

2011

The Events Center at Heartland Acres

*Bridal Guide*



Visit Us Online:

[www.heartlandacresusa.com](http://www.heartlandacresusa.com)

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# The Events Center at Heartland Acres

Celebrate your special occasion while overlooking the beautiful Swan Lake. The Events Center at Heartland Acres is Buchanan County's premier banquet location, specializing in wedding receptions and outdoor ceremonies.

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Brian Bell, Events Center Manager  
319.332.0123  
brianbell@heartlandacresusa.com



Thank you for considering the Heartland Acres Events Center for your big day. Making sure that your big day is perfect is our greatest concern. We encourage you to look through this guide to find information about some exceptional vendors and useful tips in planning one of the most important days of your lives. For additional information and rates feel free to contact me directly.

Warm Regards,

*Brian Bell*

Events Center Manager  
(319) 332-0123  
BrianBell@heartlandacresusa.com

Advertising information for this guide:  
Contact: Fusion Forward, LLC  
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# Wedding Planning Checklist

## Wedding Planning Checklist

### 16 to 9 Months Before

- Start a wedding folder or binder where you can compile all your wedding ideas and inspirations.
- Solidify your budget
- Choose your wedding party
- Begin your guest list
- Hire a wedding planner
- Reserve your date with desired venues
- Book your officiate
- Research entertainment options, florists, photographers and caterers
- Throw an engagement party

### 8 Months Before

- Hire your photographer/videographer
- Book the entertainment
- Meet with the caterers
- Purchase your bridal gown
- Reserve a block of hotel rooms for out-of-town guests
- Register for gifts with various retailers
- Launch a wedding website

### 7 to 6 Months Before

- Select and purchase invitations
- Start planning a honeymoon
- Shop for bridesmaid dresses
- Meet with the officiate
- Send save the date cards
- Reserve various rented items i.e. chairs, electrical items, portable toilets for outdoor events
- Book the florist
- Arrange transportation
- Put together a timeline of events for the day of the wedding

### 5 to 4 Months Before

- Book the rehearsal and rehearsal-dinner venues
- Check on the wedding invitations – ask for samples to review
- Select and order the cake
- Give your guest list to the bridal shower host
- Purchase wedding shoes and begin bridal gown fittings
- Schedule hair and makeup artist
- Select your music

### 3 Months Before

- Finalize the menu and flowers
- Order favors if desired
- Make a list of the people giving toasts
- Finalize the readings

- Purchase your undergarments
- Finalize the order of the ceremony and reception
- Print menu cards and programs
- Send your event schedule to the vendors

### 2 Months Before

- Touch base again with all your vendors
- Meet with your photographer
- Review the music playlist with your band or DJ
- Send out your invitations
- Submit a newspaper wedding announcement
- Have fun at your bachelorette party



### 1 Month Before

- Check on RSVP's and phone those who haven't responded
- Get marriage license
- Mail rehearsal dinner invitations
- Have your last dress fitting
- Stock the bar, if needed
- Send out as many final payments as you can
- Confirm times with all vendors and your hair and makeup
- Assign seating
- Purchase bridal party gifts
- Write vows
- Get your hair cut/colored if needed

### Week of the Wedding!

- Reconfirm arrival dates with vendors
- Delegate small wedding day tasks
- Send timeline to bridal party
- Pick up your dress
- Check in with photographer and give list of shots you definitely want
- Set aside checks for all vendors
- Send a final guest count to your caterer
- Break in your shoes
- Pack for your honeymoon

# Budget for the Events Center

## Budgeting for your Event

The following information will aid you as you begin the budgeting process for your reception at the Events Center at Heartland Acres.

**2011 Rental Rate: \$1050**

### Additional Expenses

**Bartenders:** Bartenders will be scheduled based on the estimated number of guests you anticipate. Fee/bartender is \$50.

**Riser Rental:** Should you request risers for the head table, we have 8" high risers available for \$50. The maximum capacity on the risers is 14 (8' x 24' x 8").

**AV Equipment:** We have a state-of-the-art sound and visual system. We have three Bose speakers and Berq LCD projection units suspended from the ceiling and projecting onto 12' x 7' screens. Costs for use is \$50/system, \$90 for two or \$100 for all three.

**Keg(s):** Cost is \$190/keg of beer with a maximum of 5 kegs (Limit of 2 varieties).

**Linen Napkins:** The following colors are available for linen napkins: Forrest Green, Ivory, White and Black and cost is \$0.30/napkin.

**Linen Table Clothes:** White linen table clothes are available for rent at \$4.00/table.

**Backdrop:** Colors are off-white or black. Rental is \$50 and can include two locations.

**Additional Rental:** Should you request additional rental time, the cost is \$100/hour no later than 2:00am (CST)

(Rental is 8am - Midnight).

**Champagne:** We offer several selections of champagne. They vary from \$12/bottle (Berde Spumante) \$14/bottle (Luccio Moscato D'Asti) up to \$24/bottle (Coppa Moscato D'Asti).

*Plastic Flutes:* \$1/flute

**Bar Tabs:** Any tabs that are kept at the bar for any type of beverage are subject to a 15% gratuity and must be paid once the event is complete. Cash, Check or Credit Card.

**Lake Side Gazebo:** Should you choose to get married at our lake side gazebo, rental is \$100 for use. Price includes use of the gazebo, electricity and water.

All sales are subject to sales tax. Prices and tax are subject to change. Payment must be in cash, check or credit card.

### Amenities Include:

- PA system
- Projection units and screens
- Industrial kitchen complete with walk-in cooler
- Full-service bar
- White boards, easels and podiums
- Conveniently located rest rooms
- Central air/heat
- ADA Compliant Campus (handicap parking, elevator, rest rooms, entrance/exit)
- Round and rectangle tables with chairs
- Walkout patio overlooking Swan Lake





## Frequently Asked Questions

### Will you set-up tables & chairs?

The Events Center staff will set-up tables and chairs in the configuration you would like, as long as it complies with State of Iowa fire code and safety restrictions.

### How much cleaning must be done before our agreement is fulfilled?

The facility must appear as it did when you arrived to decorate/set-up. The staff will put tables & chairs away. Bartenders will occasionally bus tables of barware and cans/bottles during the event. The rest, including making sure the kitchen is clean and sanitized (if used), decorations are taken down, etc. is Lessee's responsibility. We do have professional cleaners clean the rest rooms & windows, and vacuum.

*Tip: You should notify your caterers to clean-up thoroughly after themselves.*

### How do you know how many bartenders to have?

The number of bartenders will be based on how many guests you're anticipating. This will be arranged by the Events Center Manager.

### Can we bring our own wine, champagne and/or alcohol?

In accordance with Iowa State Law, you are not allowed to bring alcohol to The Events Center. We would be glad to offer, for sale, wine, champagne or alcohol not already available.

### May we set-up the day before?

If the room is not previously booked, you may set-up the

day before for a fee of \$250.\*

### What types of decorations do you allow?

We welcome free standing decorations. In addition, there are hooks along the crown molding to affix decorations to. There is NO confetti and/or glitter allowed. Candles must be soy based and contained (no open flames) and no metal wicks are allowed. Nothing may be taped, posted, nailed, screwed or otherwise attached to walls, windows, ceilings, floors, doors, or other parts of The Events Center or furniture without prior consent from the Events Center Manager.

### Are your facilities elderly and handicapped friendly?

The Heartland Acres Campus, including The Events Center, is ADA compliant.

### How much do you charge for keg beer?

We charge \$190\* for domestic kegs (price is subject to change). Our policy only allows a MAXIMUM of five kegs.

### Is there a chance that other events could take place during mine?

We cannot guarantee that another event will not take place at The Events Center unless the whole facility is rented. We only rent the entire facility on weekends.

### What all is included in the rental fee?

As part of the rental fee, you will have access to our facility, the round & rectangle tables with chairs (staff will set-up and put away), clean-up, and walkout patio overlooking Swan Lake to name a few.

### Do you have decorations (candelabra, plant stands, etc.) that I can rent?

We do not have decorations for rental. We do have risers and a backdrop available for rent.

### Is smoking allowed in the facility – if not where can I smoke?

No smoking is allowed in the facility – NO EXCEPTIONS. There are clearly marked designated smoking areas outside the facility by the entrance and on the patio.

### Approximately how many parking spaces are available?

There are over 200 paved and ADA compliant parking spots available.

### Do you have Valet services?

Valet services are not available through The Events Center. However, there is a circle drive that leads to the main entrance for drop-off and pick-up.

### Can we get married in The Event Center or on the grounds by the lake or gazebo?

The Events Center is yours for the entire term of the Rental Agreement. If you would like to get married in The Events Center there is no additional charge. If you would like to get married by the lake or in the gazebo, you must have The Events Center booked for your reception and there is a \$100 fee. Please contact the Events Center Manager, Brian Bell, at 319.332.0123 for more information.

### Do you provide/have table linens?

We do contract with a textile leasing company for both linen table clothes and linen napkins. There is a fee for each table cloth & linen napkin requested. Table clothes come in White and there is an assortment of colors of linen napkins to choose from. Price/table cloth is \$4.00\* & \$.30\*/linen napkin. Colors: Table Cloth: White; Napkins: Black, White, Ivory and Forrest Green.

### Do you provide china, glassware and silverware?

Any china, glassware and/or silverware (tableware) will need to be provided by the caterers or rented yourself. Most caterers provide them (sometimes included in the meal price, sometimes extra). Your caterers will also be responsible for placing the dinner ware and bussing the tables following the meal.

### What is included in the bar service?

Besides friendly service, our bartender's responsibilities include periodic bussing of barware, serving wine/champagne to head table (if requested), mixing and serving drinks, beer and other beverages, emptying trash and can receptacles as well as refilling paper towels, toilet paper, soap, etc. in the rest rooms.

### Can we have a keg of beer sitting out for our guests to pour their own?

Due to under age drinking concerns, ALL alcohol beverages must be served by a staff member of The Events Center...no exceptions.

### Do you have A/V capabilities or do we need to bring our own?

We have state-of-the-art audio and visual capabilities. We have LCD projectors suspended from the ceiling as well as

three 7' x 12' screens. We have Bose speakers with both wireless handheld and lapel microphones. Rental is \$50\*/unit (screen, projector, lapel or microphone) and with rental of one unit, each additional unit rental is \$40\* or all three for a total of \$100\*.

### Do you have tables and chairs on the patio?

We have five tall tables located on the patio. To prevent theft and from the party goers staying outside for the entire event, there are no chairs on the patio. There are also two picnic tables.

### How many people can sit at each table?

We have five foot round tables that can comfortably seat eight people. Rectangles (eight foot) seat eight (four on a side).

### What type of alcohol is available to our guests?

We have an assortment of wine, liquor and beer as well as many mixers and soda.

### What is your capacity?

Our capacity is 424 people (including head table on risers – max 14ppl). With larger events, use of rectangle tables is required to accommodate the number of people. If you use five foot rounds, max capacity is 334 (includes head table on risers – max 14ppl)

### What is our rental time for the day?

Rental time is 8am – Midnight (CST). Last call is at 11:45 and the music must stop at Midnight. You do not have to be out of The Events Center at Midnight, but clean-up/tear down will begin then and bar service will be over.

### How do I rent The Events Center?

Please contact the Events Center Manager, Brian Bell, at 319.332.0123 or via email at [brianbell@heartlandacresusa.com](mailto:brianbell@heartlandacresusa.com).

*\*Prices subject to change.*





## Wedding Catering Tips

Everyone knows that a great celebration calls for delicious food. Your catering bill may be the largest single expense you incur for your big day (45-50% of most wedding budgets) so it is important to plan ahead. The following are some helpful tips for selecting your caterer and planning your feast.

- Choose your caterer carefully! Spend some time with them and discuss your overall budget, the style of reception you would like (sit-down service, buffet, cocktail reception, etc.). Ask for references and make sure to call them!
- Taste the food you will be serving at the reception! Meet with your caterer ahead of time to go over the menu and do a tasting.
- Discuss the dinnerware or china that will be used by your caterer. Sometimes this is included in the price, but be sure to check in advance. Ask to see samples of dinnerware so you can judge how well it will blend with your décor and double-check the quality.
- Talk about the service provided during the meal by your caterer. It is good to ask the ratio between servers and guests. It's good to have one server per 8-10 guests.
- When determining your final head count, be sure to include a meal for your DJ/entertainment, photographer, wedding coordinator, officiate and any other helpers. Be sure to separate this count from your guest count, sometimes caterers will offer a discounted price for the meals provided to staff as they typically serve themselves.
- Ask your caterer if they will prepare the leftovers for you to take with you at the end of the celebration.
- When ordering hors d'oeuvres you typically need maybe four different types at the most.



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## What's Hot in Wedding Decor? A Cool Ice Sculpture!!

By Ron Dillavou of Chain Reaction Carvings

If you are looking to make an impact at your Wedding Reception you can't go wrong with an ice sculpture. An ice sculpture will add a touch of class to your reception and have your guests amazed all night as it glistens and sparkles in the light; it will have them talking for weeks. There are a lot more choices than you might think, sure you can have the traditional and beautiful Swan but as Weddings change so do Ice Sculptures. With the growing visibility of ice sculptures on the TV and internet demand is growing and people are seeing a lot more choices and raising the bar. You can ask your sculptor to make a custom carving for you with your names etched into the ice, a large letter monogram, your flower frozen into the ice, or even your photos frozen into the ice block. Don't be afraid to ask your sculptor to do a design you saw on the internet, photo from a magazine or maybe your cake topper. If you have a theme wedding you can coordinate your Ice Sculpture to match your theme.

Some of the popular carvings are drink luges, vases to hold flowers, love birds, interlocked hearts, food presentation pieces to hold seafood, fruit or veggies, table centerpieces for each table or even a bar made of ice. The Choices will vary depending on your personal taste and budget. The best way to find a carver in your location is on the web site of the National Ice Carving Association. [www.nica.org](http://www.nica.org) Do a search on the "find a sculptor" button. A carver on this site will be more likely to be professional. It would also be wise to find a business that makes their own ice as this will allow you to have the option of having items frozen into the ice and they will also want to be sure you are satisfied with the final product, as this is how they grow their business through word of mouth and repeat business.

### Common questions about ice sculptures

*How long will it last?*

It depends on the temperature and if it is in direct sunlight. But the average carving will last 6-8 hours in a room that is apx. 70 degrees and away from sunlight.

*How large is the Sculpture?*

A full block Sculpture is carved from a 300 # block of ice and is apx 40" tall x 20" wide and 10" thick. Some sculptors will cut down the block and make smaller carvings to help keep the price down.

*Do all Ice Sculptures look white?*

No!! Usually only molded ice looks white. If the sculptor makes his own ice with a special machine like the "clinebell" brand of block maker it will be crystal clear and last longer because there is no air in the ice.

*Can we afford an Ice Sculpture?*

A lot of people expect a Sculpture to be very expensive. But when looking at the expense of your wedding a Sculpture is a relatively inexpensive item for the impact that is made and elegance that is added to the evening. You may not have to get the full size sculpture and some of the smaller sculptures may be able to be picked up by a

friend or relative and kept in a deep freezer at home or at the event location to save on delivery charges. There are a lot of options from small table centerpieces to multi-block carvings to match your budget.

*Where can I find a Sculptor?*

There may be some chefs that carve ice on the side and some are very talented, but some may be more interested in the money than making sure that you are satisfied, that may be your only option but first check [www.nica.org](http://www.nica.org), look in the phone book or Google ice carvers in your area.

### Questions to ask your Sculptor:

Are you a full time ice carver?

Are you the business owner?

Do you make your own ice?

Do you belong to N.I.C.A.?

Do you have a web site or photos of your work?

Can you make a carving designed for me?

What are your most popular carvings for weddings?

Do you deliver and set up the ice?

Is picking up of ice available? If so what is the charge?

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## Why soy candles?

By Heidi Magsamen of SoyAnna Candle Company

One of the most famous and well known benefits of soy candles is how clean they burn. 100% natural soy wax doesn't produce the black soot like more traditional paraffin (petroleum-based) wax candles do. The black soot produced by these traditional candles is actually toxic elements released when ignited and can damage nearby walls, cabinets and ceilings! The carcinogens (toxic elements) can cause cancer and variety of other health related problems. 100% natural soy candles do not produce these toxic elements

Soy wax is made from soybeans; this makes soy wax a naturally biodegradable product. Another added benefit of soy is that soy beans are grown in American fields, and processed into soy wax in the U.S. as well. This is one of the most important benefits of soy candles.

Soy candles are also cost effective. Soy candles can burn twice as long as a paraffin candle, saving you money while helping to save our planet.

100% natural soy candles are widely becoming the candle of choice for many types of event centers because of the health and environmental advantages over traditional paraffin wax candles.

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## Choosing your Wedding Bouquet & Ordering Flowers for Decoration

Little details are what really pull a beautiful wedding all together and the bridal bouquet is no exception! The following are four types of bouquets you can discuss with your florist to help decide the best style for your big day.

### Posy Bouquet

The posy bouquet is the most traditional shape and offers a simple elegant look. Flowers such as roses, tulips and peonies work well in this shape.

### Shower Bouquet (Cascade Bouquet)

The shower bouquet offers a tear-drop shape made of a posy bouquet with a trail of flowers. This style of bouquet works well with a wide variety of flowers.

### Sheath Bouquet (Arm Bouquet)

The sheath bouquet is long and slender and is designed to be carried draped across one arm. This style is typically made from long-stemmed flowers such as calla lilies.

### Artistic Bouquet

Artistic bouquets do not follow a standard shape and can consist of any flower and design element you would like. They can include unusual items that have importance to you and interesting materials

### Checklist for Ordering Wedding Flowers

Every wedding is different, but here is a list of everyone to consider when ordering your flower arrangements.

- Bridal bouquet and/or hair piece
- Flowers for honoring the deceased
- Throw bouquet
- Maid/Matron of honor bouquet and/or hair piece
- Bridesmaids bouquets and/or hair piece
- Junior Bridesmaids bouquets and/or hair piece
- Flower Girl bouquet and/or basket of petals and/or hair piece
- Bride's Mother corsage
- Groom's Mother corsage & Father boutonniere
- Grandmothers corsages & Grandfathers boutonniere
- Stepmother corsage & Stepfathers boutonniere
- Groom boutonniere
- Ushers boutonniere
- Ring Bearer boutonniere
- Minister/Official, Readers, Vocalist, Instrumentalist, Host, Hostess, Guestbook Attendant, Cake Server(s), Candle Lighter, Personal Attendant boutonniere
- Ceremony decorations: main alter, side arrangements, unity candle flowers, pew or chair decorations, guestbook and gift table decorations
- Reception decorations: head table, guest table centerpieces, cake decorations, buffet table and cake table decorations

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## Wedding Invitation Tips

### When to order your Invitations

Try to order your wedding invitations as soon as your guest list is final which should be at least three to four months before your wedding date.

### Over Order

Do not order the exact number of invites you will need. Try to order 20 or 30 extra invitations or 25% more than what you think you will need. It is always better to have too many to start with than to try to place a pricey order for a small number of extras later on. Also order extra envelopes in case you make a mistake addressing some of them.

### What to Include in your Invitation

Include the name(s) of the wedding hosts/sponsors (i.e. parents), names of the bride and groom, day of the week, date, time, address of the ceremony and/or reception, and RSVP information. You may also want to include a map card from the ceremony to the reception if they are located at different venues.

### Language Structure

You are expected to spell everything out in a formal wedding invitation, including the date and time of the wedding (i.e. Four o'clock in the evening and not 4:00pm).

### Keep your Budget in Mind

Elements like intricate papers, inks and decorative envelopes can increase the cost of your invitations substantially. Discuss various options with your invitation vendor. Keep the cost of postage in mind when deciding on

the final size of your wedding invite and envelope. Over-sized, bulky envelopes cost more to mail.

### Postage

Take a completed invitation to the post office and have it weighed before adhering postage to all of the invitations. You can catch any errors in postage before mailing several out.

### Thank you Cards

Save your invitation guest list for use when writing and mailing your thank you cards after the wedding.

### When to Send

If you are having a destination wedding, try to mail out your invitations at least 10 to 12 weeks before the wedding. If your wedding will be a local celebration, mail out your invitations 6 to 8 weeks prior to the wedding.

## What Language Should I Use in My Invitations?

You have your invitation design selected and your guest list put together, but what wording are you going to use in the invitation? The following guidelines will help you to determine how to write out the language in your wedding invitation.

### Who will be hosting the event?

The first names your guests will see on your wedding invitation are those of the people who are paying for the event. Traditionally, this has been the bride's parents, and so it reads:

Mr. and Mrs. John Doe, or Jane and John Doe

*If the bride and groom are hosting...*

Ms. Jane Doe and Mr. Steve Smith, or

Together with their families,

Jane Doe and Steve Smith

### Requesting your guest attend

If your ceremony is at a place of worship, then the line should read:

Request the honour of your presence

at the marriage of their daughter

*If the ceremony is at another location...*

Request the pleasure of your company

at the marriage of their daughter

*If the couple is hosting:*

invite you to join us at the celebration of our marriage

### Listing the couple's names

Etiquette says that the bride should be listed first, using first and middle names only. Then the groom should be listed, using both title and middle name:

Jane Marie

to

Mr. Steve Robert Smith

or

Jane Doe

to Steve Smith

### Date and time

Traditionally, these are spelled out:

Saturday, the eleventh of June

two thousand and eleven

at three o'clock in the afternoon

### Location

Include an address for those who may not be from the area.

The Events Center at Heartland Acres

2600 Swan Lake Blvd

Independence, Iowa

### Reception Details

You can include this information directly on the wedding invitation or a separate piece.

*On the wedding invitation, it would read*

Reception to follow at the Briar Hills Country Club

*If you are serving a limited menu*

And afterwards for cocktails and cake in the Rose Room.

Or

Dessert and dancing to follow

You may want to include a reception card if your reception will be held at another location

Reception

7 o'clock

Events Center at Heartland Acres

2600 Swan Lake Blvd

Independence, Iowa

### RSVP Cards

The favor of a reply is requested before the first of June

Or

Please reply before the first of June

M\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Will attend

\_\_\_\_\_ Will not attend

*You might also write:*

Number of people in party\_\_\_\_\_

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# Lodging

## Taking Care of Your Out-of-Town Guests

Your wedding is a wonderful celebration of your love for each other and your family and friends are going to be there to witness it all. These very important people may be traveling from afar to be a part of your event, make sure they have an enjoyable experience by taking time to truly welcome them.

### Room Reservations

Reserve a block of rooms at various hotels in the area and try to negotiate a wedding package rate. Your guests can reference your names when booking their room to receive a discounted rate. Plus, they may have a room closer to other guests. The minimum number of rooms required to make a block at most hotels is around 10 rooms per night.

### Welcome Basket

After a long day of traveling your guests may be pretty hungry. Consider placing a basket of fruit or other goodies on the night stand to welcome them. You may also want to include a little information about what there is to do around the area and restaurants nearby. This gesture will be very appreciated by your guests, especially those who are not from the area. You can even make the basket a little fun by including your favorite hang over remedies or a fun message from you. Contact the hotel ahead of time to figure out the best way to make this basket available to your guests.

### Activities for Kids

Some of your guests may be arriving to your event with small children - who have been traveling for some time. Consider preparing a game or basket of items to keep the small guests busy while their parents are unpacking and making plans for the evening. You can include items like coloring books, crayons, and books. You could also organize a volunteer sitter(s) for the children while your adult guests attend the rehearsal and rehearsal dinner.

## Wedding Day Transportation Tips

### Traditional Option

Check out your local limo service providers if you are looking for a more traditional get away after your ceremony. Test-ride in everything from the classic white Rolls-Royce (seats 2) to the stretch SUV (seats 22) to the super-luxe limo-bus (seats dozens).

### Additional Services

Your transportation service may offer a "wedding package" and include some red-carpet type of items. In fact, they may have a red carpet rollout! Check out the vehicle's music options and ask if you can provide a music CD with your favorites ahead of time. Ask if they will stock the vehicle with bubbly.

### Think Outside the Box

You don't necessarily need to make your get-away in a limo. Look at other options like buses, muscle cars, hay wagons, etc.

### Get Romantic

Are you looking for something that will give your wedding an elegant and romantic feel? Look into a horse-drawn carriage. The bride will get a true Cinderella experience as you pull away from your ceremony riding in a carriage.

### Have Options

You may find it necessary to rent a couple of different transportation options if you have a large bridal party and number of people riding with you from the ceremony to the reception. Try a more exclusive option for the newly married couple and a larger vehicle for the rest of the bridal party.

### Keep All Your Guests Safe

Renting a large luxury bus to transport guests from the reception venue to their hotel is an excellent way to ensure the safety of your guests, especially when adult beverage will be served.

### Get the Agreement in Writing

Be sure to get a signed agreement from your transportation vendor. The agreement should outline the arrival time, reception departure time, the addresses to and from where you will be traveling, color and model of the car being rented. You can also include the name of the driver you have selected, gratuity, and any special requests you have made. Lastly, make sure your agreed upon price is also included.

# Transportation



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## Planning your Honeymoon

Your honeymoon is most likely going to be your first trip as a married couple and will be very special. Keep the following advice in mind when planning your trip.

### Start Planning Early

You want your first trip as a married couple to be special and as stress-free as possible. Planning your honeymoon can be time consuming and should not be done last minute. Try to start planning your honeymoon a few months after you start planning your wedding.

### Set a Budget

Decide how much you want to spend on your honeymoon and try to stick to it. Keep in mind extra excursions you want to take part in while on the trip. Also consider the cost of food and beverages if this is not included in your stay.

### Decide the Date and the Length of the Trip

Once you have decided on a budget, it will help you determine how long you can be gone. Decide if you want to leave for your honeymoon the day after your wedding or if another date in the future would work better. Many couples decide to take their "honeymoon" on their first wedding anniversary.

### Choosing your Destination

Talk about the places each of you would like to go and compromise on one that you will both enjoy. Do you want to be someplace warm or cold? Do you want a lot of privacy or the ability to socialize with others?

### Learn about your Destination

Once you have selected a destination you can plan an itinerary of activities or sites you both want to participate in. You may be able to book excursions ahead of time so you do not have to spend time doing this while on your honeymoon.

### Important Paperwork

If you are traveling internationally you will need to have a passport and/or visa. Check government websites to find out if you need both a passport and visa to visit your destination. Typically you will just need a passport for short visits. Use your maiden name on all documents and travel tickets if you will not have time to change it before you go on your honeymoon. You want your travel itinerary and passport to have the same name so you don't run into any problems.



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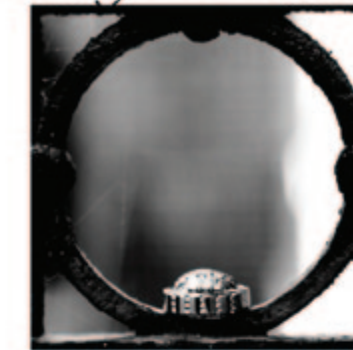
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# Photography

## Your Wedding Photography

By Dan Phillips, Owner of Dan Phillips Photography

Your wedding, your style. Not every wedding photographer (yes, even the best) is your wedding photographer. Just like a wedding dress, there are different sizes, styles, prices and products when it comes to a wedding photographer. So how do you decide?

You need to think about what YOU want. Do you want a photographer that will be with you from the beginning to the end and all the details in between? Do you want someone posing you throughout the day, or someone who lets you flow through the evening and naturally captures your wedding moments?

What products are you looking for? Most professional photographers can offer quality bridal albums that will re-tell your wedding story for lifetimes to come. What about canvas art or wall prints? High-quality prints from a photographer are an investment in the memories of your wedding day and an item that you should consider as making a lasting and more permanent memory of the wedding colors, expressions, emotions and looks.

Another popular product is a CD or DVD of all your wedding images. Most of the wedding clients that we meet with ask for this CD as a way of archiving or storing the entire wedding day image collection, however few brides ask for the CD so that they can take on the task of printing images on their own. From a professional photographer this is going to be a high cost item and often not offered since the photographer is unable to ensure the quality of printing that his or her client receives through this method. One recommendation to work this out is to talk with your photographer about receiving a DVD of low-resolution images on it for personal viewing and safe-keeping. Some photographers use this style and also allow for small size printing which are great to use as gifts or thank-you prints like 4x6s to your guests or family members. This also then serves as a permanent collection of each and every one of your wedding day images that may not be included in your album or wall prints.

*Popular questions to ask your photographer:*

### **Will you personally be the photographer for our wedding?**

Some times with larger photography studios you can meet with one photographer but have someone else arrive at your wedding. Make sure that not only are you meeting with your actual photographer but that the work and samples you are viewing are those of the actual photographer as well.

### **How many pictures will you take? How many do we see?**

Most photographers these days shoot with digital camera equipment. This means that most will also shoot several images that you may never see due to turned heads, closed eyes, or just something that isn't right with the image... don't worry though, a professional photographer will take multiple images of a family pose to ensure there is a great image that is able to be presented to you.

### **What are your policies regarding proofs, delivery times, and digital image storage...are my pictures safe?!**

Does the photographer provide printed proofs and/or digital/online proofs? How long after the wedding will it be before you are able to view the images? How long to have the album or other prints finished and delivered? How long are your images stored on the photographers computer, do they store all images or only those that you order?

### **How much is the deposit and when are payments due?**

Some photographers require a fixed deposit, others a percentage of the total. Are you required to make payments or when is the final amount due?

### **What do all the costs include? Do you charge for overtime?**

Are prints/albums included and if so how many? How much time is included, and what happens if you end up needing an extra hour or two the day of the wedding?

### **What is your cancellation policy?**

You don't want to think about it, but you should know now what happens if something comes up and you have to cancel or reschedule the wedding day.

### **Tips for making your wedding pictures a success:**

- Don't settle. If your heart is set on not seeing each other before the ceremony then find a photographer who is willing to schedule this and work with your schedule. It's your day, not theirs.
- Tell your bridesmaids, groomsmen, and family members to be ready early. If photos start at noon, tell them 11:30. Flowers are also a crucial part of this, they should be ready to be pinned and placed about 20 minutes before they are to be used.
- Expect hair/make-up to take longer than you are told. You should not be rushed on your wedding day or even feel like you are, so set aside about 15 minutes extra during this time.
- Print off images that have inspired you and share these with your photographer ahead of time.
- Pamper yourself. This piece of advice from a fellow photographer I have always loved. Go all out and get professional hair and make-up. The professionals are the ones who know what to do and how to do it...they also know how to make you look just as beautiful as you know you are! Check with your photographer if you don't know a local pro, they will most likely have someone they can recommend.
- Get outdoors. Scope out both the ceremony and reception site ahead of time for great outdoor locations that you love and get away from the same-old traditional images. Look for something with sun, character, and most importantly style that fits who you are.



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