



7 Ways to Save Big on Your Wedding

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With June and September being peak wedding months, there's still time to save money while you're wedding planning!

Here are 7 tips to help get you started!

1) Prioritize

Before you begin planning your wedding and reception, sit down with your partner and make a list of your top five priorities. This will help you decide where to splurge, and where to cut corners.

2) Limit the guest list

Keeping the guest list as concise as possible will drastically reduce reception costs. Most caterers, restaurants and banquet halls charge per-person, so the cost difference between 100 guests and 150 will be significant.

3) Cuisine costs

Research your options. You may want to consider a buffet instead of a sit-down meal; or host a high tea; a dessert reception; brunch or luncheon instead of a multicourse meal. Another possibility for keeping expenses down without sacrificing fine cuisine is "drop-off catering." The caterer delivers already-prepared food and sets it up. If you're really adventurous, cater all or part of the reception yourself.

4) Location, location, location

There are many options for low-cost or no-cost locations, including local and national parks, forest preserves, your own backyard or that of a friend or relative. Or you can make it easy on yourself and find an all-inclusive package where the wedding, reception, and even the honeymoon are all included in the deal.

A great way to celebrate your wedding at a special spot without the high cost, is to plan your wedding during an off-season. Remember too, a wedding on any day but Saturday will reduce the expenses.

5) Wedding attire

You don't have to buy at a traditional bridal salon. You could purchase a gown at an outlet or from a department store in the special occasions off-the-rack area. Other cost-conscious options include buying a vintage or once-worn gown, wear a designer suit, purchase a traditional gown through a discount gown retailer, rent a gown or check out an online auction to find your dress. Another option - go for the "something borrowed" by redoing your mom's or mother-in-law's bridal gown.

6) Getting the word out

Invitations are definitely an area where do-it-yourselfers can show off their skills and pocket the difference in costs. Consider creating your wedding invitations yourself on your own computer.

7) Bar service adds up quickly

Eliminating or limiting a traditional full bar to one or two hours will really cut costs. Alternatives include serving beer and wine only, not serving alcohol at all, or only pouring a champagne toast. Depending on the local laws and the rules at your reception hall, if you are able to buy the liquor yourself and then hire someone to pour it, that saving potential is enormous.

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