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429 LAFAYETTE CENTER (Manchester)	(636)	527-80	09

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FROM THE PUBLISHER



s the publisher of Saint Louis Best
Bridal Magazine. I have firsthand
knowledge of the St. Louis wedding scene
– this year more so than others. In addition
to my role as publisher, I also held the
esteemed (and extremely stressful) position
of Mother of the Bride.

I have an amazingly organized daughter and I was honored that she enlisted my help in the planning process. I quickly learned that my role was to provide guidance on selecting and managing the local businesses, which was the perfect role for me as I consider myself an expert in this space. My qualifications are that I LOVE to shop, and (other than a noticeable Amazon habit) I am passionate about shopping local, always. I make it a point to get to know local business owners, and I consider many of them friends. I am loyal to their business, and I believe the feeling is mutual.

From my perspective, selecting local wedding vendors (or partners as I prefer to think of them) is a no-brainer. Why would you trust the details of one of the most important days of your life to a stranger? Knowing that these business owners are committed to perfecting their piece of the wedding day is crucial for your sanity.

My daughter and I considered ourselves lucky — we had already established relationships with many of these businesses, and as a result, they dutifully offered insider knowledge on the businesses we weren't as familiar with. We looked for great products and services, and if we didn't click with the owner/manager, we went elsewhere. This effectively limited any concerns regarding the day-of logistics.

Our goal with Saint Louis Best Bridal is to also be a local business partner to St. Louis area couples. We offer advice in all aspects of planning the day (and beyond). While much of this information is widely available, we infuse our content with local partners who appreciate your business and truly desire to make your wedding day absolutely perfect. Be sure to give them a look.

In addition to the twice-a-year magazine, we feature tips, trends and small business insights every single week online. Sign up for our newsletter, follow us on social media and bookmark our website at stlouisbestbridal.com. We want to be your local wedding partner and welcome your input. Be sure to reach out with your suggestions and ideas directly to me at tgriffin@bestbridal.com.

Seura guthi

ON THE COVER



Angle and Kyle Adams and their puppy, Opal, pose in front of the Stone House of St. Charles on Oct. 11, 2019. Photo by Chosen Photography LLC.

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inside SAINT LOUIS BEST BRIDAL











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true love

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- Taylor & Brandon
- Eliana & Tommy
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Wedding Stories

Cara and Gary's love story began with the bride saying he was cute and ending with them both saying "I do!" From Greek life to married life, Angie and Kyle sealed their marriage with puppy love. Bling was the thing at Chianti and Shaquon's classy, whimsical wedding. | Brandon flirtatiously picked on Taylor in sixth grade math class - years later he picked her to be his wife. Erin and Christian shared crayons in preschool, dated in high school, then committed to forever. Tommy met Eliana on a mission trip and made it his mission to marry her.



Cara E Gary

JULY 20, 2019

THE DETAILS:

CEREMONY LOCATION:

The Jewel Box

RECEPTION LOCATION:

ZACK

INVITATIONS:

Bride's Aunt Jackie

BRIDE'S DRESS:

Simply Elegant Bridal

BRIDESMAID DRESSES:

Bella Bridesmaids

HAIR & MAKEUP:

Emily Miller Hair & Makeup Team

MEN'S ATTIRE:

Macy's

RINGS:

Novak Jewelers

FLOWERS:

Stefanie Schilling

CAKE/DESSERTS:

The Sweet Divine

ENTERTAINMENT:

Downtime Band

PHOTOGRAPHER & VIDEOGRAPHER:

Tower Studios

HONEYMOON DESTINATION:

Las Vegas









































CEREMONY LOCATION:

Main Street Methodist

RECEPTION LOCATION:

Bluff City Grill

INVITATIONS:

DESIGNED BY: Jordan Design Co. **PRINTED BY:** Schwartzkopf Printing

BRIDE'S DRESS:

Frew's Bridal

BRIDESMAID DRESSES:

Frew's Bridal

HAIR:

The Avalor

MAKEUP:

Merle Norman

MEN'S ATTIRE

Frew's Bridal

RINGS:

Maneke Jewelers

FLOWERS:

Dick's Flowers Inc.

CAKE/DESSERTS:

First Stop Bake Shop

ENTERTAINMENT:

Complete Weddings Events

PHOTOGRAPHER & VIDEOGRAPHER:

Megyme Productions

HONEYMOON DESTINATION:

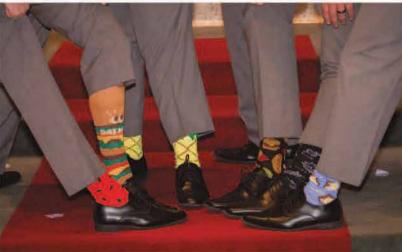
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CEREMONY LOCATION:

Marriott St. Louis Grand - Laclede Ballroom

RECEPTION LOCATION:

Marriott St. Louis Grand - Crystal Ballroom

INVITATIONS:

Paperkeet by Tori

BRIDE'S DRESS:

Maiden Voyage

BRIDESMAID DRESSES:

JJ's House

HAIR;

Kirshae Green

MAKEUP:

Nettie Kelley Cosmetics

MEN'S ATTIRE:

Macy s

RINGS:

Shane Co

FLOWERS;

Big Bow Events, Strategi K Studios

CAKE/DESSERTS:

Patty Cakes

ENTERTAINMENT:

DJ Reminise

PHOTOGRAPHER & VIDEOGRAPHER:

Endy Events

HONEYMOON:

Cabo San Lucas, Mexico



























































CEREMONY & RECEPTION LOCATION.

Sunflower Hill Farm

INVITATIONS

Minted

BAIDE'S DRESS

Martina Liana

BRIDESMAID DRESSES.

Lule's

HAIR & MAREUP

Tara Thiems

門直接計算

Joy Loveless

MEN'S ATTIRE

Bridal Manor

RINGS:

Kay Jewelers

FLOWERS:

Roses & Mirit

CAKE/DESSERTS

Amber Deady Custom Cakes

ENTERTAINMENT:

Block Rockin' Beats DJ

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Emily Broadbent Photography

VIDEOGRAPHER:

Forrest Knall

HONEYMOON DESTINATION

Margaritaville Resort in Puerto Rico















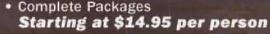












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Andre's West in Fenton 314-691-5650

Andre's at Brookdale Farms in Eureka 636-253-0867

Andre's at Fox Run Golf Club in Eureka 636-253-0867

Andre's at Oak Valley Golf Course & Resort in Pevely 314-606-0090



CEREMONY LOCATION:

The Bridge Church, Alton

RECEPTION LOCATION:

Post Commons

BRIDE'S DRESS:

The Ultimate Bride

BRIDESMAID DRESSES:

Frew's Bridal

MAKEUP

Gifted hands makeur

MEN'S ATTIRE:

Frew's Bridal

RINGS:

Jared of Galleria and Kay Jewelers

FLOWERS:

Dick's Flowers

CAKE/DESSERTS:

CAKE: Sarah's Cake Shop

DONUTS: Vincent Van Doughnut

ENTERTAINMENT:

DJ Shane Cox

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Kelly Drake Photography

VIDEOGRAPHER:

Zachary Thomas

HONEYMOON DESTINATION:

Cruise to the Bahamas





































CEREMONY & RECEPTION LOCATION: Stone House of St. Charles

BRIDE'S DRESS

HAIR & MAKEUP: The Color Room

DJ provided by Stone House of St. Charles

PHOTOGRAPHER & VIDEOGRAPHER: Chosen Photography





































Over in a While right in the widdle of an Ordinary life. fore gives us a fairstale





from our brides

COMPILED BY SARAH GERREIN



It's good to plan for perfection, but try to remember that many of the things that you'll stress about are not that important.



CHIANTI

Be organized. Have a planner. Don't wait until the last minute to order items. Box items separately by rooms and label each box: "ceremony," "reception," "cocktail hour," "bride suite," "groom suite," etc. It helps more than you know.



ANGIE

My one piece of advice would be to cherish the wedding planning experience! I know you will hear this a-million-and-one times, but your big day will be here before you know it! I was so excited to get married that I just kept wishing for time to fly by and it really did. Being engaged can be stressful at times, but it is such a special time in your life! Soak up all the fun moments of being engaged and getting to plan a wedding!



Get a day-of wedding coordinator! Whether it's a super trusted and organized friend or a wedding professional, you want to be able to enjoy your day and not be running around like crazy making sure everything is getting done correctly. Day-of coordinators are a life-saver!



Use small, local businesses if you can! Not only does using local businesses help your community grow, but they are so supportive and go out of their way to make your day even more special!



TAYLOR

Enjoy every moment! The wedding planning process goes by in a blink of an eye. Don't stress too much about the little details and focus on what matters most - the love you share for each other



BY NATALIE MACIAS

Ted and Erin fell in love with a vacant church and then fell in love with each other. Being fond of the architecture, Erin jumped at the opportunity when this church-turned-library in New Haven, Missouri went up for sale in 2018. Widowed at the time, Erin invited an old friend and contractor, Ted, to help her turn it into her dream home.

From contractor to husband, that old church building became the foundation that their love was built upon. One year later, they were married in their lofty home surrounded by loved ones.

"The sweetest part of our wedding was having all of our friends and family working together to make our day special," Erin said, "Our siblings, cousins, children, grandchildren and friends each contributed in unique ways."

From the handmade decorative ornaments to the porcelain Dutch doll cake toppers, every detail in their wedding day was significant to their love story.

"Every aspect of our wedding was touched by someone we love," Erin said. "I believe that it's most important that your day represents your love and personalities,"





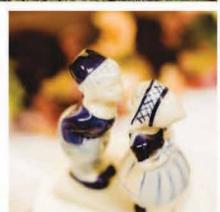
















BY NATALIE MACIAS & AUBREY BYRON

.maybleandmiliered.com

At Saint Louis Best Bridal, we have a mission to share locally produced products and services with our readers. We draw inspiration from the local makers and entrepreneurs with innovative ideas and services in St. Louis, and we have found that it is a mecca for creating unique wedding experiences.

Whether it be a custom jean jacket hand-stitched in shop by Daily Disco's Abbey Eilermann or your wedding bouquet pressed into artwork by Gold & Blooms' Audrey Carruthers, these are the small businesses creating one-of-a-kind products and services in St. Louis. Check out a few of our favorites to elevate your wedding game!



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FAULT LINE CAKES FROM CAKE HOUSE DESIGN

This cake style may contain the word "fault" - but we find none in it. Fault line cakes are commonly filled with sprinkles. but owner, Lyndsay, and her crew kicked it up a notch by incorporating an intricate floral design inspired by the bride's bouquet.

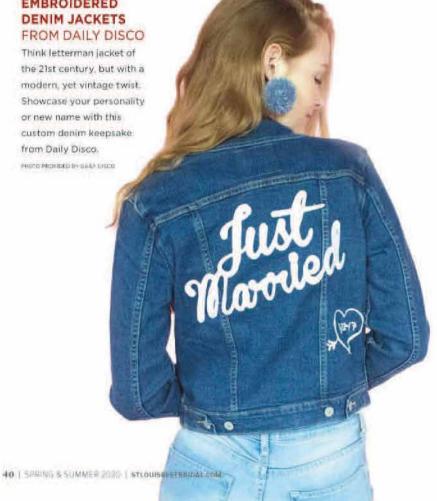
PHOTO PROVIDED BY CARE HOUSE DESIGN.



EMBROIDERED DENIM JACKETS FROM DAILY DISCO Think letterman jacket of

the 21st century, but with a modern, yet vintage twist. Showcase your personality or new name with this custom denim keepsake from Daily Disco.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY GALLY DISCO





SEASONAL **BOUQUETS FROM** FLOWERS & WEEDS

For those planning a winter wedding, one concern may be nagging the brain - what will the flowers look like? Not to worry - Flowers & Weeds specializes in creating seasonally perfect bouquets and decorations with locally grown flowers and plants.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY FLOWERS & WEEDS.

CULT & KING SET SPRAY FROM NOTCH

The botanically-infused styling and setting spray allows for beautiful sculpting of dry or wet hair that actually replenishes instead of harms your locks. Its smell+good benefits are made even better by its eco-friendly, refillable bottle that cuts down on unnecessary waste. PHOTO PROVIDED BY DENISE KOSSERIA

PRESSED **BOUQUETS FROM GOLD & BLOOMS**

Turns out there are more options than the white dress to be preserved after your big day. Gold & Blooms enables you to save a more colorful part of your wedding - your bouquet through pressed flower artwork. PHOTO PROVIDED BY SOLD & BLOOMS



PERSONALIZED GIFT BOXES FROM GREETABL

Looking to pop the question to your bestie? Maybe she lives out of town or you just want it to be extra special. Greetabl has the perfect gift to ask your best friend to become your bridesmaid! PHOTOS PROVIDED BY CREETABL You've been there for me through literally everything. Leauldn't imagine my big day without you by my side. Will you be my baldeanned? Maddy bridesmaid? -Anno XoXo

CRAFT BREW COFFEE FROM KALEIDOSCOPE

Craft coffee has never looked cooler (or tasted better). Keep your wedding guests caffeinated in style with Kaleidoscope Craft Brew Coffee's vintage brew trucks

PHOTO PROVIDED BY MALEIBOSCOPE



GET organized

SET PRIORITIES, DECIDE WHO PAYS, LIST TRANSACTIONS

COMPILED BY SARAH GERREIN

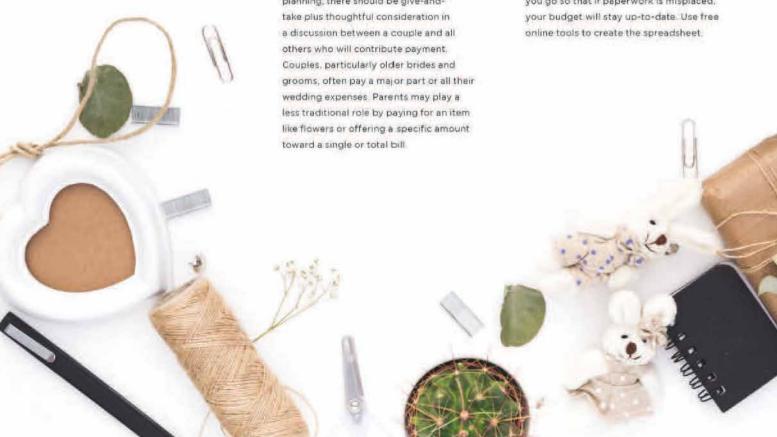
The wedding planning process is not magical, and heavenly intervention should not be expected. From start to finish, organization is imperative. A few management priorities help keep wedding planning in check and on schedule.

SIT DOWN AND DECIDE

Before setting plans in motion, decide who can pay for what. Whether a couple is established or starting out, financial priorities must be considered as the vision of the wedding unfolds. For smooth planning, there should be give-andtake plus thoughtful consideration in a discussion between a couple and all others who will contribute payment. Couples, particularly older brides and wedding expenses. Parents may play a less traditional role by paying for an item like flowers or offering a specific amount toward a single or total bill

MAKE A SPREADSHEET

Organize a spreadsheet with three expense columns. Estimated, Modified and Actual. Color-code, divide and title it in any way that makes sense to you Make a commitment to tracking expenses as you go so that if paperwork is misplaced.





3

LIST EVERY DETAIL

Not knowing what is due and when a bill should be paid disorganizes brides and grooms and any other person responsible for making payments. Record each purchase. Note how it was bought – by check, credit or cash. Was it paid online? Extra columns show how much is due, by when and how you expect to pay. Immediately list an expense when incurred and paid even in part, filling in appropriate columns with details.



SAVE ALL RECEIPTS

Print out every receipt for the wedding and designate a large envelope to hold them. Knowing where each nickel and dime goes lets you envision the path your budget should follow. Receipts help avoid overlooked minor expenses. Even a few dollars misplaced here and there can overrun a careful budget.



BE SELECTIVE AND PRIORITIZE FOR SMART BALANCE OF BUDGET

Prime areas to weigh: number of attendants and guests, food and drink, stationery, gifts, handmade details, exotic flowers, takeaway gifts

WEDDING PLANNING GUIDE

You've found the love of your life and the two of you are getting married!

Now what?

Your wedding is one of the most complex events you, your spouse-to-be and your families may ever orchestrate. A solid plan moves the process forward so the anticipation is pleasant. This timeline and checklist helps organize details from a chaotic start into the happiest celebration of your lives.

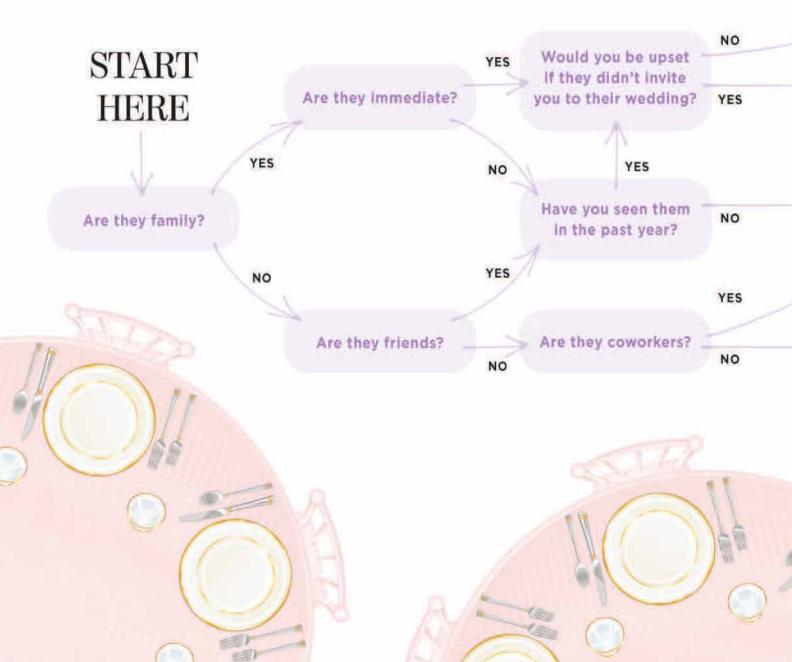
9-12 MONTHS

- Select a date and time for the wedding
- Arrange for parents to get together, perhaps at an engagement party or informally over dinner
- Begin to compile guest list
- Discuss budget with everyone who may contribute financially, establish priorities, including honeymoon
- Interview potential wedding planners
- Select officiant and visit with him or her to discuss wedding preparation and procedures
- Select catering service if not provided by reception site
- Visit stiouisbestbridal.com to announce - for free - your engagement online and in the local St. Louis Post-Dispatch newspaper
- Choose members of the wedding party
- Research legal rules for marriage license in location where you will wed, and immediately add dates to implement them to a calendar
- Narrow down ceremony and reception sites and book them (a popular location may book 18 months in advance or open reservations only 12 months before)
- Close in on style, theme and colors

WHO makes the cut?

BY AUBREY BYRON.

One of the most harrowing parts of planning the wedding is the dreaded question—who gets an invite? While there are many people in your life you may love, here are some helpful tips for who should actually be there for the celebration of your life with your new spouse.







WEDDING PLANNING GUIDE

6-9 MONTHS

- Book photographer and videographer
- Book ceremony musicians and reception band or DJ
- Reserve party rental equipment (tables, chairs, tents, lighting, linens)
- Shop for and order bridal gown and accessories
- Select florist
- Select bridesmaids' dresses
- Close in on final guest list, addresses
- Arrange wedding cake tastings, then order a favorite
- Research honeymoon spots and select travel agent
- Mail save-the-date cards, especially for destination or holiday wedding
- Make master to-do list; keep copies only with those who need to know
- Consider items for registry

4-6 MONTHS

- Order wedding invitations, thank-you notes and personal stationery (earlier is better)
- Attend pre-wedding counseling as required or desired
- Reserve location of rehearsal dinner
- Arrange lodging for out-of-towners
- Select and order formalwear for men, schedule fittings
- Complete registry
- Reserve wedding-day transportation as needed: to the ceremony, from ceremony to reception, from reception to after-party or where you will spend your wedding night
- Meet with travel agent to plan honeymoon and make reservations
- Secure travel documentation, renew/get passports if needed

Wedding websites: a must-have

BY NATALIE MACIAS

Planning a wedding can be tedious and overwhelming. The task of communicating all of your hard work and detailed plans to your guests is a big part of the stress. Before the digital age, mailing save-the-dates, creating excel spreadsheets and juggling RSVPs required the multitasking skills of a professional. If you are planning your wedding and wondering where to start — a wedding website, a bride and groom's ultimate planning and communication tool — may make your life a lot easier.

Some of the most popular wedding websites include The Knot, Zola, Minted, WeddingWire and Wix.

All of these services are free, with the exception of premium package upgrades.

WHY CREATE A WEDDING WEBSITE?

EASY TO SET UP, EASY TO NAVIGATE

Even if you've never worked in InDesign or Photoshop in your entire life, these sites make putting together a website a piece of cake. No knowledge of coding is required to build a beautiful site with engaging content for your guests. Simply choose a layout that fits your style (bonus some even let your website match your save-the-dates and invites), follow the easy-to-navigate steps and your wedding website is ready to share with guests. These websites afford a ton of space to share information that you could not on a traditional invitation and also allow guests the opportunity to learn more about you as a couple

EASY FOR GUESTS TO NAVIGATE TOO

Once your website is created, list your URL on your save-the-dates and invites so quests can quickly find your page. Upon searching your URL, guests will enter your awesome new website and find all the details of your big day. From your wedding party and travel information to things to do for out-of-towners to your registry; all the information is in one place. This allows you to easily set expectations for the wedding and add in all those little details that either don't fit on your invite or seem odd to list. Examples can include attire guidelines, cash bar, a no-alcohol reception or your request for an unplugged wedding

WEDDING PLANNING GUIDE

GUESTS GET TO KNOW YOU (AND YOUR FRIENDS) ON A MORE PERSONAL LEVEL

Wedding websites are a window to the bride and groom's personality as a couple Couples often upload their engagement photos and tell their love story. They can also profile the wedding party with pictures and descriptions of their closest friends and relatives. These personal touches make guests excited for the event and help increase the likelihood they'll attend. If they know more about you, guests will appreciate and understand the unique touches at your wedding, too.

COST-EFFECTIVE (AND GOOD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT)

The need for a hand-mailed RSVPs can be eliminated altogether. Issuing invitations through your wedding website will save you money on purchasing printed and mailing invites, It's a win-win for both parties involved (and saves a few trees along the way.) Collecting RSVPs through your site also keeps the responses organized and captures details on food choices in a way that's easy to deliver to your caterer Remember, your website's goal is to keep guests informed and pumped about the big day. Make sure it's detailed, fun and all-inclusive to make the day a success for yourself and your honored guests.

2-4 MONTHS

- Finish addressing invitations and send
- Meet with caterer to discuss plans for food at the reception
- Complete honeymoon plans
- If not already noted on calendars, fill in time for securing marriage license
- Select and order wedding rings
- Set appointments with hairstylist/makeup consultant for rehearsal and wedding day
- Choose favors and guest book
- Complete cake order, if necessary
- Book room for wedding night
- Create wedding website



DIY or Don't?

WHEN TO SAVE MONEY AND WHEN TO SAVE TIME

BY AUBREY BYRON

The do-it-yourself revolution has taken wedding planning by storm. The Pinterest board solutions cover everything from origami-inspired decorations to in-depth self-catering guides. But when is it worth it to craft and when are you biting off way more than you want to chew? Here's our guide for how to keep wedding crafting fun and not a logistical nightmare.

TABLE DECORATIONS

Table decorations can range from elegant bouquets to fun bursts of personality — like book stacks, vintage cameras or terrariums and bird cages. Whatever your style, a table decoration is the perfect place to make your wedding your own Plan a gals' night and break out the paint brushes, glitter and tulle. Not only can you save some dough, but it's an opportunity to spend crafting time with your most creative pals!

CAKE

Listen, everyone has a great aunt who has "just the best recipe," and perhaps they offered to make your wedding cake after a couple glasses of wine. But unless that family member owns a catering business, this one is best left to the professionals. The cake (if that's what you decide your dessert of choice should be) is often a centerpiece of the reception. Don't strain your relationships or your precious little time in the days leading up to the big day, and let the pros deliver!

SEATING CHART

Upcycled shutters with hanging clothespins, painted glass or small, framed calligraphy on the table — the options for making your own seating chart are endless. No matter your creativity level, this is a doable place to let your personality show and make something that matches you and your spouse-to-be's style. Use vinyl records or a hat tip to your favorite sports team! Don't be afraid to employ the help of a friend on this one. Call up your bridesmalds with the best handwriting and have a fun bonding night over wine!

DIY



DON'T



DIY





NO MATTER YOUR CRAFT, YOU'RE GOING TO NEED HELP!

No need to let your wedding planning take you away from your social circle. Call your aunts or your wedding party, and see if they're willing to lend a hand!

FLOWERS

Flowers are an expensive part of the ceremony, and maybe you've read a thing or two about doing your own but unless you are familiar with botanicals — this one is best left to the florists. Certain flowers like daffodils can prematurely kill the other flowers in your bouquet. Plus if stored incorrectly, some flowers can wilt quickly, especially during a summer wedding. If you want to avoid dead botanicals in your wedding photos for a lifetime, it's best to play it safe and skip the floral DIY

INVITATIONS

Whether you are dying to try the pocket invitation trend or just looking for a place to save, wedding invitations are a surprisingly doable place to create a little bit of room in your budget. There are endless free templates online that cater to any wedding colors or style. Or spring for some calligraphy pens and make something your friends and family will want to save.

DON'T





WEDDING PLANNING GUIDE

4-8 WEEKS

- Plan menus for rehearsal dinner
- Pick up wedding rings, arrange for engraving or check for accuracy
- Have final fitting of wedding gown, make alteration appointment
- Have run-through of bridal hair and makeup; experiment now, not later
- Check that bridesmaids have arranged fittings for their gowns, groomsmen for tuxedos/suits and shoes
- Draw up seating plan for ceremony and reception
- Submit song lists to ceremony musician and reception band or DJ
- Finalize plans with every wedding vendor, including photographer
- Select gifts for parents, attendants and each other
- Mail invitations six weeks before wedding, earlier if destination wedding or if many travel, design, test-drive map for out-of-towners
- Decide on any insurance policies and name-change documents
- Write and order programs for ceremony
- Attend bridal shower(s)
- Purchase travel insurance for honeymoon

2-4 WEEKS

- Final gown alteration appointment, bring along maid of honor to learn how to bustle
- Prepare information to announce wedding after the big day at stlouisbestbridal.com
- Write vows, if desired, write toasts
- Review guest list and provide caterer with final counts
- Finalize seating arrangements and finish place cards for reception
- Provide rehearsal and wedding day schedules to wedding party
- Arrange gift transport from reception
- Bride has last pre-wedding haircut and coloring
- Be certain names on photo IDs and/or passports match honeymoon plane tickets and reservations
- Everyone: Break in shoes

Zero-Waste wedding tips

CONTENT BY KATHERINE ROTH, ASSOCIATED PRESS.

To protect the environment, many couples are saying "I do" to Zero-Waste weddings, focusing on sustainability for everything from floral design and dresses to invitations and food.



ATTIRE

Like tables, chairs and linens, wedding dresses and tuxedos can be rented. Vintage or second-hand dresses are also popular, and can be tailored to size. Some designers now make Zero-Waste dresses using fabric scraps otherwise destined for the trash.

"Zero-Waste weddings are a recent trend in France. This year I even designed a wedding dress for a client made from pieces of her grandmother's wedding dress," says Laetitia Drouet of the French-based Kamelion Couture.



FOOD & DECOR

Choose cloth napkins and authentic tableware, glassware and plates, rather than disposables

"it's easy enough to rent, borrow or find things at thrift shops," says Kellogg, who used her abundant collection of Mason jars and borrowed items for her reception.

"Sometimes an eclectic mix of plates and glasses can be fun," says Johnson. She and Johnson both recommend colorful displays of fruits, vegetables or even flower petals as table centerpieces that guests can take home and enjoy.



GIFTS

"Instead of traditional wedding gifts, we asked guests to each bring a side dish or something to drink, and contribute to our honeymoon fund," Kellogg says

Other couples ask for donations to their favorite charity or contributions toward a goal, such as a down payment on a house. The photo to the right shows a flower crown featured in the book "Seasonal Flower Arranging: Fill Your Home with Blooms, Branches, and Foraged Materials All Year Round" by Ariella Chezar. Part of a zero-waste wedding can involve crafting and do-it-yourself projects to avoid shipping and spending.





FLOWERS

Choose locally grown, seasonal flowers, "certainly from a carbon-footprint perspective if not a waste perspective," says Ariella Chezar, author of the forthcoming book "Seasonal Flower Arranging: Fill Your Home with Blooms, Branches, and Foraged Materials All Year Round" (Ten Speed Press).

To cut back on waste, make sure your florist isn't using foam in centerpieces and other arrangements. "It's one of those products that is non-biodegradable and is totally unnecessary," says Chezar

Next, plan how your florals will be repurposed after the event, she says. Many organizations will pick up arrangements and give them to nursing homes and other institutions. If nothing else, make sure flowers are composted.



INVITATIONS

"For my wedding invitations, I bought card stock and painted a design on the front, but these days I'd say paperlesspost com or another e-mail option would be the best Zero-Waste option," says Johnson.

> If you're set on paper though, "go for recycled paper with vegetable ink," says Sylvester. Some papers are embedded with seeds, so guests can even soak the invitation in water and then plant it.

WEEK

- Send out all final payments possible, place fees still due in envelopes
- Delegate responsibilities for the wedding day to reliable helpers
- Finalize rehearsal and rehearsal dinner, confirm attending numbers
- Double-check details with vendors
- Pack for honeymoon and confirm details
- Groom: Have hair trimmed
- Gather items for emergency kit (bobby pins, hair spray, concealer, ibuprofen, lipstick, etc.)

1-2 DAYS

- Get massage, manicure, pedicure; purchase and pack extra nail polish in shade you are using for touch-up
- Pick up remaining rental attire
- Attend rehearsal and review all details with participants
- Enjoy rehearsal dinner, greet family and friends, present wedding party and parents with thank-you gifts
- Get a good night's sleep

MAPPING the day

If you're in the middle of planning, your wedding might seem forever away. But once the day arrives, it's going to fly by. Take careful time to plan for each moment (and possible hiccups), so you don't lose track of time. However your wedding day begins, use this helpful timeline to prepare

9:00 BRIDE HAIR & MAKEUP

CEREMONY FIRST







GET TO THE VENUE. SEE FINAL SETUP

11:30

GET READY WITH BRIDESMAIDS AT VENUE

2:00

FINAL PREP FOR BRIDAL PARTY Don't forget lunch! You're about to have a long day (especially if alcohol is involved!), make sure you have a midday meal.



FIRST LOOK & PHOTOS

1:00 PM

CEREMONY



3:00

FINAL PREP

2:00 PM

PHOTOS

Plan ahead for extra travel time and delays.

4:00

CEREMONY

4:30

COCKTAIL HOUR

5:00

COCKTAIL HOUR

WEDDING PLANNING GUIDE

RECEPTION

6:30

DINNER & TOASTS

7:30

FIRST DANCE

Greet guests by name, be gracious and grateful.

8:00

BOOGIE

8:30

DESSERT & COFFEE

10:00

LAST CALL

Make time for quiet moments between you and your new life

partner.



If it all doesn't go according to plan, just try to enjoy the moment.



1:00

AFTER PARTY



Things to remember

- If you don't have a coordinator, choose someone to help manage last-minute fixes
- Double-check that you have all items you need, including your emergency kit. Don't forget the marriage license (aka the most important part)!
- Give groom's wedding band to maid of honor and bride's ring to best man.
- Make certain the best man and maid of honor remember to sign the marriage license.
- Take advantage of snacks and bottled water in the dressing area.
- If you leave early, say goodbye to parents and grandparents.

Advice From a Stylist

HIS & HERS TIPS FOR GETTING READY

BY AUBREY BYRON

When planning a day that involves picture after picture, it's natural for couples to want to look their best. But what are the best strategies to pull it off? We sat down with stylist, Jenn Rhodes of Notch and Kink Salon to discuss insider tips and tricks for brides and grooms as they prepare for their wedding day,

DON'T FORGET TO HYDRATE

No matter your makeup routine, the No. I way to ensure the



best looking skin is hydration. "Drink

plenty of water the week of the wedding and employ a good maisturaing regunen. This helps clear the skin and makes sure your makeup looks flawless," says Jenn.

AVOID SPF

Avoid using a moisturizer or makeup with SPF, TSPF creates a reflective light on your face, making it appear washed-out in photos."

REMEMBER THE DECOLLETE

The neck and chest are just as important as the face. especially in a dress

with a low cut. "Blending makeup at the jawline and buffing out any discoloration helps, as well as smoothing out tan lines -

BE READY TO REAPPLY

Bring your lip color with you!

"Whether you do your own makeup or have it done professionally. you need to be able to reapply throughout the day."

TRY IT FIRST

Schedule a trial six months before and a haircut one month out. Be sure to bring all veil and hair pieces, and bring photos for ideas! "It's important to find

what is going to be most comfortable on you."

CONSIDER A PRO LOOK

For a flawless look that stays on all day, consider airbrush foundation, "It's so light that you don't feel it and it provides really flawless maleous."

BOOK AHEAD

Especially if looking for onsite services, book six months ahead. "There may be limited reservations available and travel fees."

TRIM EARLY

Schedule a haircut or facial one week prior. Hairouts tend to look best after they grow out a little. bit, so it's better not to do it day of."

KEEP IT CLASSIC

For styling - go with classic and simple. "If you don't normally style, it's best to stick with a classic look - something that will lost longer in pictures "

BE POLISHED

Facial hair should be maintained, and don't forget to trim the eyebrows!

"Fer facial recommend a beard trim with a razor line up or clean shave

Make It the most polished it can be."

USE PRODUCTS

Products can help maintain a formal look, "If you want. to keep your facial hair for your wedding, keep it polished with a beard oil."

REMEMBER NAIL CARE

Don't neglect the hands.

"A lot of pictures involve hands. Make sure your nails are clipped back and hands are mounturesed."

CONSIDER THE SPA TREATMENT

Scheduling a hot shave the day of can help ensure a perfect look for the day. "Sometimes there's a lull while ladies are getting ready, it can be a great time for men to primp themselves too."

FIND YOUR MATCH

If you don't have a go-to person, try to meet one a month out. "A lot of men don't have a go-to barber. Check local salons, look at social media to try to find someone you like ahead of time and do a trial."

Jenn Ahodes is a stylist specializing in men's and women's hair, as well as a certified airbruth makeup artist. She provides wedding day styling consultations and onlide

Leave your gown cleaning to the experts

SPONSORED CONTENT BY NATALIE MACIAS

With their cleaning and preservation expertise, locally-owned and -operated American Cleaners will ensure that your wedding dress will be ready for the next generation.

Fast-paced wedding days can be filled with small instances that often leave invisible spots on your precious gown. White wine, clear soda, cake icing, candle wax, etc. can all contribute to eventual staining. "While those little spots and spills are not noticed right away, given time those spots and spills will oxidize leaving yellow or brown marks on the gown," says American Cleaners.

Gowns also pick up dust particles and other debris from the floor and outdoors. Gowns

need to be cleaned before being stored. All those hazards become permanent if they are not cleaned before storage.

So when dust settles-literally-leave it to the experts for cleaning.

Additional wedding services provided by American Cleaners include cleaning and pressing the groom's attire as well as the rest of the wedding party. They also offer preservation of your gown upon request.

HOW TO STORE YOUR GOWN

TIPS FROM AMERICAN CLEANERS

- · Stretching and distortion can occur when those heavy dresses are hung for long periods of time
- · Your gown should be protected from light, moisture and temperature extremes
- . Be mindful of sunlight, dust, pet dander and cigarette smoke. which can all damage fabrics
- · You should not store your dress in your attic or your basement

American Cleaners opened with one location in 1961. They now have 22 locations in the Greater St. Louis area. They provide dry-cleaning, wet-cleaning and commercial laundry services. Their prices on wedding gown cleaning and preservation are some of the most reasonable in the area.



he lone FOR YOUR WEDDING

BY NATALIE MACIAS

Your color scheme sets the tone for your entire wedding-literally. These colors overflow on a continuum from the save-the-dates, invites, table settings, bridesmaild dresses and, of course, bouquets. Whether you're a naturesque bride who loves earthy tones or a lover of all things spring with fun, bright colors-your color schemes are uniquely you. We have picked a few spring-inspired color palettes for your ultimate hue inspiration.

CLASSIC BLUE

Classic blue (not to be confused with navy) has made a comeback in 2020. As the Pantone Color of the Year, couples will have no trouble finding their "something blue" and incorporating it into their color scheme. This timeless color, paired with whites, greys or even soft greens, will be sure to set a regal tone for your wedding







CORAL AND NAVY

This combo evokes a fun yet classic vibe with a hint of nautical elegance. Coral complements the timeless navy. The contrast of these two colors creates an eye-pleasing palette that can easily be paired with silver or gold to complete the look.



PEACHES, PINKS AND **TURQUOISE ACCENTS**

Spring showers bring flowers—and spring weddings bring colors! Peaches, pinks and turquoise are the perfect bursts of color to match the bright vibe of the long-awaited spring season. If you want your wedding to pop, this color combo is the way to go.







EARTHY GREENS

If you love all things earthy and fresh, this simple yet eye-catching color palette is for you. Greens, browns and neutrals mimic the colors found in nature and make for a beautiful palette for your wedding. Pull in wild flowers, accent with gold touches and add some succulents into the mix, and you'll be sure to wow your guests.



SOFT PURPLES AND PASTELS

You can make a big statement with soft colors. This combo of lavenders, pastels and blushes is simple but noteworthy for your big day. These easy-on-the-eyes colors pair perfectly with just about any hue, creating a romantic vibe your guests won't forget.











It's a well-known cliché popularized by movies like "27 Dresses" — bridesmaid dresses can be ugly and unflattering. But it doesn't have to be that way. Here are eight do's and don'ts for choosing the best dresses for your best gals.

KEEP EVERYONE'S BUDGETS IN MIND

Weddings are expensive, even for the bridesmaids. So, while talking about money can be uncomfortable, it's a crucial conversation if you expect each bridesmaid to pay for her own gown.

"Be considerate of your bridesmaids' financial situations, and have an open and honest conversation about your expectations as well as theirs. Remember, you're friends for a reason!" says Amanda Guagliardo, marketing manager for Azazie, an online bridal shop.

CONSIDER FORMALITY

Your bridesmaids' dresses should match the style of your event. "Want something black tie and elegant? Opt for floor length gowns in darker colors like black, navy and cabernet. Going for something more casual? Think brighter colors, lighter fabrics and shorter lengths to match," advises Guagliardo.

READ THE REVIEWS

Most of us have never shopped for bridesmaid dresses before. So do your research to find a store that will make the experience as easy as possible.

"Wedding planning is stressful enough — find a reputable company that will guide you through any questions you have and make sure your special day is perfect," recommends Guagliardo.

ORDER SAMPLE SWATCHES

If you go the online route, be sure to order swatches so you can see the color in-person before buying. Colors can appear different online due to screen resolutions, as well as fabric choice and lighting.

LEAVE TIME FOR ALTERATIONS

Don't wait until the last minute to order your bridesmaids' dresses. Most retailers recommend orders be placed six months before the big day. If you're ordering online, leave enough time (at least three months) for potential return and alterations.

ASSUME ONE STYLE FITS ALL

Everyone's tastes and bodies are different, so take the time to consult your bridesmaids before choosing a gown. Or, better yet, embrace the mix-and-match trend by letting your friends choose their own complementary dresses.

"One of the most common mistakes we see brides make is thinking that one style will flatter everyone," says Guagliardo, Embrace what makes your friends special and unique and allow them to choose a style they feel most comfortable in."

BE AFRAID TO SHOP ONLINE

Buying something as important as a bridesmaid dress can feel a little sketchy. Luckily, today you don't have to sacrifice boutique quality products for the convenience of online.

"At Azazie, we offer try-on samples in any size so you can gather your bridesmaids and host a try-on party in the comfort of your own home," says Guagliardo. "No time limit, no salesperson there to pressure you into a style they think you should like."

It's also a great option for bridal parties with members who live all across the country.

FORGET ABOUT DYE BATCHES

"To ensure that your bridesmaid dresses match perfectly, instruct your bridesmaids to place their [online] orders within 24 hours of one another so that they can be dyed in the same lot," advises Guagliardo



5 ways to capture your big day

POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY IDEAS TO HELP THE MEMORIES OF YOUR WEDDING LAST A LIFETIME

BY CAPTLIN MULLEN PUTERBAUGH, CTW FEATURES





Your wedding photos will tell a story that's uniquely yours. Opt for some of these popular trends aimed at personalizing your photos.

1. NATURAL STYLE AND FILM REVIVAL

Candid, photojournalistic-style wedding photography remains very popular, says Leise Jones of Leise Jones Photography in Boston. Additionally, film photography and digital images that look similar to film are trending now, says Shawnee Custalow of A Lovely Photo, based in Richmond, Virginia. She views the use of traditional film as a novelty couples can add to their photo package.

2. FEWER GROUP SHOTS, MORE COUPLE PHOTOS

Couples are eschewing numerous pictures of the bridal party in various groupings and limiting formal family photos. "I think people realize, "That's taking more time on my wedding day," says Custalow. "They want more great photos of themselves."

3. PERSONALIZED EXPERIENCE

Couples today put all of this effort into an event that is uniquely them, so they want a photographer who can capture that.

Couples should keep in mind the intimate nature of documentary photography when searching for a photographer. The key is finding someone whose personality meshes with yours.

4. LESS EMPHASIS ON DETAILS

While photos of the couples' rings or the wedding dress hanging in the window abound on Pinterest, Custalow says many of the couples she works with are no longer as concerned with the details.

Jones recommends couples think about the photos they might want on display in their homes — often, detail shots don't fall into that category. "In general, couples are less interested in photos of the details, and more interested in photos of their friends and family," says Wenzel.

5. CAPTURING THE 'FIRST LOOK'

Another trend that remains popular, photographing the moment the bride and groom see each other before the ceremony.

Many couples like doing this shot early in the day, so they don't have to be pulled away from celebrating with family and friends to take portraits.

"It's really a lot less stressful for them to get those photos out of the way," Jones said, "so that from cocktail hour, on they're partying.

DON'T FORGET THE DRONE!

A drone can create awe-inspiring photos that are impossible to get from the ground. Do some careful planning and map out the location of your wedding or reception and identify gardens, meadows, staircases, etc. that will create artistic and unique photos. Word to the wise, be sure to hire an experienced and licensed operator, and check the local drone laws to avoid disaster.

You can't spell still without STL



BY NATALIE MACIAS

Day-of wedding photos capture the true essence of the day — the still moments in the midst of an often fast-paced and chaotic time. They are the fond memories of the wonderful celebration of your wedding. These photos embody your personalities and your love for one another and a good location adds to the splendor.

There are a myriad of nook and cranny spots for the picture perfect (pun intended) wedding day photos in and around St. Louis.

Here's a few of our favorites:

1 FOREST PARK

Considered one of the nation's greatest urban public parks, you can't go wrong with day-of wedding photos at the beautiful Forest Park. From the wide views at Art Hill and the Jewel Box to the Muny and the World's Fair Pavilion — this tried-and-true location will offer perfect photos for any season.

PHOTO BY JACKELYNN NOEL PHOTOSHARMY

2 | MALCOLM W. MARTIN MEMORIAL PARK

Believe it or not, the ideal arch photo isn't actually under the arch. Head across the river to capture the entire St. Louis cityscape as your backdrop. To snap the ideal skyline photo, this location will not disappoint.

PHOTO BY JESS & JEWN PHOTODRAPHY

3 LIBERTY BANK AMPHITHEATER

With the historic downtown Alton buildings as one backdrop option and the other being the Mighty Mississippi River and Clark Bridge, the Liberty Bank Amphitheater in Alton, Illinois is the perfect spot for large groups and airy photos.

PHOTO BY MESYME PRODUCTIONS

4 POST COMMONS

Located just 30 miles from downtown St. Louis, this beautiful, historic building that was formerly a United States Post Office is perched atop Alton, Illinois' theater district with some of the best river views in town — perfect for snapping a vintage-inspired photo on your big day.

PHOTO BY KELLY DRAKE PHOTOGRAPHY

5 RUINS OF THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

The scenery at the urban church ruins is undeniable. Located at 3750 Washington in St. Louis, the former Church of God in Christ is a must-shoot location for wedding photos. The walls of the concrete church shell are dressed with ivy leaves, leaving a mystical and breathtaking backdrop.

PHOTO BY JESS & JEWN PHOTOGRAPHY

6 WASHINGTON AVENUE

In the heart of downtown, the flickering lights and stunning architecture of Wash Ave. delivers the ideal urban backdrop for your wedding day.

7 GRAFFITI WALL

If you're looking to offset a white dress and a neutral suit, the graffiti wall is the perfect pop of color to bring your wedding photos to life, Located near the Gateway Arch just off the riverfront, this unique canvas speaks for itself.

8 LAUMEIER SCULPTURE PARK

For the nontraditional couple, Laumeier Sculpture Park offers art-forward, unique shots for your big day. With a 105-acre open-air museum filled with sculptures like the giant eye ball and plenty of trees and greenery surrounding the park, couples have plenty of options for a whimsical photo op.







"A MOMENT LASTS ALL OF A SECOND. BUT THE MEMORY LIVES ON FOREVER."

AUTHOR UNKNOWN







Tactors to consider BEFORE INCLUDING FIDO IN YOUR WEDDING



CONTENT PROVIDED BY METRO NEWS

Many of today's couples want their four-legged friends to stand with them on their big day. Before including dogs in their wedding plans, couples may want to consider what's best for them, their guests and of course, their beloved pooches.

ELIGIBILITY

Some venues do not allow pets that are not documented assistance animals on the premises. Confirm a venue's pet policy before purchasing any wedding day attire for your dog. Couples who intend on including their pets in their wedding ceremonies should only consider pet-friendly facilities. Couples who plan to take a limousine to and from their wedding also should confirm that the cars allow pets before booking.

PERSONALITY

No two dogs are the same.

Some dogs might love people and attention, while others might prefer one-on-one time with their owners. Dogs that are sociable and unaggressive may make perfect additions to wedding ceremonies, while animals that exhibit anxiety around strangers or seem uncomfortable in noisy settings should be kept out of the ceremony.

HEALTH

Dog owners also must consider their pets' health when deciding whether or not to include them in the wedding ceremony. Couples who bonded over a love of their dog may really hope to include their furry friend in the festivities but should not do so at the expense of the animal's health. Outdoor wedding ceremonies under sunny skies may produce potentially unhealthy conditions for certain breeds or older dogs. Dogs that have difficulty getting around may need a red wagon (and attendant) to make the rounds at the wedding.

ASSISTANCE

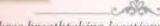
Couples will be busy on their wedding day, so they may need to arrange for a caretaker to look after their dog during and after the ceremony. Asking a guest or guests to play this role may be asking too much, as guests will no doubt want to celebrate without having to take care of a dog. A professional pet sitter might work, but that can be costly, as couples must pay for the sitter and will likely need to pay for them to have a seat and a meal during the reception.

DOGS CAN MAKE GREAT ADDITIONS TO WEDDINGS,
BUT COUPLES MUST CONSIDER A HOST OF FACTORS
BEFORE DECIDING TO HAVE FIDO JOIN THEM AS THEY TIE THE KNOT.









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How to take care of your

diamond rine

EXPERT TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUR NEW JEWELRY SHINY AND BRIGHT FOR YEARS TO COME

BY JILL JARACZ, CTW FEATURES

Diamonds may be forever, but it takes work to keep diamond jewelry looking its best. Poor care can lead to dull stones, or even worse, missing rocks.

"Diamond jewelry is durable but not indestructible," says Mark Mann, a director for the Gemological Institute of America (GIA).

Here are some expert tips for helping your diamond ring last as long as your marriage:

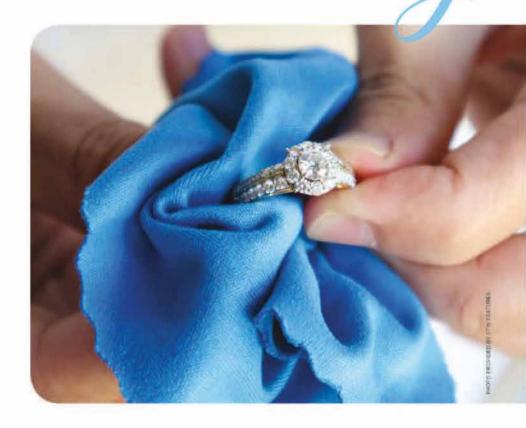
KEEP IT CLEAN

Rings need regular cleaning to maintain their sparide. Diamonds can easily pick up grease, and that can change the appearance of the stone.

"Clean your rings frequently with warm water, mild soap and a soft brush," says Mann.

The GIA recommends cleaning diamond rings once or twice a week by soaking in an ammonia-based household cleaner, such as window cleaner. Let the ring soak overnight and then brush it with a soft, clean toothbrush. For rings with fragile settings or estate jewelry, skip the brushing step

If the ring has a lot of built-up dirt on the diamond, take it to a professional jeweler for ultrasonic cleaning



MAKE SURE IT FITS

Proper sizing may also be an issue with a ring. To resize a ring, a jeweler will cut the ring and either add or remove a piece "You're fusing metal one way or another," says Steve Quick of Steve Quick Jeweler stores in Chicago, adding that accurate sizing can be tricky.

"You really are trying to hit a moving target," he says. "The size of your finger at II a.m. may not be the size of your finger at 7 p.m." Quick recommends the best sizing is slightly tight once in a while and somewhat loose once in a while. "If you need to resize your ring, have your finger measured at least three times at different times of the day, to ensure the best fit," says Mann

TEND TO WEAR AND TEAR

Everyday use can also do damage to a ring, including causing stones to fall out. Something as simple as opening a metal filing cabinet can hurt a ring if it's done often enough. "Every shock you put into that metal is a shock to the ring's system," says Quick.

"If you wear your diamond rings every day, have them professionally cleaned and examined about every six months to: prevent the loss of a stone," says Mann.

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the that the state of the state

Gown shapes are as diverse as brides themselves. Multitudes of options balance unique contours for the short, the tall, the lean or the curvy, so guests will exclaim over how marvelous the bride looks and she is confident she does?

Start in the gown shop. Try on dresses with

Bring favorite ideas plus an open mind. A professional dress consultant's expertise can pull a matching style for you.

Look in the mirror from all angles. Snap pictures and take notes to sort features that flatter or detract.

Compare these five body shapes with yours. Build a base to discover a gown structured for your desired look and comfort. Each design complements a bride's normal silhouette, but a professional may shape a dream gown into a fil you never thought possible.

HOURGLASS

A defined waistline sits between hips and shoulders similar in size. This figure indulges easy enhancement. All necklines seem to work. Glamorize an indented waist and let natural curves contour this figure-hugging silhouette. A mermaid gown delights in the line, a sheath accents it, a cinched waistline on a ball gown pours into double (or triple) layering of fluffy tulle, crinoline or the like, and a low-flaring style guides an elongated central line. The drop waist features a bodice that fits to the mid hip.





PEAR

Hips, and perhaps thighs, are wider than shoulders. Simple vertical, rather than horizontal, lines evenly shape curves. An **off-the shoulder** or "V" neckline frames the face, An **A-line gown** highlights an indented natural waist so an added detail, such as studded waistband or flowing sash, accents the top and lets the skirt flow gracefully. A **trumpet gown** is fitted throughout the bodice and the volume begins at mid-thigh.

APPLE

Slimmer thighs counter a fuller chest, broader shoulders and less defined waist. The waistline, wherever drawn, grabs the eye. An empire waist eases lower flow, but a cinched waist sienderizes the silhouette to balance proportion. With or without sheer illusion, a deeply plunging neckline draws attention away from wide horizontal shoulders to flatter the bustline. A wide ribbon, slightly dropped waist, asymmetrical pleating or ruching focuses waistline interest.

STE ST





RECTANGLE

Straight line extends from shoulders to waist to hips. Exult in a long, lean line or create geometric roundness with an A-line, frothy and flirtatious skirt or elevated empire waist for more skirt flow. Off-the-shoulder styles widen a top tier. Illusion pieces of embroidered lace play peekaboo with what may or may not hide under sheer fabric. A nipped waist artistically balances high and low canvases. New curves flow with soft, breezy fabric. A silt elongates a tall bride's legs and contrasting sash trims a wide middle.



INVERTED TRIANGLE

Shoulders are wider than hips. A scoop neckline outlines a lovely neck.

Off-shoulder draping minimizes a generous bustline. Popular modesty and illusion pieces balance a slim bodice to move the eye down along neckto-knee embellishment. A ball gown with a full skirt encourages flow, but a confident bride's short gown or high-low skirt exudes fun with alluring attention to shapely legs and spectacular shoes.



theElsie

Astrid & Mercedes' Elsie debuts classic lines in a simple yet elegant fit. Encircled with a slender silver beaded ribbon at the natural waist, the scoop-neck bodice flatters. Crisp, knife pleats develop the full skirt's volume, and pockets give brides a spot to stash their lipstick.



Trinity

Using lace motifs over tulle, the Trinity by Maggie Sottero delivers a strking, princess silhouette. The embroidered lace, plunging neckline, illusion back and lace straps complete the romantic look and feel.



Charon

Mori Lee's Sharon wedding gown features delicate, long sleeves and an Illusion bodice beaded with crystal and pearl, Sequined Chantilly lace accents the mermaid silhouette, and the scalloped hemline and sheer petal train complete the look.





Events



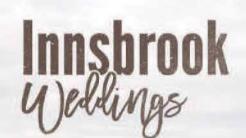


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innsbrook-resort.com/weddings

Mermaid

Renowned Milan-based designer Eddy K uses the highest quality fabrics and detailing in this fitted, off-the-shoulder gown.



Yasmin This gown have Sottero is strapless with asymmetrical pleating and a beaded waist. The soft, romantic look features a sweetheart neckline and a tiered, tulle skirt with horsehair trim. STLOWGRESTERIDAL.COM | THE REST WEDGINGS START HERE 1 73

the seaded A-line

This A-line gown designed by Allure Bridal features a sweetheart neckline and beaded appliques throughout. The full skirt and train add to the elegance of this gown.



SOMETHING Old. SOMETHING Melle.

COMPILED BY SARAH GERREIN

You've probably heard the 19th century bridal saying: "Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue and a silver sixpence in her shoe." Here's how some of our Love Story Brides incorporated this time-honored tradition into their wedding day.

SOMETHING OLD

ANGIE: A tiny piece of lace from my mom's wedding dress, safety-pinned together with tiny beads for fertility and a small diamond Mickey Mouse because I love Disney. This was all placed on the inside of my dress.

CARA: The penny from my grandmother's shoe at her own wedding

ERIN: My flowers were wrapped with my grandpa's tie.

TAYLOR: I wore my great grandmother's wedding ring.

SOMETHING NEW

ANGIE: My dress

CARA: My dress

CHIANTI: My bridal dress and tiara

ERIN: My dress

TAYLOR: New, sparkly shoes



ANGIE: A beautiful, diamond necklace from my mother-in-law which was an anniversary present from my father-in-law.

CARA: My pawpaw's hankie

CHIANTI: A ring from a friend of my mom who has been married for over 40 years that I hooked to my bracelet

ERIN: My mom's earrings

TAYLOR: I borrowed my mother's clutch from her wedding day.



SOMETHING BLUE

ANGIE: An anklet with blue beads and an opal stone. Opal is the name of my puppy so this anklet was perfect for me

CARA: An ankle bracelet from my aunts

CHIANTI: The bottom of my shoes, my garter and the diamond inside my ring were blue.

ERIN: My sapphire ring, a graduation present from my parents

TAYLOR: I stuck blue "I Do" stickers under my heels.





Your Groomswear QUESTIONS ANSWERED

AV SADAH GERDEIN

Groomswear is every bit as important as the bridal gown. With more options than ever in men's fashion, men don't have to compromise their personal style to look good. Alia Wilson, wedding planner at Firefly events and video blogger for Men's Wearhouse sums it up perfectly, "[Brides and grooms] want to look like themselves on their wedding day, but just the very, very best version of themselves."

The Q and A below answers how grooms can be that very best version of themselves on their wedding day.

WHEN SHOULD I START SHOPPING FOR MY SUIT OR TUXEDO?

According to Men's Wearhouse, you should start within six months of your wedding date. Your final fitting should be as close to the actual wedding date as possible for both you and your groomsman. Speaking of groomsman, pick out exactly what they are wearing so all they have to do is to show up for the fitting.

SUIT OR TUXEDO?

Your choice depends on the how formal of a wedding you are

planning. It also depends on how formal of a wedding dress your bride is wearing. You don't need to see it to know — she can describe the color, style and beading in order for your stylist to determine how formal your attire should be. For a formal wedding and look, the tuxedo is the more traditional option. A suit is best for destination, rustic and less-formal weddings. Keep in mind, though, that you can still dress up a three-piece suit quite a bit.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SUIT AND A TUXEDO?

A tuxedo consists of a satin lapel and buttons, as well as a satin stripe down the pants leg. A three-piece suit allows more flexibility with colors and style than a tuxedo. Purchasing a suit is more affordable (and more functional) than buying a tuxedo. Although if you will wear the tux more than once, it's worth the investment to purchase it.

WHAT COLOR?

Again, consider what the bride is wearing. If she is wearing an eggshell or offwhite, go with black. If she is wearing stark white, go for dark blue or another color suit. Off-color suits (burgundy and emerald) are currently popular.

Groomsmen typically match the attire of the groom, but one of their accessories like a tie/bowtie or boutonniere could match the bridesmaids' dresses or florals.

HOW DO I PERSONALIZE MY LOOK?

There are many ways to add personality to a suit. Think about adding a patterned tie, a tie bar or a bowtie. You can also purchase highly personalized cufflinks, add suspenders and funky socks to express yourself.

WHAT COLOR AND TYPE OF SHOES?

For a tuxedo, avoid a wingtip and go for the shiny shoes to keep with the formal look. A brown shoe with navy or gray suit is popular now and also adds a level of elegance to the suit. Leather soles add to the formality. Either way you decide, make sure those shoes are shiny and polished!











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LEGAL REQUIREMENTS - YOUR 'MUST DO' LIST.



Before two people head to the ceremony and run off into matrimonial bliss, they must apply for a marriage license. A legitimate officiant will not marry a couple without one in hand. Rules vary between states, as marriage is considered a civil contract between a state and the two people initiating it.

A marriage license should be secured based on where the wedding takes place, and not where the couple lives, if the ceremony destination is not Missouri or Illinois, the website usmarriagelaws.com can be consulted for any other state.

Marriage license requirements can change by state, even between counties, so it is important to verify ALL information with the local marriage license office or county clerk where you will be married before making wedding or travel plans. Each county also directs its own schedule for a courthouse marriage by a judge



GETTING MARRIED IN THE SHOW-ME STATE

The state of Missouri requires that both parties be single and not blood-related, 2018 legislation raised the minimum age of marriage to 16, and 16- and 17-year-olds must receive parental permission to be married It also bars a person 21 or older from marrying anyone 18 or younger.

Before the ceremony, even on the same day, a couple must appear together at the recorder of deeds office in any Missouri county or the city of St. Louis. No blood test is required

Each must show a valid form of government issued identification, such as a current passport, state ID or driver's license, which lists date of birth. Unless the Social Security number is on the ID, a Social Security card is also required in Missouri. A person without a Social Security number must sign a form of verification

The marriage license is valid in any county but only in Missouri. The ceremony must take place within 30 days of the license being issued. If an individual is divorced, a final decree must be at least 30 days before application, although some counties allow variations.

A cash-only, non-refundable charge of about \$50 must be paid with the application. For an extra fee, a certified certificate may be given as proof of marriage or as a keepsake

REGISTER NEW NAMES

BEFORE MARRYING, a couple should decide what names to use later

AFTER THE WEDDING, registering a new name on documents and records may require a certified marriage license and a proof of residence bearing current name and address. Check each authority's specific needs.

BASIC SEVEN TO START

- ☐ Social Security card
- Driver's license or state ID card
- D Passport
- Bank accounts and checks
- Credit pards
- □ Insurance policies
- □ Post office address

NUPTIALS IN THE LAND OF LINCOLN

Getting married in Illinois differs on some details. A bride- or groom-to-be still needs to be single, not related and at least 18 years old Sixteen- and 17-year-olds must have parental consent. No one under the age of 16 can marry.

Like its neighbor to the west. Illinois requires a valid form of identification and proof of age for both parties, who must be present at the time of application - but only in the county where they will be married.

Also, a waiting period of 24 hours is required after application. The license, however, is valid for 60 days.

A certified decree of divorce, often within a recent time frame, may be required. Date of divorce or when a spouse died also may be requested.

The fee for a marriage license varies by county. For example, Madison County requires a nonrefundable cash fee of \$30.

WHO CAN OFFICIATE THE CEREMONY

Missouri and Illinois also differ in criteria for an officiant to fulfill these duries

According to the law, marriage in Missouri may be performed by any clergyman, active or retired; a judge, municipal judge or ordained minister, a religious society, institution or organization when either party is a member. Paperwork must be returned within 15 days to the recorder issuing it. In Illinois, an officiant may be an ordained minister, active or retired judge, or public official empowered to perform marriage. The signed license with information filled out should be returned to the recorder of deeds within 90 days of issuance.

If considering someone besides clergy or a public official to take charge, check with the county recorder of deeds where you will be married to assure authorization-for-a-day will be valid.

Using a new name on the marriage license does not legally change it. To change it on a Social Security card, bring marriage documentation with you. Also, inform your employer so the name corresponds with Internal Revenue Service information

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ultimate GIFT GUIDE

BY ALIBREY BYDON

Weddings involve several exchanges of gifts to and from the people who mean the most to you. Finding the perfect gift to express your love can be difficult. We're here to help.





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spousal gifts for the bride

SPA SET

Even today, brides are most often saddled with the brunt of wedding planning. Show your appreciation for all her hard work with a relaxing spa set or gift card.

HONEYMOON SUPPLIES

Get ready to blow the joint with a honeymoon prep bag - include new sunglasses, sun hats, lotions, sunscreen and the works so your bride-to-be has one less worry before hitting the road!



ENGRAVED JEWELRY

Get sentimental with a loving note to memorialize the day. Lockets can hold sweet photos or notes that make your new wife feel special.





ENGRAVED CUFFLINKS

Cufflinks are the perfect engraved accessory for a subtle but personal gift.



Get cutesy with a gift

for "cold feet." useful.





WATCH

Every man needs a quality watch. Have it engraved for a personal touch.

wedding party gifts



JEWELRY

Jewelry for the big day is a perfect way to show appreciation to your bridesmaids, especially if you have a specific jewelry style in mind.

WINE BASKET

Who doesn't love a good wine and cheese basket? Personalize the glass for a fun reminder of the day.





The classic choice for your girl gang are matching robes to get ready in together.

roomsmen



TIES

Make it easy for your groomsmen by gifting them their matching ties for the ceremony.



Extend the celebration by gifting a nice whiskey.





A nice leather belt is practical and can relieve a cost for your wedding party.

wedding favors

to say thank you



LOCAL SNACKS

Give guests a taste of local flavor with a favorite bag of chips. Plus this can help hold folks over while they wait for dinner.

PHOTO BOOTH PHOTOS

You're not the only one dressed up! Give everyone something to remember with printed out photos.





MINI LOCAL HONEY JARS

A sweet treat for a love so sweet.



SUCCULENTS

The little potted plant to symbolize a growing of love.

CUSTOM KOOZIES

If you live for the party, remind everyone of your special day with custom koozies. Guests will think of you every time they crack a cold one.



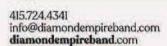


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Putting a wing on it this year?

HERE ARE SOME OF THE BIGGEST ENGAGEMENT RING STYLES YOU NEED TO KNOW

BY CARLEY LINTZ, CTW FEATURES

The custom of popping the question with a ring is centuries old, but the look of engagement rings is always evolving with the times. Here's a look at some of the biggest trends you can expect to see in the ring shop (or scrolling through your newsfeed) this year according to experts.

YELLOW GOLD

This traditional metal is making a big comeback, says. Shannon Miller, Retail Director at Anna Sheffield.

"2020 welcomes a new decade and a break from the norm. Yellow gold will continue to prevail offering a playful nod to all things vintage and nostalgic. With its soft glow, yellow gold allows a stone to really be the star," she explains



CHIC SHAPES

Move over princess cut new shapes are taking over in 2020! Instead of square or round diamonds; many modern couples are opting for oval and pear-shaped cuts as chic alternatives, says Miller.

"Be on the lookout for marquise diamonds as emerald cuts continue to be standout," she adds.

SUSTAINABLE STONES

Modern couples aren't just concerned with how a ring looks; they also want to know where it comes from. That's why many people, especially younger generations, are choosing lab-grown diamonds over traditionally mined stones.

This trend is part of a larger movement toward eco-conscious weddings as modern couples better understand the impact their nuptials can have on the Earth.



CLUSTER GEMS

If you want a little more sparkle than a single stone can offer, consider another big trend for 2020 rings; cluster stones. This new take on multi-stone rings doesn't surround the main stone with smaller gems; instead, stones are grouped for a more organic, eye-catching shape.

CUSTOM DESIGNS

"My favorite trend has to be the resurgence of custom jewelry," says Miller. "Clients now more than ever are incorporating their unique love story into their rings with hidden halos, birthstories in the wedding bands, cool engravings and the list goes on!"

COLORFUL GEMS

When you picture an engagement ring, you probably automatically imagine a crystal-clear diamond at the center. Today's engagement rings, though, come in every color of the rainbow.

Gemstones, like pretty pink morganite, sky blue aquamarine or bright green emeralds, all allow brides to add a pop of color and personality to their rings. Gray diamonds (aka "salt and pepper" diamonds) are also gaining in popularity among brides who want a more subtle, yet still nontraditional stone.

MINIMALIST DESIGNS

In another return to classics, rings with few adornments are also having a resurgence.

"I have noticed a shift towards traditional rings with cleaner more simple designs," says award-winning jeweler, Deidre Featherstone: "I think the halo has had a good long run and people are moving away from it. There is a safety and longevity in a classic design."

One of the most popular embodiments of this is the solitary stone trend. This understated look with a single gem and unadorned band allows the stone to really shine. Plus, without all the extra fuss, many couples can actually afford a slightly larger gem this way.





Ultimately, though, you shouldn't focus too much on what's popular or trendy when shopping for an engagement ring. Instead, find something you love and is as special as the person who gave it to you.

"Remember that your engagement ring is the only outfit that you will wear every day. Think beyond trend and choose a piece that truly speaks to you today and you ten years from now," advises Miller.

icone rine ARE A THING

CONTENT BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

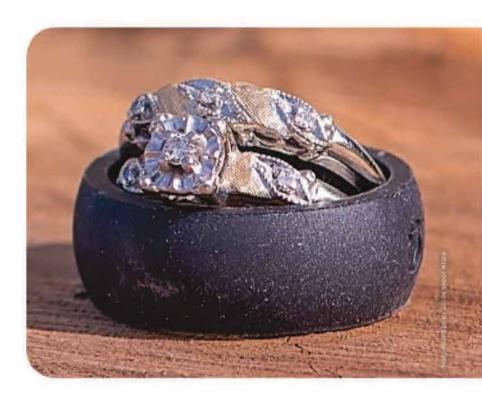
Wedding rings have been exchanged for thousands of years. But today's rings tend to be more space age than the traditional gold and silver bands. The latest trend, perfect for active lifestyles, is a silicone band.

WHAT IS IT?

Silicone bands are very light, and they stretch. bend and break away, so if you work in a field that's hazardous to your digits, you can still wear your ring. Or if you play sports, work out or maybe just have fingers that tend to swell, a silicone band may be right for you.

Unlike traditional metal bands, silicone rings come in a dazzling array of colors and finishes, even iridescent. They also come in different widths, patterns and textures, and can even be engraved. Some are meant to be stackable, and they come with different edges for your comfort. Several companies also offer limited edition designs by artists for a once-in-a-lifetime band at an affordable price.

This may also be a good option if you have an expensive or heirloom wedding set you don't want on you at all times. You can have the permanent, traditional set, and then a silicone ring for everyday wear.



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Just like with any ring, you may prove to be allergic to the material. If you have a silicone allergy, obviously, this isn't the ring for you.

You also need to make sure your sizing is on point; a too-snug ring of any kind will cause irritation.

As with any jewelry, be careful around chemicals. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for cleaning.

HOW MUCH DO THEY COST?

Silicone bands are much cheaper than bands made of precious metals, starting at around \$20. Customization such as engraving or fancy finishes. of course, cost more. If you're prone to losing jewelry, these bands may be a cost-effective solution for you.

WHERE DO I GET THEM?

Some jewelers have started carrying silicone bands as an option for their customers, but you can also find them at local sporting goods and outdoors stores.

3 tips for choosing the

WEDDING JEWELRY

CONTENT BY NEWSPAPER TOOLBOX

Are you wondering what kind of jewelry to wear on your wedding day? Here are three tips to help you match your accessories to your wedding attire.



BE YOURSELF

If you never wear jewelry in your day-to-day life, you shouldn't be dripping in jewels on your wedding day. However, if you love the way you look in big chunky earrings or long necklaces, go for it.

MATCH THE METAL TO THE DRESS

Pure white dresses look best with silver jewelry. while ivory or champagne fabrics pair well with gold. If you've chosen to wear a blush-hued gown, opt for rose gold.



CONSIDER THE NECKLINE

High-necked or halter dresses look best with statement earrings and a simple bracelet. A V-neck is practically begging for a beautiful necklace to fill the space. And a sweetheart or strapless gown goes with anything, from a choker to a pendant or even just the right earrings.

On your wedding day, less is more. Your radiant face, your beautiful gown and your new wedding ring won't need much embellishing.



classic chic

The subtle, yet eye-catching Classic Chic bouquet is comprised of white O'Hara Garden and Ecuadorian roses and ranunculus. It is accented with lisianthus, veronica, waxflower, seeded Eucalyptus, gunni and succulents for a striking look.



bohemian

The free-spirited, multi-textured Bohemian Look bouquet features roses, garden roses, gunni, seeded Eucalyptus, the mini Calla Iily, king protea, snapdragon, caspia and dahlia. The hanging red amaranthus and the soft pink and white ribbons cascade for a dramatic flair.



round & textured

Enduring and classic, the Round & Textured bouquet features blush garden roses and complementing seeded Eucalyptus.

Aptly placed silver rhinestones add to the elegance of this satin-tied bouquet.



bright & vibrant

The gathered Bright & Vibrant bouquet features sunflowers, rose, garden rose, mini Calla lily, dusty miller, feather Eucalyptus and gunni wrapped with a deep red ribbon.



wild & textured

If you are looking for a bouquet with "pop," the vibrant Wild & Textured bouquet featuring yellow, peach and blue hues is for you. The multi-textured bouquet was designed using thistle, rose garden, hanging amaranthus, delphinium, Gerbera daisy, seeded Eucalyptus and feather ferns.



Gunday Funday...

...at the Feb. 16 Wedding Show at the River City Casino. Over 850 brides and grooms and their friends and families visited with over 70 vendors, sampled food, drinks and technology, watched a fashion show that featured more than 30 looks, and won a variety of prizes, including an all-expense paid vacation to Mexico!

Join in on the fun and save the date for upcoming shows on June 14, 2020 at the Centene Community Ice Center in Maryland Heights and on Nov. 1 at the St. Charles Convention Center.

Can't wait? Get your tickets now at stlouisbestbridal.com/events-promotions.



















Fact: Roughly 10 percent of your wedding budget will go towards flowers. That's quite a bit of bank, Utilize a few of our tips and useful ideas to reduce that expense so that you can put it towards something else on your wishlist like singing bartenders!

USE IN SEASON OR LOCALLY GROWN FLOWERS

You may have your heart set on a certain type of flower for your bouquet or centerpiece, but if it is not in season at the time of your wedding, it could raise the price. Most flowers are sourced from

outside the area, so availability during peak seasons comes at a cost. Don't fret though. There are some flowers that are in season year-round. See the next page for a seasonal floral list.

HOLIDAYS CAN IMPACT PRICES

Watch out if you decide to get married in the middle of February, for instance! On the flip side, if you are getting married around the holidays, your event or ceremony space may already be decorated, requiring less of your budget.

FILL YOUR BOUQUET WITH NON-FLORAL ITEMS

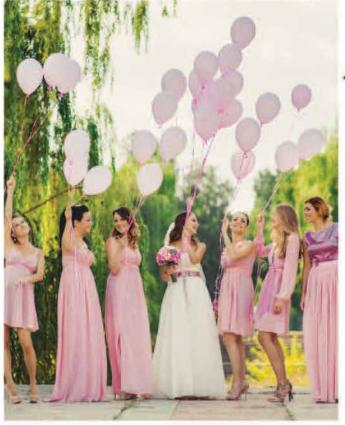
Greenery like Eucalyptus, ferns, ivy or tropical leaves not only fill space, but they make flower arrangements lighter to hold. Other foliage like berries, herbs and wheat are often used in both bouquets and boutonnieres. Also consider feathers, ribbon, wood and buttons in place of floral filler.

LOVE A LARGE BLOOM?

Centerpiece flowers like orchids, calla illies, peonies, dahlias or sunflowers can fill a ton of bouquet space. Or maybe a singular bloom is your entire bouquet? Either way, you'll make a statement.

USE YOUR CEREMONY FLOWERS AT THE RECEPTION

Why let that beautiful bouquet only have one moment? Most florists are ready to repurpose your ceremony flowers at the reception site. Rent or purchase vases and your tables will nearly decorate themselves.



ALTERNATE DÉCOR

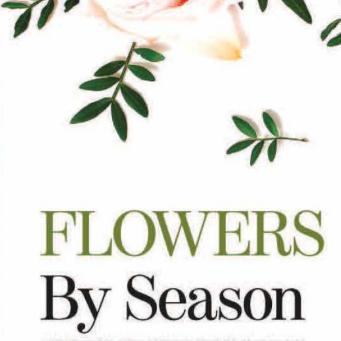
Lights, lights, more lights. Wrap strands of lights around trees or let them cascade behind the head table. Shop for vintage lamps and lampshades or chandeliers, and figure out creative ways to use them in your venue. Votive candles are a reasonably priced and simple decoration as well. Work with your venue on do-it-yourself decorating with lights.

NONTRADITIONAL

If you want to forgo the traditional bouquet and decorations, check out these nontraditional ideas:

- Paper or fabric bouquets
- Large, oversized balloons
- Brooch bouquets
- Hoop bouquets
- Rescue pupples. Yes, pupples, but realistically, you can hold any item that means something to you.





COMPILED FROM FLOWERS & WEEDS FLORIST AND OTHER SOURCES

Here is a sampling of what's in bloom by season in the Midwest. Keep in mind that most greenery is in-season all year long! If you don't see your flower of choice listed, check with your local florist.

SPRING	
--------	--

SUMMER/FALL CONT.

ANEMONE

CHRYSANTHEMUM

BACHELOR'S BUTTON

COSMOS

COLUMBINE

DAHLIA.

DAFFODIL

ECHEVERIA SUCCULENT

FRITILLARIA

HYDRANGEA

HYACINTH

IRIS

MUSCARI

LAVENDER

PEONY

MARIGOLD

POPPY

SEDUM

SCABIOSA

SUNFLOWER

SWEET PEA

ZINNIA

TULIP

QUEEN ANNE'S LACE

WINTER **AMARYLLIS**

SUMMER/FALL

GARDENIA

ALLIUM

LARKSPUR

AMARANTH

POINSETTIA

BASIL

ROSE (RED AND WHITE)

CELOSIA



FLOWERS not just for holding

BY SARAH GERREIN

WEARABLES

Flowers are your No. 1 wedding accessory, so treat it like one by thinking outside of the hand-held bouquets and try wearing your florals instead. An artistic florist can create anything you dream in petals. Some wearable ideas are:

HAIR: Don't fret, floral crowns are still in, but go even more classic with a comb or a clip to match your bouquet.

WRISTS: Give moms and grandmothers the gift of a non-pinned floral. A dainty floral bracelet can highlight the elders important to you with a modern spin on the classic.

NECKS: Have your bridesmaids go hands-free with a floral necklace that replaces the traditional bouquet *Tip*: Choose the flowers wisely to accommodate for allergies.

FINGERS: A fresh flower ring is a unique accessory for brides and bridesmaids alike.

DECORATING

If there was ever a time to go big, it's now. The trend for large floral arrangements is for brides who crave a bold and romantic feel. If you can make room in your budget for the following floral decorating trends, your wedding will be draped in elegance and romance — literally.

INSTALLATIONS: Do you wish for your wedding and reception to be larger than life? If so, the floral installation trend is your new best friend. Imagine a giant chandelier floating above the head table, cake table or as the centerpiece of the room. *Tip:* These require construction and installation time, so plan accordingly.

FLOWER WALLS: Create a focal point for your wedding with a gorgeous wall of flowers or greenery. Use the flower wall as the backdrop to your ceremony and then move it to the reception venue. Tip 1: Use artificial flowers or greenery or even paper flowers to achieve the desired effect. Tip 2: Rent it!

TABLE RUNNERS: Cascading table runners create a uniform table decoration that just won't end. Lush greenery, bold colors or simple vines will make your reception appear awash in fragrant florals and elegant refinement

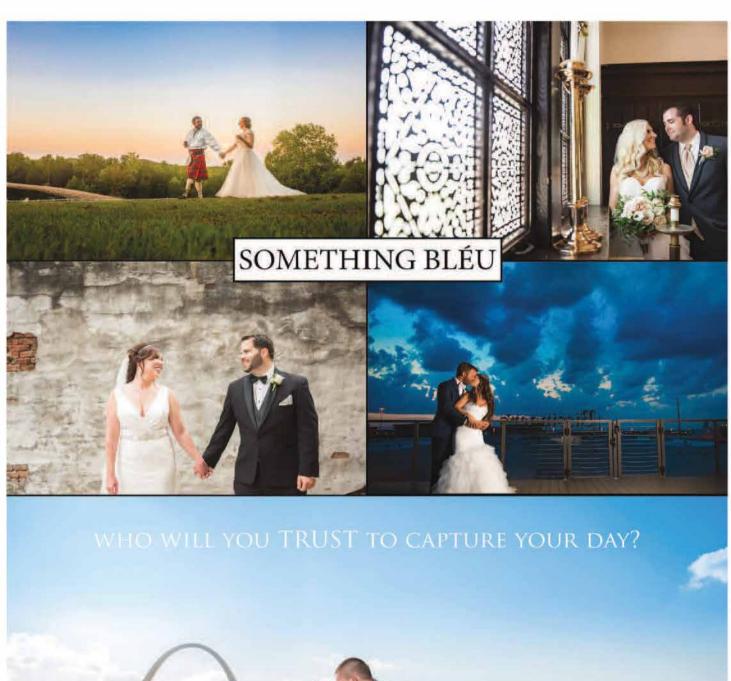














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What's your wedding cake

BY SARAH GERREIN

The cutting of the wedding cake is the proverbial cherry on top of any wedding reception.

For many guests, dessert-eating is the pinnacle of the reception, so couples should work closely with bakeries to ensure their cake is stylish and tasty. Your personal taste dictates what type of dessert you chose to serve. Cakes may be naked and or even oddly-shaped. What's your cake taste?







AN AFFINITY FOR THE TRADITIONAL

There's nothing wrong with sticking with a CLASSIC. Simple and classic cakes adorned with edible or fresh flowers, latticework, pearls and other sugar decorations will continue to be the choice of many couples. Unique fillings and cake flavors allow guests to pick their favorite piece.

THE MINIMALIST

The less-is-more type might think about serving a NAKED CAKE.

The multi-layered cake with a thin coating of buttercream on the outside will remain popular as rustic weddings stay in style.

An added bonus is a more freshly baked cake since naked cakes tend to dry out more quickly

SUPPORTS THE ARTS

Cake decorators are artists by their own right, but taking a paint brush to icing requires a special type of talent. If you share an appreciation for the arts, you may want a HAND-PAINTED cake. Be it a floral design or tile-like handiwork or even a marbled cake, these deftly painted cakes add a touch of personality and sophistication to your traditional white cake.









THE MATHEMATICAL SORT

GEOMETRIC cakes with precise lines and details provide a striking yet understated effect that any right-brained person could appreciate. The cake itself can be geometric in shape or the icing can show off varying designs with the same effect. If you want to use shape conservatively, keep the shapes symmetrical. For a more daring look, go for abstract, off-balance cake layers.

ALL THE FRILLS

For an over-the-top, all-in cake, go for RUFFLES — tots and lots of ruffles. Buttercream or fondant ruffles give wedding cakes all sorts of complexity, and the extra icing is a bonus for those who crave it! Ruffles come in all shapes and sizes. Floral petals and rosettes with a peeling effect are popular options. For a unique look, a fabric-like or a torn paper ruffle are also options. Ombre up your ruffles for additional depth of color.

NO CAKE FOR YOU!

If a layered cake isn't your deal (or even if you just want to offer a sweet grazing table in addition to cake), consider these alternative dessert ideas:

- ☐ Grab-and-go dessert table
- Macaroon towers
- ☐ Cheesecakes
- ☐ Ice cream sandwiches
- Dipped cookies, tartlets or cake pops
- □ Bundt cakes
- Dessert food trucks

Think outside the hall

BY SARAH GERREIN

A NONTRADITIONAL RECEPTION HAS MANY PERKS

The idea of a traditional Saturday wedding followed by an evening filled with a formal dinner reception is being challenged by budget-conscious brides who want to put their stamp on the celebration.

Frequently, brides are opting for micro-weddings — a smaller guest list and a budget spent on fabulous food, drink, décor and entertainment.

BRUNCH

Show me one person who doesn't enjoy brunch!
The benefit of a morning wedding and late
morning/early afternoon reception are
many. The timing of a brunch ceremony
allows for more guests to attend,
eggs are more affordable than steak
and chicken, the drinks are often
caffeinated and the setting lends itself
to a casual, less stuffy experience.
Even the word "brunch" has a light, airy,
uncomplicated feel.

TIMING: Vows at sunrise

ATTIRE: Informal (sundresses welcomer)

FOOD: Frittatas, omelets, crepes or pancake stations, fruit parfaits,

wrap sandwiches, biscuits and gravy, shrimp and grits

DRINK: Espresso bar, pressed juice bar, Mimosas, Bellinis and

Bloody Marys

DESSERT: Scones, coffee cake, angel food cake, zucchini bread

AFTERNOON TEA

Why should the royals get all of the good hats?
Turn your childhood imaginary tea party into your dream wedding with an English Tea reception. Good tea, finger foods, formal table settings and savory sweets are essential for an elegant tea party. An outdoor setting is ideal if the season and the weather are right, and each table will house charming silver teapots and accompanying accourtements.

TIMING: Vows in early afternoon.

ATTIRE: Formal (and headwear for quests is a must)

FOOD: Finger sandwiches, cheese platters, salmon canapes, tarts, open-faced chicken salad sandwiches

DRINK: Earl Grey Tea, Champagne punch

DESSERT: Scones, Madelines, thumbprint cookies

BACKYARD BBQ

St. Louisans have a regional affinity towards barbecue, so a barbecue reception is as natural as a plate of brisket. Hold a party in your

backyard or in a rented outdoor space, and let your guests get their hands dirty with ribs and pulled pork sandwiches.

Serve plenty of craft beer in barrels and break out the yard games for a good ole' time.

TIMING: Vows in late afternoon/reception starting at 6 or 7 p.m.

ATTIRE: Informal (shorts are welcome)

FOOD: Pig roast, pulled pork or chicken, sauce station, fried chicken, cole slaw, potato salad, grilled corn on

the cob, baked beans, mac and cheese

DRINK: Spiked lemonade in mason Jars, craft beer,

local sodas in bottles

DESSERT: Make-your-own s'mores, pies, mini cobblers







Drink locally. Eat sustainably.

A RECEPTION FOR THE MODERN ERA

BY KATHERINE LEWIS CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Modern couples are taking a holistic approach to wedding planning. Even as they tailor details to reflect their personal taste and style, they are also thinking globally. Sustainability is now a major consideration, one that many St. Louis catering companies recognize by minimizing waste and using locally sourced ingredients.

"We strive to use every part of the plant, produce and protein," says chef Vince Bommarito Jr., the chief culinary officer at Butler's Pantry. "The trick is to not only use it in familiar ways but also unexpected ones. For instance, we like to use leftover basil, introduce agar-agar and vollal We've created basil 'caviar' to top hors d'oeuvres or add an herbaceous flair to the cocktail menu,"

Another way to reduce a reception's carbon feotprint? Drink locally. The St. Louis area has no shortage of breweries and wineries, and





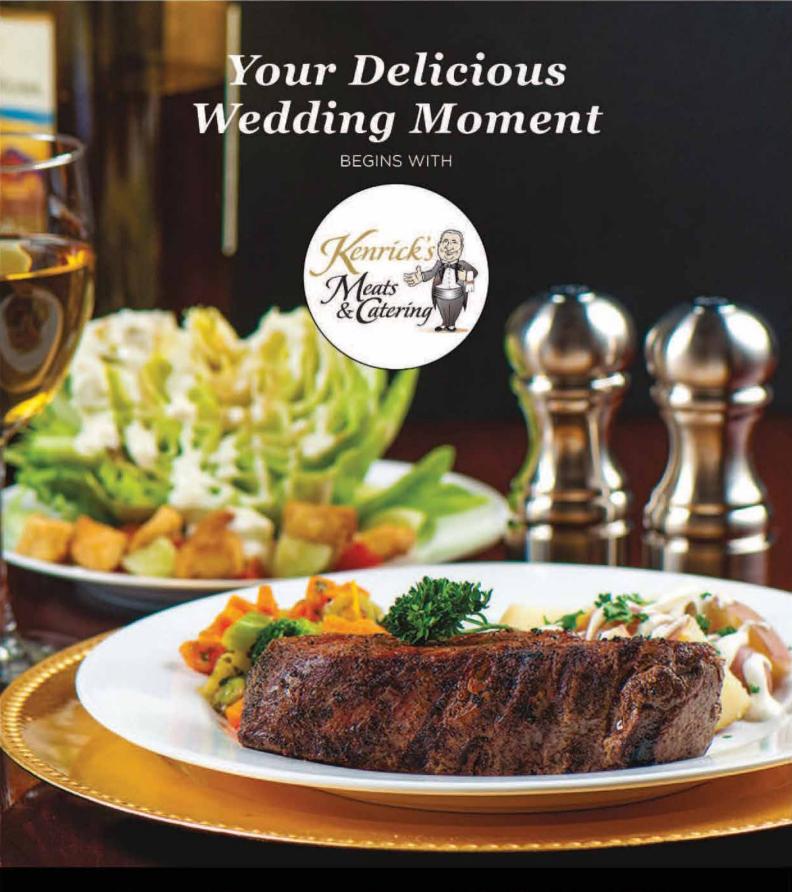
weddings are fantastic opportunities to give out-of-towners a taste of what makes St. Louis special. Markets and liquor stores all over the city offer kegs from the region's most popular microbreweries including Schlafly, 4 Hands. Urban Chestnut, Old Bakery and more.

Consider using real stemware and eliminating single-use plastic straws and swizzle sticks—they will not be missed. Be sure to include your non-drinking guests by making zero- proof cocktails available or even a coffee bar.

Guests who have a sweet tooth and a penchant for the unexpected will love a dessert bar or a milkshake station that offers traditional and boozy shakes. Strange Donuts owner, Jason Bockman, says that it caters to couples who want something a little bit different for their reception — in this case, doughnuts as an

alternative to cake — while still referencing classic wedding traditions. "Wedding cake and strawberries and champagne flavors are always popular, but being from St. Louis, our gooey butter cake doughnut is always on the menu." he says.

Receptions tend to get more laid-back as they progress, and the food should loosen up right along with it. If dinner was the time to use the correct fork for salad, late night is the time to do away with utensils entirely: Bringing in finger foods like pizza, hot dogs, sliders, pretzels and toasted ravioli is a surefire way to keep the party — and the guests — going into the wee hours.



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BANDS & DJS keep the party going

CONTENT PROVIDED BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

No reception is complete without music. The couples' preferences have to be balanced with entertaining their guests. So, the big decision becomes, to hire a band or a DJ? Here's a list of pros and cons to both and how to ensure you get the best entertainment value for your money.

BUDGET

As you might guess, bands are more expensive than DJs. But live music can create a specific atmosphere that can't be achieved by a DJ. On the other hand, DJs can tailor music to a wide variety of preferences from the original artists. Check around online to get a feel for the costs and weigh your musical desires against your budget. Or split the difference — have a band play at the ceremony and a DJ spin at the reception.



THE VIBE

The size and type of wedding will dictate the vibe. If it's a small, quiet ceremony and brief reception, the romantic feel created by a string quartet might be the perfect background music. If it's an all-out bash with large numbers of people, a DJ might be the right choice to meet a variety of tastes and requests.





VENUE

You'll want to take into account the venue and any size restrictions or technical limitations. A band will need a larger performance space than a DJ, of course, and special power and logistics may be involved (stages, amplifiers and PA systems, lights, etc.).

MUSIC AND REVIEWS

Whether you choose a band or a DJ, you'll have some musical preferences, so ask for a suggested playlist based on these choices and any music that is of particular interest (first dance, ethnic or theme music). Don't forget to include the ability to handle requests from guests. Professional entertainers will be more than happy to also send you references and links to video of past performances.

The bandleader or DJ will also act as an MC for the event, so get a feel for their personality. You might want to take in a live performance to gauge the music and rapport with an audience.

AVAILABILITY

Because top wedding bands and DJs are in demand, make sure you choose with enough advance notice to ensure availability on your wedding date. Six months in advance is good time to begin the booking process. You'll want to decide if they'll play through the entire event or just the reception. Four hours of music is a good baseline to begin from when negotiating, but ask about overtime if the party goes into overdrive.

THE DEAL

After you've covered all these bases, it's time to seal the deal with a contract. Within the contract, the specific terms of the length or the performance and any overtime costs should be covered, as well as break times, deposits and the refund policy should the show fall short of expectations. Also, if the bandleader or DJ you meet becomes ill or unavailable on the date of the event, ask who will replace them and set up a time to meet with them as well.

What's your jam.



BY NATALIE MACIAS

Whether you prefer Earth, Wind & Fire or Ed Sheeran, music remains one of the most important aspects of your wedding reception.

Although you personally choose the songs for the traditional dances like the father-bride, mothergroom and first dance, the music that follows must be carefully crafted to get people out of their seats and on the dance floor.

PARTY STARTERS

First things first, there are some pivotal, traditional songs to get people grooving. These are the ones that everyone knows, and everyone secretly loves - guaranteed to get the party started. Here are some of the top classic reception songs to get your guests on the floor:

"I Wanna Dance With Somebody (Who Loves Me)"

Whitney Houston

"Cupid Shuffle"

Cunici

"September"

Earth, Wind & Fire

"Sweet Caroline"

Neil Diamond

"Single Ladies"

Beyonce

"We Are Family"

Sister Stedge

"Wobble"

VIC

"Friends in Low Places"

Garth Brooks

"I Gotta Feeling"

Black Eyed Peas

"Girls Just Want To Have Fun"

Cyndi Lauper

SLOW SONGS

Slow songs — when the happy couples hit the dance floor and the single people hit the bar. Slow songs are equally as important as the party starters when it comes to having a memorable wedding reception. Some of the go-to slow dance songs as of late include:

"Wonderful Tonight"

Eric Clapton

"At Last"

Etta James

"Can't Help Falling in Love"

Eivis Presley

"Speechless"

Dan + Stray

"Lover"

Taylor Swift

"Strawberry Wine"

Deana Carter

"The Way You Look Tonight"

Frank Sinatra

"Make You Feel My Love"

Adels

"(What A) Wonderful World"

Sam Cooke

"Perfect"

Ed Sheeran

LATE-NIGHT JAMS

Late-night music is for the loyal wedding reception guests who are willing to stick around until the very last song is over.

When all the little ones and grandparents have left the building, these songs are sure to keep the night owls on their feet. A few end of night favorites include:

"Yeah!"

Usher, Lil Jon, Ludach's

"Country Grammar"

Netty

"Truth Hurts"

Lizzo

"Baby Got Back"

Sir Mix-A-Lot

"Wannabe"

Spice Girls

"Low (feat, T-Pain)"

Flo Rida

"Anaconda"

Nicki Minai

"The Git Up"

Blanco Brown

"Get Low"

Lil Jon & Da East Side Boyz

"All the Small Things"

Blink-182

[Nontraditional]

Registry IDEAS

BY AUBREY BYRON

Many modern couples are waiting longer to get married. They're finding their way in their careers, starting homes and getting settled before they say, "I do." And with this new modern timeline comes a question — what do I register for? If you already have the household goods you need, why stick to the traditional? Here are our picks to get creative with your registry!



Love the outdoors? Register for a tent. Your home away from home is a perfect item to kick off your life as a couple. \$38 and up



MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP

Is art and culture your thing? Why not make the most of your registry with a membership to the St. Louis Art Museum, Science Center, Zoo or Botanical Garden? \$50-79





OUTDOOR SPEAKER

Okay, maybe you're stocked inside the house, but what about the outside? A waterproof portable speaker like the **JBL Charge 3** is a great tool for entertaining **\$99.95**



CHARITY

If you're all stocked up. Champion a cause! St. Louis is full of non-profits that could use support — whether it's Stray Rescue, United Way or Boys & Girls Club! (Amount Optional)



HIS AND HERS SUBSCRIPTIONS

Try out a his and hers subscription plan. Get skin and grooming covered with plans like **Dollar Shave Club** and **Ipsy**, \$12 -\$40



No matter your stock of kitchen gadgets, every couple needs to cook. Register for delivered meals like **Home Chef** to learn new recipes and get those first months together covered. \$9.95 per serving





G COOLER

Whether you're catching games or heading to a pot luck, every couple needs a quality cooler. The RTIC Pack cooler keeps items cold for days in a compact, accessible case. \$158.99

ACTION CAM

This is a honeymoon must you might not have thought of.
Request a gift that allows you to record and share your vacation moments with loved ones when you get back home like the GoPro Hero 7 Black: \$329.99



Boarding Pass | Sourcing Pass

HONEYMOON FUND

Yes! You can do a honeymoon fund without being tacky. But there's a catch—make sure to register for specific experiences you plan to do, and don't forget to include traditional registry items as well.

(Amount optional)



No matter how nontraditional you may be as a couple, you're still going to need some traditional household items. But why not upgrade in the process? The iRobot Roomba 960 can offer relief in the dreaded household duties. \$499.99



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VENUE DIRECTORY



PRO TIPS for the perfect space

CONTENT PROVIDED BY NEWSPAPER TOOLBOX

The question was popped and your answer was "yes"! Let the planning commence. First things first — venue! Selecting your venue is one of the most important elements of the wedding planning process. If you have yet to chose your venue, it's time to roll up your sleeves and get down to work.

DATE

The date is the first thing to be decided. Indeed, it is often the availability of the reception hall that determines the wedding date, rather than the reverse. In other words, the earlier you reserve, the more options you have.

SITE

Ideally, your reception hall should be close to where the majority of your guests live or to a hotel where they can stay. It is also crucial to book a hall close to the church or town hall where the wedding ceremony is going to take place.

CAPACITY

Find out if the venue is large enough to hold all your guests. Also, be careful not to choose somewhere that is too big, as an oversized room can make it difficult to create a welcoming atmosphere. Check for possible layouts of the tables as well as the shape of tables that are available.

NOTE: Round tables facilitate socializing.

EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

Does the hall provide all the services you need?
Look for ample parking, attractive washrooms, a children's playroom, room for a band or a
DJ as well as a dance floor, kitchen facilities and suitable heating or air-conditioning.
Check what is included in the price and what isn't, such as tables and chairs, tablecloths, place settings, decorations, centerpieces, meals, alcohol, service, tips, a coordinator or audio and video equipment.

PAYMENT

The cost will, of course, influence your choice Find out about the methods of payment accepted; do you have to give a deposit? Can you pay in installments? If you only have a small budget, an out-of-season wedding or a weekday evening can save you a lot of money.

VENUE	CONTACT	337	400	AND STA	St. saled St. saled		or Josephin
312North Event Space 312 North 2nd Street, St. Louis	314-899-0612 612north.com	225+			•	*	
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All Occasion Banquet Center 11 Compass Point Drive, St. Charles	636-946-1011 alloccasionbanquetcenter.com	300			•	×	*
Ameristar Casino Resort Spa One Ameristar Blvd., St. Charles	636-940-4300 ameristarstcharles.com	640		4	1:00		
Andre's South 1254 Telegraph Road, St. Louis	314-894-2622 andresbanquet.com	400			٠	14.	
Andre's West 111 S. Old Hwy, 141, Fenton	314-691-5650 andresbanquet.com	350	4		*	14	
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Barnett on Washington 207 Washington Ave., St. Louis	844-462-2763 barnettonwashington.com	200		1	14	ě	
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lusch Stadium Special Events 00 Clark St., St. Louis	314-345-9630 mlb.com/cardinals/ballpark	400+	7.0	٠	4	19.	
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ave Vineyard 1124 Cave Road, St. Genevieve	314-616-1098 cavevineyard.com	250			19	±.	
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he Conservatory 001 South Main St., St. Charles	636-947-0414 gardenwedding.com	100	*			7.	*
Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis 1750 Washington Blvd., St. Louis	314-535-4660 camstl.org	225	*	*		•	×
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Holiday Inn Airport West — Earth City 3400 Rider Trail South, St. Louis	314-291-6800 lhg.com/holidayinn	300	¥		÷.	(*	÷
Holiday Inn — Forest Park 5915 Wilson Ave., St. Louis	314-645-0700 ihg.com/holidayinn	80			•		
Holiday Inn Select - St. Louis Downtown 811 N. 9th St., St. Louis	314-421-4000 ing.com/holldayinn	400	*		15.00		
Holiday Inn — South County Ctr. 5921 S. Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis	314-892-3600 ing.com/holidayinn	325			٠	12.	14.
Holiday Inn Express St. Louis Airport 3735 Riverport Dr., Maryland Heights	1-800-652-3705 lhg.com/holidayinnexpress	125	*			12	*
Holiday Inn Southwest - Route 66 0709 Watson Road, St. Louis	314-821-6600 hg.com/holidayinn	400			ly.	•	*
Hotel Saint Louis 705 Olive St., St. Louis	314-241-4300 hotelsainthouis.com	325					*
Hyatt Regency St. Louis at The Arch 515 Chestnut St., St. Louis	314-655-1234 hyatt.com	2000	7		*	ū.	
nnsbrook Resort & Conference Center 596 Aspen Way Dr., Innsbrook	636-928-3366 Innsbrook-resort.com	200	4		(8)	1	4
lewel Box 600 Clayton Avenue: Forest Park, St. Louis	314-531-0080 forestparkmap.org/jewel-box	250	100	٠		19	
(uhs Estate & Farm 3080 Spanish Pond Rd., Spanish Lake	314-226-0709 kuhsfarm.com	400+		•		2	
andings at Spirit Golf Club 80 N. Eatherton Rd., Chesterfield	636-728-1927 landingsatspint.com	400			Let	(*)	3
emp Grand Hall 817 Cherokee St., St. Louis	314-664-8024 lempmansion.com/grandhall	300	*	1.0	*	٠	
emp Mansion 3322 DeMenil Place, St. Louis	314-664-8024 lempmansion.com	260	*	*	+	•	
IUNA Event Center 1532 S. Lindbergh Blvd., Sunset Hills	314-226-1010 Illunaeventcenter.com	350			*		
The Lodge of Des Peres 050 Des Peres Rd., Des Peres	314-835-6150 desperesmo.org	165					
odge at Grant's Trail 1398 Hoffmeister Ave., St. Louis	314-638-3340 lodgeatgrantstrail.com	80		*		*	0.
Lumen St. Louis 1201 Locust St., St. Louis	314-615-2480 lumensti.com	200				٠	
Lumière Place Casino and Hotel 999 N. 2nd St., St. Louis	314-881-7777 lumiereplace.com	350	3		*	3	×
Mad Art Gallery 1727 S. 12th St., St. Louis	314-771-8230 madart.com	230	*		٠	*	
The Magic House 116 South Kirkwood, St. Louis	314-822-8900 magichouse.org	500	.*:			•	*
dagic Chef Mansion 400 Russell Blvd. St. Louis	314-664-3400 magicchefmansion.com	150	•			781	
The Mahler Ballroom 1915 Washington Blvd. St. Louis	314-361-4411 mahlerballroom.com	150		*		*	
darnott St. Louis Airport 0700 Pear Tree Drive, St. Louis	314-423-9700 marriott.com	500			٠	ж	3.
Marnott St. Louis West 560 Maryville Center Drive, St. Louis	314-878-2747 marriott.com	1,045	(A)		1961		1.4
dissouri Athletic Club 105 Washington Avenue, St. Louis	855-418-6652 mac-stl.org	400			4	ū.	-4
Missouri Bluffs Golf Club 8 Research Park Circle, St. Charles	636-939-6494 mobiliffs.com	150	122	*	- 4		

/ENUE	CONTACT	230	200 g		of selly of or o		ord Joseph Jest
Missouri Botanical Garden 4344 Shaw Blyd., St. Louis	314-577-5100 missouribotanicalgarden.org	300	101			•	
Missouri History Museum 3700 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis	314-746-4599 mohistory.org/museum	250	*	-30	\⊕.	i.	
Mount Pleasant Estate 5634 High St., Augusta	636-482-9463 mountpleasant.com	225		*	•		
New Town at St. Charles 3331-2 Rue Royale, St. Charles	636-288-7332 newtownstcharles.com	300		4		•	
Old Hickory Golf Club Dye Club Dr., St. Peters	636-477-8960 oldhickoryge.com	550		7.6		1.	
Old Stone Chapel 106 S. Main St., St. Charles	636-947-8270 hearteventsstl.com	200		à.	14	12	×
Oliya On The Hill 4915 Daggett Ave., St. Louis	314-961-7588 ollvaonthehill.com	100	74	ú.	l) y		
Orlando's Event Centers, South County 4300 Hoffmeister, St. Louis	314-638-6660 orlandogardens.com	900			14	ě	
Orlando's Event Centers, Maryland Heights 2050 Dorsett Village Plaza	314-453-9000 orlandogardens.com	600				*	
Palladium St. Louis 400 Park Place, St. Louis	314-881-4301 palladium-sti.com	400		*	(10)	121	
Stifel Theatre 400 Market St., St. Louis	314-499-7600 stife(theatre.com	400	30)		4:		
Pear Tree Inn St. Louis Union Station 2211 Market St., St. Louis	314-241-3200 druryhotels.com	150			16	7.	*
Pevely Farms Golf Club 400 Lewis Rd., Eureka	636-938-7000 pevelyfarms.com	250		181			
The Purser Center at Logan College 851 Schoettler Rd., Chesterfield	636-230-1881 logan.edu/purser-center	400	(*)				
Randall Gallery 999 North 13th St., St. Louis	314-550-0818 randallgallery.com	300	*	•		*	
Marriott St. Louis Grand Hotel 800 Washington Ave., St. Louis	314-621-9600 marriott.com	500	.4.		*	1	ģ.
Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel 9801 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis	314-429-1100 marriott.com	650	*			٠	
The Ritz-Carlton St. Louis 00 Carondolet Plaza, St. Louis	314-863-6300 ritzcarlton.com	700	*			*	*
The Vineyards at Riverbend Chapel 327 Ming Drive, Washington	636-390-8600 riverbendchapelinc.biz	300	•	. *		*	
Rose Of The Hill by Favazza's 2300 Edwards St., St. Louis	314-772-6003 roseofthehill.com	350	3	*	(B)	×	
Saint Charles Convention Center Convention Plaza, St. Charles	636-669-3000 stcharlesconventioncenter.com	1,000	301			*	4
St. Louis Art Museum Fine Arts Drive, St. Louis	314-721-0072 slam.org	250	.*1		*:		
St. Louis Artists' Guild and Gallery 2 N. Jackson, Clayton	314-727-6266 stlouisartistsgulld.org	110		ı,×		18	
St. Louis Science Center 5050 Oakland Ave. St. Louis	314-289-4400 sisc.org	330	.et	*	4	*	
St Louis University Events 221 North Grand Blvd., St. Louis	314-977-6338 slu.edu/events	500	i k i		•	*	
St. Louis Zoo Government Drive, St. Louis	314-781-0900 stlzoo.org	500	100	*	*		
The Sheldon Concert Hall & Ballroom 3648 Washington Blvd., St. Louis	314-533-9900 thesheldon.org	500			- 1		
Sheraton Clayton Plaza Hotel 7730 Bonhomme Ave., Clayton	314-863-0400 marriott.com	250		*		18	×

VENUE	CONTACT	(33)	400	SERVE S	St. St.		Ser Service and
Sheraton Westport — Chalet Hotel St. Louis 191 Westport Plaza, St. Louis	314-878-1500 marriott.com	800				*	
Sheraton Westport Plaza Hotel St. Louis 900 Westport Plaza, St. Louis	314-878-1500 marriott.com	300			1.7	· *	
Silver Oaks Chateau 1168 Hwy 100, Pacific	314-280-8890 silveroakschateau.com	250	3.00	⊒Œ.		1	*
Soulard Preservation Hall 1921 S. 9th St., St. Louis	314-241-8181 preservationhall.com	150		4		÷	
Spazio Westport 12031 Lackland Rd., St. Lows	314-576-0400 spaziowestport.com	250				14.	
Sunset 44 Bistro 118 W. Adams Ave., Kirkwood	314-965-6644 sunset44.com	50	*		1		
Sunset Hills Banquet Center 13366 West Watson Road, Sunset Hills	314-843-3000 sunsethilfsgolfcourse.net	250	*		hø.		
Third Degree Glass Factory 5200 Delmar Blvd., St. Louis.	314-367-4527 thirddegreeglassfactory.com	250		1 6	1.0	ı.	
University of Missouri - St. Louis 1-70 & 1-170, St. Louis	314-516-4324 umsl.edu	1600	140			ŧ	
Vance Vineyards & Winery 1522 Madison 212. Fredricktown	573-783-8800 vancevineyards.com	100	4	4	14	4	
Villa Antonio Winery 3660 Linhorst, Hillsboro	636-475-5008 villaantoniowinery.com	300	(*)			(4)	
The Westin St. Louis 811 Spruce St., St. Louis	314-621-2000 marriott.com	275			13	*	*
Winghaven Country Club 7777 Winghaven Blvd., O'Fallon	636-561-9464 winghavence.com	250		100	3	17	
Whitmoor Country Club 1100 Whitmoor Drive, St. Charles	636-926-9622 whitmoorgolf.com	500					
Whittemore House at Washington University 6440 Forsyth Blvd., St. Louis	314-935-5210 whittemorehouse.org	TIO	*			r)	
Windows On Washington 1601 Washington Ave., St. Louis	314-241-5555 wowbanquets.com	350	(*)		*	18.	
Worlds Fair Pavilion 1904 Concourse Drive, St. Louis	314-289-5344 stlauis-ma.gov	450	*	eta:			
Xavier Grand Ballroom 3628 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis	314-977-7303 sfxcollegechurchweddings.com	300	*			*	

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Best Bridal



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/énue	CONTACT	(AB)	10 40 A		of sales		Ser JOS STREET
4204 Main Street Brewing Co. 4204 W. Main Street, Belleville	618-234-4903 mainstreetbrewingco.com	450	10	*		•	
Aerie's Terrace 300 Timber Ridge Drive, Grafton, III	618-786-8438 aeriesview.com	700	¥	- (*)	1.7	i.	
Beall Mansion 107 E. 12 Street, Alton	618-474-9100 beallmansion.com	10.0		37			
Bluff City Grill 124 E Broadway, Alton	618-433-8288 bluff-city-grill business site	500	*		1500		
Casino Queen Hotel & Casino 100 South Front St., East St. Louis	800-777-0777 casinoqueen.com/stlouis	250		1.6		14.	
Crystal Garden and Event Center 230 University Drive, Edwardsville	618-655-1170 gccuisine.com	400	*		*	1k	
OoubleTree Collinsville 000 Eastport Plaza Drive, Collinsville	618-345-2800 hilton.com/en/doubletree	350					
A Fair Barn 8416 Hotze Road, Salem	618-740-1515 afairbarn.com	300+	(e)				19
The Falls Reception & Conference Center, 500 Admiral Wienel Blvd., Columbia	618-281-3255 seethefalls.com	550	340				
Four Points By Sheraton Fairview Heights 319 Fountains Parkway, Fairview Heights	618-622-9500 marriott.com	500	(A)		(10)	1/2	TV.
Sateway Center, The Gateway Drive, Collinsville	800-289-2388 gatewaycenter.com	1,280	100				4
he Grafton Winery 00 W. Main Street, Grafton	618-768-5001 thegraftonwinery.com	350	,			2	
lidden Lake Winery 0580 Wellen Rd., Aviston	618-228-9111 hiddenlakewinery.com	500			18	(*)	đ
The Loading Dock 101 E. Front Street, Grafton	618-786-3494 graftonloadingdock.com	500		120			
ockhaven Golf Club 0872 Lawrence Keller Dr., Godfrey	618-466-2441 lockhavengolfclub.com	300+	*	*	+	•	(*
The National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows 142 South De Mazenod Drive, Belleville	618-397-6700 snows.org	400			*	*	
Dak Terrace Resort & Spa 00 Beyers Lake Rd., Pana	800-577-7598 oakterraceresort.com	Call		*:	*		
Orchards Golf Club 499 Golf Course Drive, Belleville	618-233-8921 orchardsgolfclub.com	125	*				
Pere Marquette Lodge 3653 Lodge Boulevard, Grafton	618-786-2331 pmlodge.net	250	*	. *		٠	
The Regency Conference Center 100 Regency Park Dr., O'Fallon	618-624-9999 regencyconferencecenter.com	850	3	*	· (*)	18	
Stanewolf Galf Club 195 Stanewolf Trail, Fairview Heights	618-624-4653 stonewolfgolf.com	350	.				
imithton Turner Hall 15 North Julia Street, Smithton	618-277-9690 smithtonturnerhall.com	500			100	•	
iunset Hills Country Club 525 Highway 157 S., Edwardsville	618-656-9380 sunsethillscountryclub.com	330				18	
ony's Vogue Room 12 Plasa Street, Alton	618-462-8384 tonysrestaurant.com	250				*.	4
uscany Ballroom Regency Conference Center 00 Regency Park Dr., O'Fallon	618-624-9999 regencyconferencecenter.com	750	4.		٠	ж	
Nildey Theatre 52 North Main Street, Edwardsville	618-307-2053 wildeytheatre.com	325	141				
Nilloughby Farm 31 Willoughby Lane, Collinsville	618-977-0941 willoughbyfarm.org	175				ū.	
Now Furnishings and Event Center	618-444-7969 facebook.com/wowfurnishings	250	1		-4:		

LOOK WHO'S

ENGAG

COMPILED BY NATALIE MACIAS

These St. Louis-area couples submitted their engagements to us and we couldn't be happier to feature them. To have your announcement included, visit stlouisbestbridal.com!

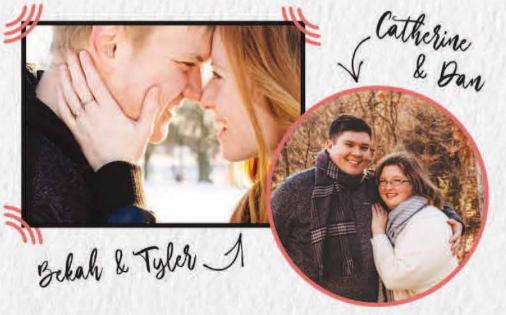


Allison & Joe

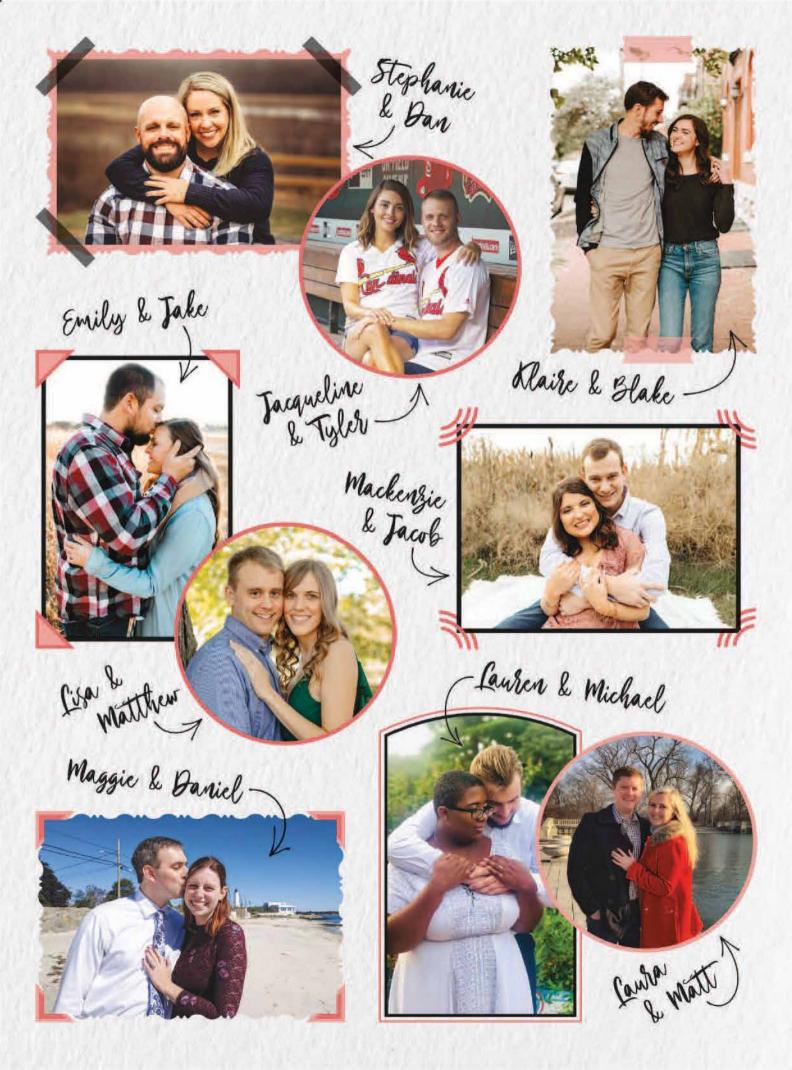


Hannah & Ryan A











The Best Cone General DESTINATIONS FROM ST. LOUIS

BY AUBREY BYRON

You've done it! You're married. You planned and planned. You listened to suggestions from your new mother-in-law, sisters, clergy and everyone else in your life. You prepped and pressed and preened. Now it's finally time to enjoy your married life with the one you said the vows to!

Whether it's domestic or international, a honeymoon is a special time to take together. Celebrating with family and friends is important, but it's also crucial to celebrate the two of you. While planning a vacation on top of a wedding may sound like a lot, it's the perfect gift to yourselves. Here are our suggestions for the best destinations, locally and otherwise, to spend your first trip as a married couple.



DOMESTIC

Save the worry of a passport and customs by staying local. Here are four easy, domestic destinations to reach from St. Louis.



DENVER

Mountains, braweries and flight deals galore!
Head to Denver, Colorado to start your marriage with a little adventure. Take a daytrip to Garden of the Gods, see a show at Red Rocks Amphitheatre or spend your time hopping between the city's more than 148 breweries. If you want daytime adventures and nightlife all in just one short, direct flight away, Denver is the destination for you.



CHARLESTON

Rent a house on Folly Beach or stay at a resort on the pristinely preserved Kiawah Island. Whether you want to surf and paddleboard or lounge and read, Charleston, South Carolina, has the beaches and views to celebrate your nuptials. Plus take a bike ride on the boardwalk and enjoy the nightlife of historic downtown Charleston.



SAN JUAN

What better way to counter all the wedding planning stress than an island getaway? If you're craving the slow life on the beach without the hassle of leaving the country, we have two words for you, "Puerto Rico!" This laid back island territory has all the views, resorts and beaches of the Caribbean has to offer for the price of a domestic flight. Enjoy bright blue waves, incredible food and the easygoing lifestyle. In just a few hours, you can be transported to tropical island paradise.



LAS VEGAS

It's Vegas, baby! Celebrate your new marriage under the lights. Ride the ferris wheel, hit the slots or pick from dozens of shows each night — from the marvel of Cirque du Soleil to Elvis tributes to famous stand-up comics. If nightlife is your thing, Vegas is the place to be. Plus enjoy a surprising catalog of outdoor recreation a short drive away.

INTERNATIONAL

Passport in hand, you're ready to fly off for your first adventure as a married couple!

Here are some of the best international trips to take from St. Louis on your honeymoon getaway.



PUERTO VALLARTA

We know that you know about Mexico.
But if the all-inclusive, one-stop destination is your thing, there are other options than Cancun!
Leave the Yucatan Peninsula to the massive crowds and hop over to the pristine beaches of Puerto Vallarta. Even though it's on the Pacific side, you can still grab short, affordable flights.
Pick a resort and experience luxury on the beach.



MONTREAL

Alright, we know Canada might not have been what you had in mind, but trust us on this one! Montreal is one of North America's best-kept romantic secrets. Cobblestone? Openaired restaurants? Low-lit walks on a narrow street? Enjoy the feel of a European vacation without the price point. Plus, see the world-famous botanical garden and have your fill of the deliciously fried local cuisine called Poutine.



COSTA RICA

"Pura Vida" is all about living the "pure life."
Whether you want beaches, rich rainforests or
just to catch the sight of a swinging sloth —
Costa Rica is known for its rich biodiversity and
undeveloped beach fronts. Zip line, snorkel and
hike through the jungle to see all that the rich
land can offer! Or simply rent a cabana on the
beach and lie back to enjoy the scenery and let
the waterfall splash on your skin. Costa Rica's
beauty is unmatched!

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO? APPS LIKE AIRBNB NOW LET YOU BOOK EXPERIENCES! FIND EVERYTHING FROM BIKE RIDES TO PRIVATE CHEF DINNERS.



NICE

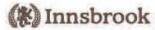
The French Riviera has been one of the most sought-after vacation destinations since medieval times — and for good reason. The colorful villas by the sea have become synonymous with the good life. Head to Nice, France to enjoy gourmet French meals, romantic wine and the crystal blue views of the sea. Walk the cobblestone streets and take a boat out to see the cliffs. The winding streets of Nice offer endless summer fun.



Will You Be the Lucky Winner?

Innsbrook Resort, in partnership with Saint Louis Bride, is giving away an all-inclusive dream wedding worth more than \$40,000! One lucky couple will win and up to 150 of their closest friends and family will witness their dreams come true as they tie the knot on March 20, 2021. The prize package includes quality products and services from our talented sponsors, including: Applause Weddings, Event Inspirations, Eye Do STL, Innsbrook Vacations, J&M Displays, Jess & Jenn Photography, Made. by Lia, Mia Grace Bridal, Nadine & Mina, and Serendipity Beyond Design.

Enter to win at InnsbrookWeddings.com Registration closes March 31, 2020



Beyond the Big Day

HOW TO MERGE HOUSEHOLD DUTIES, PETS AND FINANCES



Merging household DUTIES

You've merged your finances and your home, now you must merge, divide and conquer your household responsibilities. If you don't want these tiny conflicts to take over your newly married life, you should set some guidelines. Here are some tips that can turn mundane tasks into success.

THROW GENDER STEREOTYPES OUT THE DOOR

The breadwinner, the man, the man of the house — all of these roles are outdated and do nothing but cause resentment and overblown expectations. A complementary approach to divvying up chores will do your marriage a world of good.

MAKE A LIST

Early in your cohabitation, make a list and decide upon the frequency of household tasks by listing daily (dishes, cooking), weekly (trash, yardwork) and monthly (pet bathing, car washing) chores. If you agree upon the task and the frequency, you are ready to divide and conquer

CATER TO TALENT

Think about the jobs each of you do well, don't mind doing or who can do it the quickest. Sign yourself up

TAKE TURNS

There will be jobs that neither of you enjoy. Rotate frequently enough that the tasks are bearable, or raise your hand if you need help accomplishing them on a case-by-case basis.

APPRECIATE

Folding socks and making beds are not difficult duties in and of themselves, but the monotony and repetition can be taxing. A word of appreciation can go a long way. Be your spouse's biggest cheerleader in appreciating their efforts, because the work will always exist.

The bottom line is that one size does not fit all when it comes to splitting household chores. Find a system that works for you and mix it up as best you can. If all else fails, hire a cleaning service or a handyman as a treat!

How to introduce





A NEW PET

BY METRO NEWS

Many people are excited by the prospect of introducing a new pet into their homes. In the midst of such excitement, it can be easy to overlook the potential feelings existing pets may have about sharing their homes with new animals.

Whether the introduction involves animals of the same species or a hopeful friendship between cat and dog, follow these tips to increase the chances for a successful first meeting.

EMPLOY SENSE OF SMELL

Some dogs and cats will "posture" if they make eye contact with a new animal, according to PetMD. Submissive or dominant responses can cause stress to the animals and may create a negative first meeting. Sometimes it's best if pets meet through scent instead of sight. Separate the pets in different rooms or cages, allowing them to grow accustomed to the smell of the other animal before actually meeting it. Exchange blankets with each pets' scent between the cages.

CONTAIN AND RELEASE

Let the new pet have roam of the house for a little while before containing it to a room or cage. This allows the animal to start leaving its scent around the house. Follow the same technique with the other pet. Eventually the animals will grow a deeper bond through scent articles and grow accustomed to the sounds and smells of each other.

INTRODUCE DOGS OR CATS ON NEUTRAL TERRITORY

Existing pets may feel the need to defend their territory or protect their owners if they meet a new animal inside of the house. When the time comes for a face-to-face meeting, introduce the two animals outside of the home in a neutral area, such as in a neighbor's yard or in a park, offers The Humane Society of America. Reward positive behavior during this initial encounter with treats.

HAVE NEW TOYS AND ITEMS AVAILABLE

Dogs and cats can both be territorial. Even if they accept the new animal, they may not want to share their toys, food bowls or other baubles. Make sure there are items for both of the pets so there will be no bickering or actual fights.

The introduction process is not something pet owners should rush. Such a process can take a few days, weeks or even longer. Pet owners who remain patient and encouraging may find that their pets ultimately learn to live together peacefully.





Merging finances after TYING THE KNOT

BY METRO NEWS

Happy couples experience various changes after tying the knot. One of those changes concerns the couples' finances

According to an analysis of data from the National Survey of Families and Households, arguments about money are a frequent concern with married couples. Furthermore, there is a higher correlation between the risk of divorce and the prevalence of financial disagreements. While fights about money do not necessarily cause divorce, they can create rifts in relationships.

Even couples who have plenty of money may have disagreements about their finances. Arguments may stem from spouses not understanding how their partner views money or the disparities in spending habits among partners. Couples who make early efforts to get on the same page concerning finances may have smoother waters ahead than those who delay such discussions.

ESTABLISH GOALS TOGETHER

Couples should define their financial goals together. Is it a goal to save for early retirement? Is a house in the immediate future? Is frequent travel a desire? Are you planning to contribute to future children's educations? These questions and more need to be addressed early on. By creating a financial plan together, couples can more clearly map out their financial futures.

COMBINING ACCOUNTS MAY BE EASIER

However, some couples want to maintain their full financial independence.

ASSESS DEBTS AS A TEAM

One person may be bringing more debt to the marriage than another. It's important for all cards to be on the table and to work together to eradicate debt. If a person will be coming to the marriage with poor credit, it may be worth it to keep things separate until a spouse works on remedying his or her finances, according to Credit.com.

DECIDE HOW TO SPLIT EXPENSES.

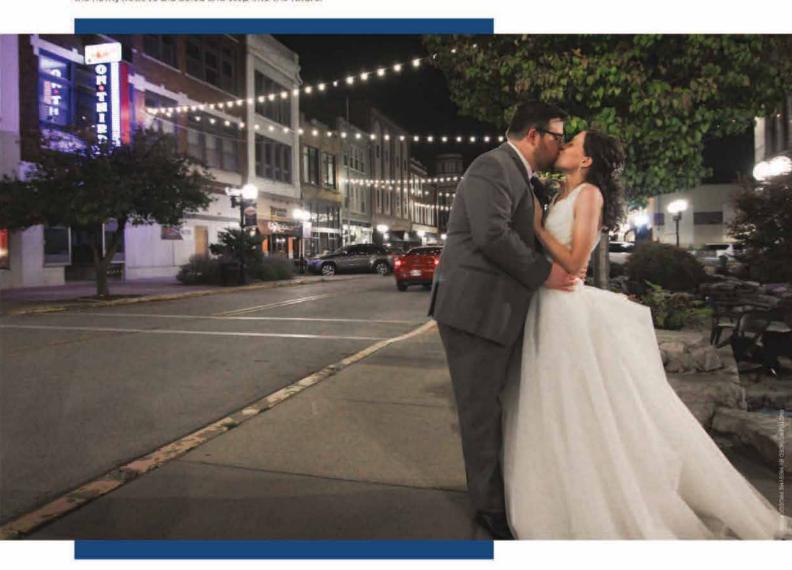
One partner may make more money than the other, and one may spend more time handling household needs or future childcare responsibilities. Couples need to agree whether one person pays for certain bills exclusively, whether they spend from one salary and save the other or combine finances completely and spend equally, offers NerdWallet.

Engaged couples who develop a post-wedding financial plan may find their transition to being married much easier than those who delay such discussions.



Goodnight, Sweetheart

The party's over. The half has closed its doors and weary guests depart. Erin and Christian's feet are tired, but adrenaline pushes them out into the night. They step out onto Main Street in the quaint river town of Alton, Illinois for a final moment of reflection. After prepping and preening, praying and partying with family and friends, it's time for the newlyweds to bid adieu and step into the future.



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