

Wedding Venue Walk-Through Checklist

A practical worksheet to help you compare venues, uncover hidden costs, and avoid wedding-day surprises.

Venue Name: _____	Tour Date: _____
Address: _____	Contact Person: _____
Phone / Email: _____	Website: _____
Quoted Price: _____	Guest Count / Capacity: _____

1. Availability, Capacity & Overall Fit

- ☐ Is our wedding date available, and how long can the venue hold the date before a contract is signed?
- ☐ What is the comfortable seated capacity - not just the maximum legal capacity?
- ☐ Will our guest count leave enough room for a dance floor, DJ, photo booth, buffet, bar, and other vendors?
- ☐ Is the venue hosting any other weddings or events on the same day?
- ☐ What areas of the property are included in the rental?
- ☐ What are the exact access times for setup, decorating, vendor arrival, ceremony, reception, and cleanup?
- ☐ Is there a hard ending time, noise curfew, or overtime fee?
- ☐ Is there a bridal suite / getting-ready room? Is there a separate space for the other partner or wedding party?

Notes:

2. Pricing, Deposits & Hidden Costs

- ☐ What is included in the base rental price?
- ☐ What deposit or retainer is required, and is any portion refundable?
- ☐ When are remaining payments due?
- ☐ Are there service charges, administrative fees, gratuities, taxes, security fees, or cleaning fees?
- ☐ Are tables, chairs, linens, china, glassware, flatware, staging, or dance floor included?
- ☐ Are there extra fees for ceremony use, rehearsal time, additional rooms, or outdoor areas?
- ☐ Are there fees for bringing in outside vendors?
- ☐ Is event insurance required? If so, what coverage limits are required?
- ☐ What is the cancellation / postponement policy?
- ☐ What costs could change if our guest count changes?

Notes:

3. Ceremony Space & Weather Backup

- ☐ Can the ceremony be held on-site, and is there an additional fee?
- ☐ What is the rain / severe-weather backup plan for an outdoor ceremony?
- ☐ When must the weather decision be made, and who makes it?

- ☐ Is the backup space large enough for our full guest count?
- ☐ Is electrical power available near the ceremony location for sound equipment?
- ☐ Are chairs included and who sets them up / removes them?
- ☐ Is there a private place for the wedding party to wait before the ceremony?
- ☐ Are there restrictions on aisle décor, flower petals, confetti, candles, arches, or ceremony structures?

Notes:

4. Reception Layout & Guest Experience

- ☐ Where will the dance floor be located, and is it large enough for our guest count?
- ☐ Where will the DJ / band be positioned? Is the entertainment area close to the dance floor?
- ☐ Can the DJ see the couple, dance floor, and major formalities from the setup location?
- ☐ Where will the sweetheart / head table be placed?
- ☐ Where will the cake, gift / card table, photo booth, guest book, and other special stations go?
- ☐ Is there enough room for buffet lines without blocking entrances, exits, or the dance floor?
- ☐ Are there columns, low ceilings, room dividers, or unusual sightline issues?
- ☐ Is the room climate-controlled throughout the event?
- ☐ Are restrooms adequate, clean, accessible, and reasonably close to the reception space?
- ☐ Are there comfortable areas for older guests or guests who want to talk away from the speakers?

Notes:

5. DJ, Entertainment, Power & Sound

- ☐ Where can the DJ unload and load equipment? Are there stairs, elevators, long walks, gravel, grass, or narrow doorways?
- ☐ How close can the DJ vehicle park during load-in and load-out?
- ☐ Are dedicated electrical circuits available near the DJ location?
- ☐ Where are the electrical outlets located, and are they grounded?
- ☐ Are there venue sound systems that the DJ is required to use?
- ☐ Are there sound / volume limits or decibel restrictions?
- ☐ Does the venue use a sound limiter that can cut electrical power if music gets too loud?
- ☐ Are subwoofers permitted?
- ☐ Are moving lights, uplighting, lasers, haze, fog, low fog, or cold-spark effects restricted?
- ☐ Are ceiling hooks, wall mounting, tape, command strips, or other rigging methods restricted?
- ☐ Does the venue require the DJ or other vendors to provide a Certificate of Insurance?

Notes:

6. Catering, Bar & Vendor Meals

- ☐ Is catering in-house, preferred-vendor only, or can we bring in an outside caterer?
- ☐ What are the food-and-beverage minimums?
- ☐ Are outside desserts or wedding cakes permitted? Is there a cake-cutting fee?
- ☐ What bar packages are available and what is included?

- ☐ Is there a last-call time?
- ☐ Are bartenders, security, or licensed servers required?
- ☐ How are dietary restrictions and food allergies handled?
- ☐ Will meals be provided for the DJ, photographer, videographer, planner, and other vendors working through dinner?
- ☐ Where and when will vendors eat so they remain available for wedding formalities?

Notes:

7. Photography & Video Considerations

- ☐ Where are the best indoor and outdoor photo locations?
- ☐ Are there areas that are off-limits to photographers or videographers?
- ☐ Is photography permitted before the ceremony if another event is on-site?
- ☐ What is the plan for portraits if it rains?
- ☐ Is there enough natural light indoors for photos?
- ☐ Are there restrictions on flash, tripods, drones, or video lighting?
- ☐ Will venue staff allow the photographer enough time for sunset / golden-hour portraits?
- ☐ Are there distracting backgrounds, clutter, signs, exit lights, or service areas behind key photo locations?

Notes:

8. Parking, Accessibility & Transportation

- ☐ Is parking free and sufficient for the expected guest count?
- ☐ Is there reserved parking for the couple, wedding party, and vendors?
- ☐ Is valet parking available or required?
- ☐ Are entrances, restrooms, ceremony areas, and reception spaces wheelchair accessible?
- ☐ Are there stairs or long distances that may be difficult for elderly or mobility-limited guests?
- ☐ Is there a safe rideshare / shuttle pickup and drop-off location?
- ☐ Are nearby hotels available, and does the venue have preferred hotel or shuttle partners?
- ☐ Is overnight parking permitted for guests who should not drive?

Notes:

9. Décor, Setup & Cleanup Rules

- ☐ When can decorations be delivered and installed?
- ☐ Who is responsible for setting up tables, chairs, linens, centerpieces, and décor?
- ☐ Are real candles or open flames permitted?
- ☐ Are confetti, rice, glitter, bubbles, flower petals, sparklers, or other send-off items permitted?
- ☐ Can anything be attached to walls, ceilings, railings, or floors?
- ☐ Can décor or rental items remain overnight?
- ☐ Who is responsible for removing décor, trash, gifts, flowers, cake, and personal items?
- ☐ Are dumpsters or disposal areas available to vendors?
- ☐ Are there cleanup fees or damage deposits?

Notes:

10. Venue Staffing & Day-of Coordination

- ☐ Who will be our primary venue contact during planning?
- ☐ Who will be physically present on the wedding day?
- ☐ Does the venue provide a coordinator? Exactly what does that coordinator handle?
- ☐ Who communicates timeline changes to the DJ, photographer, caterer, and couple?
- ☐ Who manages ceremony seating, doors, room flips, dinner release, and cleanup?
- ☐ How many staff members will be working during our event?
- ☐ Who handles emergencies, maintenance issues, spills, temperature problems, or restroom issues?

Notes:

11. Restrictions & Policies to Get in Writing

- ☐ Music / noise limits:
- ☐ Alcohol / bar restrictions:
- ☐ Outside vendor restrictions:
- ☐ Decorating restrictions:
- ☐ Lighting / special-effects restrictions:
- ☐ Smoking / vaping policy:
- ☐ Pet policy:
- ☐ Children / supervision rules:
- ☐ Security requirements:
- ☐ Required insurance:
- ☐ Weather / force-majeure policy:
- ☐ Cleanup / damage policy:

Notes:

12. Venue Red Flags

- ⚠ Important promises are made verbally but the venue will not put them in the contract.
- ⚠ The venue is vague about fees, access times, noise limits, or cancellation terms.
- ⚠ The advertised capacity leaves little or no space for dancing and vendors.
- ⚠ The rain backup space is significantly smaller or less attractive than the outdoor ceremony space.
- ⚠ Vendor load-in is difficult, unsafe, or requires excessive stairs / distance without prior disclosure.
- ⚠ The venue has inadequate electrical power or restrictive sound-limit equipment.
- ⚠ The venue requires preferred vendors but cannot clearly explain the policy or fees.
- ⚠ You feel rushed, pressured to sign immediately, or discouraged from asking detailed questions.

13. After the Tour - Your Quick Scorecard

Overall appearance & atmosphere	1	2	3	4	5
Layout & guest comfort	1	2	3	4	5
Ceremony / weather backup	1	2	3	4	5
Food & beverage options	1	2	3	4	5

Vendor friendliness & logistics	1 2 3 4 5
Value for the price	1 2 3 4 5
Staff communication & confidence	1 2 3 4 5
Would we feel good booking here?	☐ Yes ☐ Maybe ☐ No

What we loved most:

Biggest concern:

Questions we still need answered:

Planning tip: Ask the venue to include important promises, fees, restrictions, access times, and included services in the written agreement before you sign.

14. Before You Sign the Venue Contract

- ☐ Get the complete final price - including taxes, service charges, gratuities, security, cleaning, rentals, and mandatory fees - in writing.
- ☐ Confirm the exact spaces, furniture, equipment, staff, and services included in the rental.
- ☐ Confirm setup, vendor access, ceremony, reception, last-call, music-ending, and cleanup times in writing.
- ☐ Ask that any promised exception or special accommodation be written into the agreement.
- ☐ Read the cancellation, postponement, weather, damage, and force-majeure provisions carefully.
- ☐ Give your key vendors the venue rules before the wedding so there are no surprises on event day.

Venue Follow-Up

Follow-up contact:	_____
Follow-up date:	_____
Updated quote received:	☐ Yes ☐ No
Contract reviewed:	☐ Yes ☐ No
Decision / next step:	_____

Final notes:
