

Organizing for a Wedding

By **Tatiana Knight**

After eight months of preparation I was married. During that time I learned that hosting a wide scale event requires meticulous organization.

Whether you plan it yourself or hire help, it is your job to be the head of the operation. Many bridal guides emphasize the importance of managing your budget and time, but this article will highlight additional aspects to organize including your information, purchases, and presents.

Information:

Paperwork, photos and files will pile up, so it is important to get organized from the beginning and keep all of your wedding materials separate from your personal and professional files.

Not surprisingly, a binder is often the first item recommended for brides because it gives you a central place to save inspiration, lists, vendor information, contracts, and the like. Either buy a pre-made “wedding planning binder” or make one using Emily Co’s instructions on POPSUGAR.com. Store all of the necessary paperwork in the sections of your binder and remove anything that is no longer needed.

Organize all of your digital information with labeled folders in your email and computer documents. The blog “I Dream of Pretty Things” has an article entitled “10 tips on the road to I Do” where the author suggests creating a new email account just for wedding communication which helps to keep the event messages in one place and eliminates wedding spam from coming into your main email.

Photos are useful for inspiration and for communicating ideas to the other people helping you with the wedding. File the printed photos in your binder. Digital photos often come from various sources so avoid confusion by choosing a central location like your phone, tablet, computer, website, or an app such as Pinterest (secret boards are the best), and save all of the pictures to that one source or sync multiple sources. Keep the photos separated into general categories such as “flowers”, “dress”, and “décor” and remove anything you decide not to use.

Weddings call for a lot of lists, including those for the guests (wedding/shower/rehearsal dinner), responses, and seating arrangements, to name a few. I strongly



suggest using a computer due to the numerous rounds of editing. When inputting information, first decide how the lists will be organized such as by alphabetical order, his side & her side, or by family & friends so that it is easy to find people.

I used a basic excel spreadsheet with columns for the name of the guest(s), mailing address, number of people invited and number attending. The master sheet serves as a template for all other lists. As you make changes, it is smart to update the name of a document to include the date which you

last edited it and do back-ups periodically.

Purchases:

Weddings often include several items that the couple will need to purchase and bring to the ceremony or reception such as decorations, favors, cake knife, toasting glasses, guest book, and more.

I suggest creating a master list of the all of the items you plan to purchase so that you can check them off once you get them. Keep the receipts together so that you can update your budget and return any extras that are unused. It is also nice to store the items together so that you can see how your vision for the event is unfolding.

Do as much of prep work as possible beforehand, such as putting together the favors. I triple checked that I had everything, loaded it into boxes and laundry baskets, and took it to the venue before the wedding. The “I Dream of Pretty Things” article suggests separating items into clear plastic boxes for the ceremony and the reception with inventory lists for each.

Presents:

Presents pile up and become disorganized which is a problem when you want to properly thank the gift-givers. In my case, packages arrived in the mail, were given to myself and my fiancé in person, and were brought to the shower and the wedding. With so many different receiving routes, it was hard to keep things straight.

The best plan is to print out your guest list and leave space next to the names where you can write the gift that was given as soon as you open it. A second option (that I used) is to pile the gifts against one side of the room and move them to other side after they are cataloged. Gift cards should go in one spot for safe keeping and the gift receipts stay with the items.

After all the time and effort that was invested, the experience of planning my wedding was a fun and challenging time that I will always cherish. I feel that being well organized with my data, goods and gifts, helped me to feel more in control of my big day and I wish the very same to you.

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