same weekend as the Super Bowl in the city where the event is taking place may not be wise, as hotel availability will likely be limited and room rates may be much higher than normal. Even more localized events like harvest festivals may affect the availability of accommodations, so this important variable merits consideration.



EMPOWERING WOMEN TO FEEL *beautiful*
& *confident* IN THEIR OWN SKIN.

PURE



BLISS

Real Bodies, Fake Tans



PUREBLISSTANNING.COM

Wedding photos

Couples who hire a professional photographer to capture their weddings may end up with anywhere from 400 to 600 images, with some photographers promising even more. Although it is likely that a wide array of shots will be taken, couples who do not want to leave things up to chance should sit down with their photo professionals and discuss the key shots they want to capture.

Once the big day has passed, there will be no opportunity to go back and arrange missed shots. This list of must-have photos can ensure that the wedding album has all the shots couples desire.

Before the ceremony

- Wedding day outfits hanging in the wardrobe or placed over a chair
- Wedding invitation surrounded by bouquets
- Wedding rings side by side
- Outfit accessories, such as shoes, jewelry, a veil, and cuff links
- Bride and bridesmaids getting hair and makeup done
- Groom and groomsmen laughing and having fun
- Bride getting zipped up into her dress

At the ceremony

- Guests entering the ceremony site
- Ushers escorting guests to their seats
- Close-ups of the couple separately waiting to see their soon-to-be spouse
- Cute kids participating in the ceremony coming down the aisle
- Parents of the couple coming down the aisle or seated prominently awaiting the start of the ceremony
- Shots of all members of the wedding party

- Guests of honor, such as grandparents
- Partner coming down the aisle and the partner's reaction
- Exchange of rings
- First kiss
- A wide shot of the guests at the ceremony
- Signing the marriage certificate
- The processional with the newly hitched couple beaming
- Couple in the limo backseat

Portraits

- Couple with bridesmaids and groomsmen
- Bride and maid/matron of honor
- Groom and best man
- Couple with each set of parents and siblings
- Couple with close family members

At the reception

- Couple's first entrance
- Special signage, decorations or photos of the scenery
- Wedding cake details
- Toasts and speeches from key people
- First dance as a couple
- Father/daughter, mother/son dances, if applicable
- Couple mingling with guests
- Guests dancing and having fun
- Shots of the musicians or any special entertainers
- The cake cutting
- The couple's grand exit and wave goodbye

These are some of the customary images that couples will want to request. Photographers likely will cover most of them without prompting, but couples should be sure to point out any special photographs they'd like captured throughout the day.

Did You Know?

Where couples choose to get married:

60%

where they currently live

23%

hometown venue

18%

destination wedding



Choosing a location to get married requires careful consideration. Some couples prefer to get married in their hometowns while others want to jet off to far-flung destinations. According to The

Knot 2025 Real Weddings Study, 60 percent of couples

choose to get married where they currently live, 23 percent opt for a hometown venue, and 18 percent select a destination wedding. The truth is there are many domestic and international spots that are prime locations for weddings. The Knot says the French Riviera; Punta Mita, Mexico; Spain; Costa Rica; Portugal; and Greece are popular picks for destination weddings. People who want to stay closer to home often opt for the Hudson Valley and the Catskills, New York, for a farm or ranch wedding, and the Rockies in Colorado for a mountain venue. According to Google data and the travel and lifestyle firm Holidu, Chicago is the most searched urban area for wedding venues over the past year, followed by Long Island, New York and Dallas, Texas. Other popular cities for getting hitched include San Diego, Las Vegas, Atlanta, and New Orleans. Ultimately, wedding city location will depend on the couple's budget and guests' convenience.





Delicious and visually stunning cakes.



Get a quote on your custom cake today!

254-432-4779

858 S. Fort Hood Street, Killeen

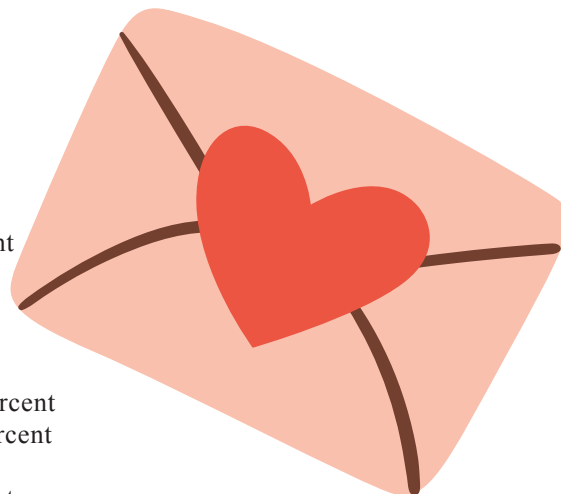
kittyskakerie.com

How to allocate funds for a wedding

Whether it's a lavish, black-tie affair or a laid back gathering in the backyard, a couple's wedding day is a momentous, and often costly, occasion. According to the online wedding planning resource Zola, the average cost of a wedding in 2023 was \$33,000. That's a significant sum for couples to spend, and it's understandable if couples aren't sure how to allocate funds for their big day.

It's important that couples recognize what's most important to them when planning their weddings. Recognition of those priorities can help couples determine how to allocate their funds. Equally helpful can be how past couples have spent on their weddings. Utilizing data from its The Knot 2023 Real Weddings Study, the wedding experts at The Knot (theknot.com) have calculated general percentages of a wedding budget couples can devote to various components.

- Venue: 37 percent
- Catering: 28 percent
- Band: 12 percent
- Wedding rings: 9 percent
- Photography: 8 percent
- Flowers: 8 percent
- Alcohol: 8 percent
- Rehearsal dinner: 8 percent
- Videography: 7 percent
- Couples' attire: 7 percent
- Rentals: 6 percent
- DJ: 5 percent
- Wedding party attire: 4 percent
- Guest entertainment: 3 percent
- Transportation: 3 percent
- Ceremony music: 3 percent
- Cake and desserts: 2 percent
- Stationery: 2 percent
- Officiant: 1 percent
- Favors and gifts: 1 percent
- Additional jewelry: 1 percent



Couples with a keen eye might notice these percentages add up to significantly more than 100 percent. That's because the budgetary breakdown reflects personal preferences, individual couples' budgets and what couples can expect to spend on certain components. For example, The Knot data indicates a couple that prefers a band for their reception instead of a DJ may need to allocate roughly twice as much of their budget to accommodate that preference. In addition, couples who do not intend to pay for wedding party members' attire can find other ways to allocate those funds, which The Knot data indicates typically accounts for roughly 4 percent of a wedding budget.

Another variable to consider is family. According to The Knot data, couples allocated an average of 8 percent of their budgets to their rehearsal dinner. However, couples' parents may offer to pay for that meal, which can leave more room in the budget for other expenses. In addition, The Knot reported that the percentage of couples asking a friend or family member to serve as their wedding officiant rose from 37 percent in 2015 to 51 percent in 2020. Wedding officiants do not often eat up a significant portion of a couple's wedding budget (1 percent), but this is another expense that modern couples may not need to account for.

Weddings can cost tens of thousands of dollars. Couples who determine how best to allocate their wedding budgets may find it far simpler to plan their big day.



Kenn & Kate Real Estate

Proudly partnered with Two Lakes Real Estate Group

*Serving Waco to Austin
and everywhere in between.*

Our mission?

*To make your home buying or
selling experience not just smooth,
but genuinely enjoyable.*

With both of us on your side,
you get double the expertise,
double the dedication, and a
whole lot of positive energy.

254-717-8036

kennandkaterealestate24@gmail.com

"[Kenn and Kate] were down-to-earth, efficient, and really knew their stuff...If you want a hassle-free experience with realtors who get the job done right, Katelynn and Kennedy are the ones to go with!!"

-Pickney Family

*Let's find a home that matches your vision for the future—after
all, why settle for ordinary when you can have extraordinary?*

Rustic Acres

EVENT CENTER



Jade & Kyle Photography

- Weekend rentals (Friday - Sunday at noon) \$4,000
- 5500 sq. ft. facility holds over 300 people
- Tables & chairs included in rental fee
- Indoor & outdoor ceremony site options

Contact us to schedule a tour & view available dates!

254-791-9010

8513 Fox Road, Belton, TX



www.RusticAcresEventCenter.com
RusticAcresEventCenter@gmail.com

Tipping etiquette for wedding vendors

Florists, photographers, musicians, emcees, limousine drivers, caterers, and waitstaff are just some of the professionals couples will meet and rely on for their weddings. Each of these vendors will ply their trades in the hopes of contributing to a night couples will remember forever.

Vendors charge a certain fee for their services, but couples may wonder if they should offer tips as well. When is it appropriate to tip wedding staff and at what rate?

A tip is never required but is always appreciated. That's why couples can build tips into their wedding budgets to thank vendors for the various services they provide. Here are some additional guidelines.

- Familiarize yourself with the contract and determine if the agreement already includes a built-in gratuity. A service fee is different from a gratuity.

- Be prepared to offer something to an officiant. Members of the clergy may not be allowed to accept tips, but a donation made to a house of worship often is customary.

A civil officiant is prohibited by law from accepting a gratuity in the United States, so keep that in mind if getting hitched at city hall.

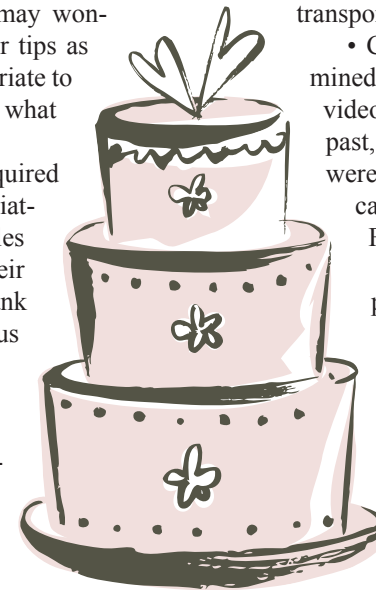
- Wedding planners, hairstylists, makeup artists, and catering bartenders and waitstaff can be tipped 15 to 20 percent of the total fee charged, as can a transportation company.

- Consider offering a predetermined gratuity for a photographer, videographer or florist. In the past, these small business owners weren't customarily tipped, but a cash tip always is appreciated. Fifty to \$200 is a standard tip.

- Think about tipping parking attendants anywhere from \$1 to \$5 the number of cars at the reception.

- Use your discretion when tipping musicians. Generally between \$25 and \$50 per musician and set-up staff is an adequate gratuity.

There are no hard rules regarding wedding vendor gratuities. Couples can bring cash along and enlist a bridal party member or parent to take care of tipping the wedding vendors who helped to make their special day memorable.



How to maximize outdoor wedding venues

When searching for the right place to tie the knot, each couple looks for their own unique spot. According to The Knot Worldwide 2024 Global Wedding Report, couples across the globe identify cost and venue style/type as the most important variables to consider. Nearly 75 percent of couples worldwide report getting married within 30 miles of their homes. And many couples prefer an outdoor wedding.

Outdoor weddings peaked in popularity in 2020, when the global pandemic forced couples to be creative as they sought to tie the knot with friends and family in attendance. Statista reported that 68 percent of couples hosted their wedding ceremonies outside or partially outside in 2020. However, Hudson Valley Weddings paints a more conservative picture of outdoor weddings today, with 35 percent of weddings now being held outdoors.

Couples hold their ceremonies and receptions outside for a variety of reasons, including the chance to tie the knot in a naturally beautiful landscape. The following are some ways to maximize the benefits of outdoor venues.

- Embrace the opportunity to accommodate more guests. Couples with large

guest lists may opt for outdoor weddings because venues with outdoor space typically can accommodate more people. Outdoor spaces can be vast and not constrained by the walls of banquet halls or restaurants — allowing guests to spread out.

- Include child-friendly elements. If it would be difficult to exclude children from the festivities, an outdoor venue can ensure kids have something to do. Kids tend to have high energy levels, and an outdoor venue gives them space to run around without crashing into something or tipping something over. Setting up a separate kids' play area also makes it easy to gather the kids in a certain spot, helping to keep children away from adults who are dancing.

- Take advantage of the aesthetic. Most outdoor spaces offer awe-inspiring features. Those who opt for spring or summer weddings can take advantage of cultivated, fragrant gardens or even fields of natural wildflowers. Fall weddings will be on fire with the natural oranges, reds and yellows of the changing landscape, which makes the perfect photo backdrop for nuptials. Try to time the occasion for around

sunset to make outdoor areas even more special. A setting sun can cast a special glow on the festivities. And save money on decor by relying exclusively on natural features.

- Get creative with food. Part of the appeal of being outdoors for the wedding is the freedom to offer guests less standard fare in regard to food. A pig roast for a tropical affair or even wood-fired pizzas or barbecue align well with an outdoor wedding. Caterers often suggest passed

appetizers for the cocktail hour and plated meals for dinner to cut down on insects buzzing around a buffet line.

- Design a contingency plan. Every couple wants the wedding to go off without a hitch (except for the actual getting hitched part), so it's important to have a tent, pergola or covered area to retreat to in the event of rain or strong sun.

Outdoor weddings are popular options that can add a special touch newlyweds will remember for years to come.



Unique wedding reception elements

Couples who are currently planning their wedding undoubtedly hope the day will one they remember forever. Weddings will be memorialized in people's minds and on film and video, and setting an occasion apart from other weddings and big events may come down to some creative touches that truly make it unique. Here are some interesting elements that merit consideration, many of which involve interactive entertainment.

Photo booth

There is a reason why photo booths complete with



entertaining props and various backdrops are so popular. A photo booth is a great way for guests to capture the day and take home a memento. Couples can review the photo booth images and enjoy snippets of unscripted and unposed moments from the party.

Live painter

Hiring an artist to capture the festivities can be a truly unique feature. While photography packages and wedding albums come with some turn-around time, a painting will be done at the end of the reception and can give couples a glimpse of the evening right away.

Interesting sweets display

Couples can elevate their wedding receptions by offering guests something that's a cut above a piece of wedding cake. A "Viennese Hour," also known as a "Venetian Hour," is a popular wedding tradition, particularly in the tri-state area on the east coast of the United States. This hour features a lavish dessert buffet presented after the cake cutting. Couples need not have a traditional Venetian Hour, however. They can offer a table filled with various candies, cordials, doughnuts, cupcakes, or whatever special sweet they want to showcase. Serve with monogrammed napkins.

Entertaining performance

Performers can run the gamut from cultural dancers celebrating a couple's heritage to magicians to even a specialized singer. In addition to a band or DJ, this performer can engage the audience and provide them with a bona fide show.

Signature cocktails

Whether a couple chooses an entire open bar or has select alcoholic offerings for guests, a signature cocktail can make the reception even more special. Tie the drink's ingredients or theme into something that pertains to the couple's interests or history. For example, if the couple sipped Moscow Mules on their first date, serve a First Date Mule at the wedding reception.

Couples can embrace various extra special touches to make their wedding receptions more memorable.



iMERAKi

FASHION FOR MEN & WOMEN



IT'S WEDDING SEASON

121 N. East St
Downtown Belton

CALL TO BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT

(254) 831-5101

Honoring loved ones at a wedding

A wedding is a happy day in a couple's life together. Couples who have lost loved ones in recent years, whether it's parents, grandparents, close friends, or siblings, may find their happiness mixing with feelings of loss. It can be challenging to fully celebrate in the absence of a beloved loved one who was supposed to be there joining in the happiness.

Responding to feelings of grief and loss on a wedding day can be challenging, but there are ways couples can pay homage to late loved ones during wedding celebrations to make the loss a little easier to bear. Here are different ways to remember the special people who are there in spirit.



- **Save a seat.** Reserve a seat at the ceremony and reception with a small placard that reads something along the lines of "In loving memory of the mother of the bride. She is forever present in our hearts."

- **Include a note.** Include an In Memoriam note in the wedding program with special words about the person who is missed.

- **Light a candle during the ceremony.** The officiant can say a few words and invite someone to light a candle in honor of a late relative or friend.

- **Carry a special memento.** Whether in the bouquet or in the pocket of a tuxedo, carrying a small souvenir that represents the deceased loved one. If there is an item that belonged to the loved one, it can be worn during the wedding. It could be a dress, a piece of jewelry, a pair of cufflinks, or even an embroidered handkerchief.

- **Toast with a drink.** The atmosphere at a reception is more lively than during a ceremony. Offer a toast to the person who is missed or serve their favorite food at the buffet.

- **Play a special song.** If the deceased loved one would be featured in a signature dance, like the father/daughter, mother/son traditions, play a song that was meaningful to that person and enlist someone to stand in for the absent person.

- **Request donations.** Set up a memorial table and make mention of the person's favorite charity. Ask guests to donate in the loved one's honor.

Remembering a special person who has passed on at a wedding can ensure that individual is honored and included in a couple's big day.



Where history becomes
part of your story



Bridal showers ♦ Full ceremonies ♦ Receptions

254-933-5860
www.harrisevents.org

401 N. Alexander St.
Belton, Texas 76513

Tours available Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm

What to know when shopping for a gown

Weddings mark a turning point from one stage in life to another. The significance of that transition is perhaps one reason why couples and their guests dress so nicely for a wedding ceremony and reception. Formal garb is a wedding tradition, and guests anxiously await seeing which type of gown a bride will wear. In western cultures, white wedding gowns have been the standard since the nineteenth century and are believed to symbolize purity and grace. In eastern cultures, wedding gowns often have been elaborate, colorful creations that have their own symbolic meanings unique to various areas of the world.

Shopping for a wedding gown can spark mixed emotions. While it is exciting to try on some remarkable garments, there also is the pressure of knowing all eyes will be on you while wearing this couture creation. Narrowing down wedding gown prospects can take vision, time and patience. The following pointers can help when it comes time to visit bridal shops.

Make an appointment

Many bridal shops operate by appointment only. That's because the staff wants to devote complete attention to a client, and having people simply walk in from the street can draw their attention away and/or lead to long wait times. Identify the stores you want to visit, and then call to secure your time slot.



Narrow down styles

Think about what your personal style might be and how you want to look on your wedding day. If you're not sure about the vocabulary surrounding dress silhouettes, visit Pinterest or Instagram and save images of dresses that you love. Then you can show the sales staff what you are thinking instead of going in empty-handed.

Keep an open mind

Try on a few different styles even if you have a particular dress in mind. You never know if something might be a better fit for your body type or the scope and style of your wedding unless you give it a go.

Start the process early

Unlike off-the-rack clothing, most wedding shops will have to order your dress and have it shipped. Then comes a few weeks for alterations. KWH Bridal notes eight to 12 months before a wedding is a good time to choose and order a dress. Brides magazine says most made-to-order wedding gowns take about six to nine months to create. There also are three separate fittings to ensure the gown will fit like a glove.

Invite a handful of confidantes

It's best not to arrive at the shopping appointment with an entire entourage. Pick, at the most, four people whose opinions you trust; otherwise, it could be a case of too many cooks in the kitchen. As a bride-to-be you'll already be anxious, and you'll want soothing, supportive people with you.

Plan your budget

Know well in advance what you can afford to spend. According to data from The Knot, wedding attire accounts for 7 percent of the average couple's budget. Most wedding gowns are in the range of \$2,000. Don't forget about additional costs, such as veil, shoes, alterations, undergarments, and any add-ons.

In addition to these tips, arrive to an appointment well-rested, fed and comfortable.



A full-service, family-owned floral boutique located in downtown Waco for over 20 years!



We push the typical floral design boundaries,
making a bride's dream day her reality.

254.296.2772

bloomingals.square.site

bloomingalsfloral@gmail.com

600 Austin Ave., Suite 16, Waco, TX 76701

Say 'I do' to these bridal jewelry trends

The fashion-conscious understand that the right jewelry can serve as the finishing touch to any look. Therefore, during weddings, when all eyes are on the happy couple, bridal jewelry can be especially important. Those who want to stand apart can look to these trends for their weddings.



Maximum appeal

After several years in which the mantra "less is more" has dominated, brides are now embracing the glam factor with their jewelry. Bold choices, sparkly items and statement pieces are favorites among modern couples, says Verstolo Fine Jewelry. Fading into the background has given way to bold earrings, bracelets and necklaces this year.

Floral jewelry

Riding on the coattails of the growing popularity of floral elements on wedding dresses, floral jewelry is big right now as well. Many designers are giving a nod to natural inspiration in their creations, and these pieces add a touch of grace and femininity to bridal style. In addition to floral jewelry made from metals and precious stones, some brides are opting for rosette floral ties made from ribbon or soft jersey fabric that are worn choker-style around the neck.

Pearls

Pearls are the latest old-is-new craze in the bridal world and even in everyday attire right now, according to The Knot.

Brides can wear pearls on their ears, wrists and neck, and pearls also are right at home on a bridal headband. Cultured pearls are a more affordable option than natural pearls, and can look just as beautiful.

Touches of color

Jewelry can be a way for the bride and others to showcase some color at the wedding. Why not make that "something blue" a vibrant pair of blue sapphire or blue topaz earrings? Couples also may want to opt for wedding bands with a pop of blue or another color rather than a plain band or a colorless gemstone, advise the style experts at Vogue.

Diamond cuff bracelets

Cuff bracelets have been a staple on fashion runways for some time, and they're increasingly spilling into wedding fashion. Diamond cuff bracelets are popular among brides and mothers of the newlyweds, and can be thoughtful gifts for these special ladies.

Jewelry is a personalized choice and should match the style of the dress or other attire. Grooms and groomsmen also may want to make jewelry choices, although they typically are more subdued than those for the ladies. Sparkling cufflinks or a gemstone tie tack are understated choices that can add a pop of style on the wedding day.




**BIG GUN
BBQ**

**For All Your BBQ
& Catering Needs**

(254) 290-5064

**BIG GUN
BBQ**



EST.
Luminous
360 PHOTOBOOTH
2023

- LUXURY PHOTOBOOTH
- MOBILE DJ SERVICES
- AUDIO GUESTBOOK
- 360 VIDEOBOOTH

(254) 654-7400
luminous360photoboos.com

UNLOCK
SPECIAL
SAVINGS
WHEN YOU
BOOK MORE
THAN ONE
SERVICE!

Instagram: Luminous.360_
Facebook: Luminous 360 Photobooth



Satisfy my Soul
TRAVEL

Book Your
**DREAM
VACATION**

SPECIALIZING IN:

- GROUP TRIPS
- CRUISES
- HONEYMOONS
- ALL INCLUSIVES
- DISNEY, UNIVERSAL
- FAMILY TRIPS

DeAnna Acklin
TRAVEL AGENT

Contact Me

951-707-9487

SatisfymySoulTravel@outlook.com

Satisfy my Soul Travel

THIS SUMMER ONLY: 30% OFF

THE
ADELPHIA

HILL COUNTRY EVENTS | WEDDINGS | LODGING



CELEBRATE SUMMER WITH
30% OFF BOOKINGS DURING JULY!

BOOK YOUR TOUR. PLAN YOUR EVENT. STAY A WHILE.

SALES@THEADELPHIA1875.COM





The tradition of bridal veils

Though couples can plan wedding ceremonies and receptions how they see fit, many weddings are steeped in tradition, some of which may be more subtle than others. One longstanding wedding tradition revolves around a bride's attire. Historians differ regarding the origins of the bridal veil, but some trace this tradition all the way back to Ancient Greece. Others suggest bridal veils were first popularized within the Roman Empire by people who believed that the veil protected the bride from evil spirits as she walked down the aisle. Traditions surrounding bridal veils even differ within various faiths, so the veil may signify one thing at a Jewish wedding and something entirely different at a Christian ceremony. Veils also have long been seen by some as symbolic of purity. Despite their long-held position in wedding lore and tradition, veils are no longer seen as a must-have. Nor are brides who choose to wear a veil beholden to having it cover their face as they walk down the aisle en route to saying, "I do." Regardless of how brides who opt for veils choose to wear them, there's no denying the enduring popularity of this tradition.





Time management tips for your wedding day



As any married couple can attest, a wedding day has a tendency to fly by. Couples have much to do on the day they tie the knot, which can make the day feel like a whirlwind.

Certain skills can come in especially handy on a wedding day, and the ability to manage time is certainly one of them. As their big day draws closer, couples can employ these time management tips to slow the day down a little bit.

- **Create and distribute a schedule.** A schedule can ensure the happy couple and all members of the bridal party know when and where they need to be at certain times during the day. Include all pertinent information on the schedule, including when and where hair and makeup appointments begin, when transportation to and from the ceremony and reception site will arrive and, of course, the start time for the cer-

emony. A printed copy can help, but a digital copy sent via text or email can guarantee the schedule is accessible via smartphone at all times during the day.

- **Collaborate with your photographer in advance of your wedding day.** Couples can streamline wedding day photography sessions by collaborating with their photographer in advance. During these sessions, identify the bridal party shots you want to take and then create a schedule of photos so all party members know where they need to be and when. Some couples choose to schedule bridal party photoshoots before the ceremony, while others prefer theirs after the couple has made it official. Regardless of which option couples prefer, schedule these photos so no time is wasted finding bridal party members.

- **Don't forget to set aside time to eat.** Anything can derail a wedding

day schedule if it's forgotten when couples devise their initial plan for how the day will unfold. Couples might be less inclined to forget hair and makeup appointments and photo sessions because such components are integral to wedding planning. But couples should not forget to leave time for themselves and their bridal party to eat. Schedule a breakfast for all bridal party members (separate ones if couples insist on avoiding each other until the ceremony) to ensure no one sleeps in and throws off the day's timeline. Include time to eat lunch if the ceremony is in late afternoon or early evening. If you forget to schedule time to eat, the timeline will almost certainly be thrown off when everyone gets hungry and requires some sustenance.

- **Go over schedules with your vendors.** In the weeks prior to your wedding, reach out to your vendors to

confirm the day's timeline. Do this prior to handing out a schedule to your bridal party so no one is confused if any last-minute changes are made.

Couples have much to manage on their wedding days. Perhaps no component is more important to manage effectively than time.



Tirzah
A Charming
Vintage
Venue

Tirzah | 115 N. East Street, Belton, TX | 254-760-9145 | www.tirzah.biz
Facebook @tirzah.oohlala | Contact Us for a Private Tour ♡

paperdoodles
PAPER & DOODLES IN A DASH

Everything you could need for your special day...
save the dates, wedding invitations, thank you notes and more!

254-773-8331
1401 S 31st Ste. C,
Temple, Texas
paperdoodles.com

Why it pays to hire a professional makeup artist for your wedding

There is no denying that weddings can be exciting, memorable and expensive. According to data from the wedding planning and registry website Zola, the average wedding in the United States in 2024 cost \$33,000. Prices for weddings will vary depending on geography and services.

In an effort to rein in spending, couples may wonder where they can cut costs, and one service that may be up for consideration is a professional makeup artist. After all, a bride and her bridesmaids may feel they already have plenty of experience applying makeup, and the plethora of online tutorials can guide them through areas where they may need some help. But before making a pilgrimage to Ulta or Sephora for supplies, savvy brides should realize there are plenty of reasons to utilize a pro when it comes to wedding makeup.

- Bridal makeup isn't like everyday makeup. A professional knows how to create a look that will remain flawless throughout the entire day. From the ceremony to the reception, makeup has to be durable, and a pro will know which products and techniques to use to ensure everything stays put, advises Shervonne Kitto, a makeup artist serving New York and New Jersey.

- You can actually save money going with a pro. Doing makeup yourself may not result in cost savings. Remember, employees at makeup stores may do your makeup for a reduced cost initially, but they are in the business of selling products. Many consumers walk away spending more in products than they intended, and sometimes the cost in getting all new bridal makeup could actually be more than if you relied on a professional.

- Enjoy time savings. Professionals who have mastered their crafts can quickly and efficiently create a desired makeup look, saving you time compared to a do-it-

yourself attempt.

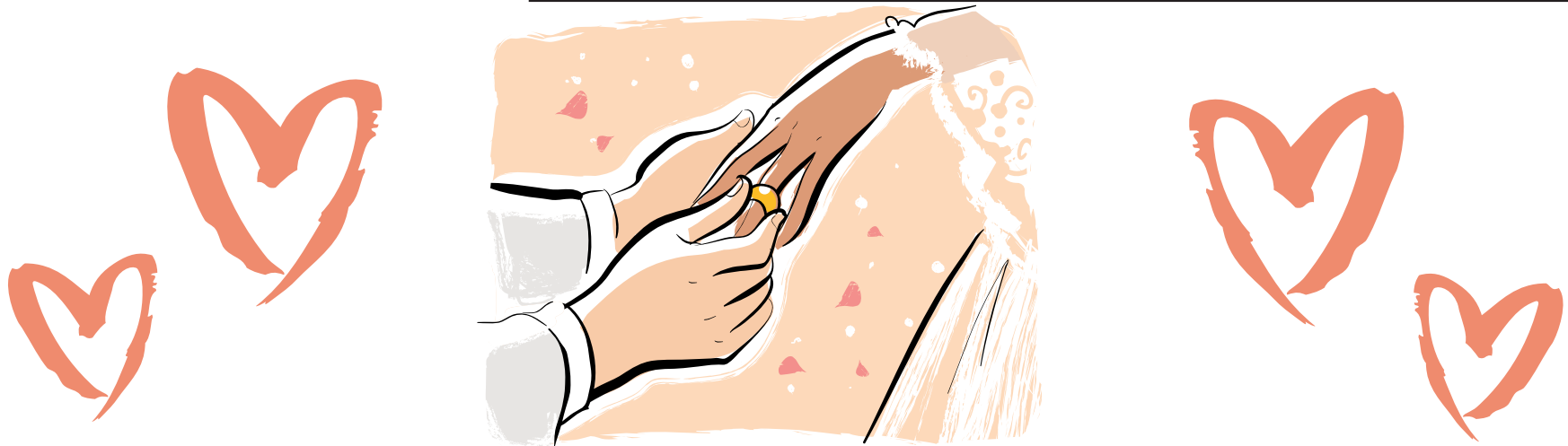
- Enhance your beauty. A pro knows which techniques to use to play up certain features and minimize others. This can help present the best version of yourself on one of the most photographed days of your life.

- Create a comprehensive look. Hiring a professional makeup artist means you can coordinate how you and your bridal party look, which can serve to complement the overall wedding theme. If you go the DIY route, you might end up with a bridal party with some very different-looking makeup applications. A pro may do some

photo-enhancing minimal touches for the gentlemen in the wedding as well.

- Enjoy time to relax. Having your hair and makeup done by someone else affords you an hour or more to just sit back and be pampered, something that likely will not occur for the rest of the busy wedding day.

When considering makeup artists, each should offer a free trial and be receptive to clients' needs and requests. However, it is worthwhile to trust the makeup artist as he or she ultimately knows how to craft winning wedding day looks.





The responsibilities of bridal party members

A couple's wedding day is one they will never forget. Guests' focus is squarely on the happy couple on the day they're set to make their union official. However, happy couples are not the only ones with important roles to play during a wedding.

Being asked to be in a bridal party is a unique honor. With that honor comes responsibility, as each person in a bridal party can do their own part to ensure a couple's wedding day is a success.

Maid or matron of honor

A maid of honor and matron of honor perform the same functions. The terms are simply unique because a maid of honor refers to a person who has not yet gotten married, while the term matron of honor is used for a person who has gotten married. Brides also may choose a man to serve as man of honor. Whatever title is appropriate, the person who serves in this capacity will help the bride plan the wedding, including being there to offer insight when shopping for a wedding dress. This person also may coordinate the bachelorette party and periodically speak with bridesmaids to ensure everyone is on schedule. The maid of honor will typically give a bridal toast during the reception.

Best man

Don't let the title fool you, as many couples now

choose to have a best woman. Like the maid of honor, the best man may be asked to help with wedding planning and is typically tasked with organizing the bachelor party and toasting the groom during the reception. The best man also can help to ensure groomsmen are on schedule with tuxedo fittings.

Bridesmaids/Groomsmen

Bridesmaids stand beside the bride during the wedding ceremony. They can help with planning and help to resolve any last-minute issues that may arise on the big day, such as a vendor arriving late.

Groomsmen stand next to the groom during the ceremony and may be asked to help the best man plan the bachelor party. Both bridesmaids and groomsmen also may be asked to help host events leading up to the big day, such as a shower or engagement party.

Ring bearer/flower girl

The roles of ring bearer and flower girl are typically filled by young relatives of the couple, such as nieces, nephews or young cousins. The flower girl walks down the aisle in advance of the bride, spreading pedals as she goes. The ring bearer carries the wedding rings down the aisle.

Parents

If they choose to do so, parents of the happy couple can help to pay for the wedding. The custom of the bride's

parents paying the entire bill has largely fallen by the way-side, as many modern couples now pay for their own weddings. Parents can offer to pay for the engagement party and/or rehearsal dinner, but such generosity is not expected of them.

Serving in a wedding party is a unique and humbling honor. The roles of each person in the party vary, and party members who want to do their best for the couple can study up on their responsibilities in advance of the big day.



Did you know?

The average engagement length is

15 months

Getting engaged is a momentous occasion worthy of celebration. However, soon after the question is popped, people in the couple's lives tend to start asking when the big day might be. Newly engaged couples may feel pressured to rush into setting a wedding date, but enjoying one's engagement for however long it may last is an option for brides and grooms. Some couples want to run to the altar in a month, while others are happy to stay engaged indefinitely. The Knot, a trusted wedding resource, surveyed nearly 170,000 American couples in 2024 to gauge how long most were waiting to wed. The Knot 2025 Real Weddings Study found that the average engagement length is 15 months. This number has held steady since 2022. Event Source in Canada says the average engagement length for couples in Canada also is 15 months. In general, couples across North America are waiting just over a year to tie the knot





Every
Bride
Deserves
A Perfect
Smile

SATW

— ■ ■ ■ ■ —

ORTHODONTICS

CALL Today! 254-773-8028
209 HILLIARD RD, TEMPLE
WWW.SMILEATTHEWORLD.COM