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**Settling On The Size Of Your Wedding**

**By George Meszaros**

How many people and who exactly to invite to your wedding day is one of the biggest challenges you will face during the planning process. Making the guest list is difficult. You may find yourself making compromises due to parental, budgetary, reception site size, location and several other forces.

First you need to decide if your wedding is going to be an once-in-a-lifetime huge party or smaller more intimate event. Your budget will most certainly limit the number of guests. Once you set your budget for the reception, you can quickly do the math and decide the maximum number of guests. More than \$16 billion is spent on wedding receptions in the U.S. Your reception will probably account for the largest part of your wedding budget. In some cases, nearly half of the total wedding budget is spent on the reception.

Most reception sites charge per-head. If your budget is \$6000 for the reception, and the cost per head is \$65.00, you could have no more than 92 guests. There are many ways to cut expenses such as buying your own alcohol, having a buffet instead of a served dinner. Undoubtedly, you must take budgetary boundaries into account when preparing the guest list.

If your parents are paying for the wedding, you are going to have to respect their input for the final list. The more your parents are footing the bill, the more you may need to compromise. The more relatives you have to invite, the longer the guest list is going to be. Your list will also be affected by the size of the reception site. Be sure that you don't fall in love with a site until you are sure that it can accommodate all the people you plan to invite.

Traditionally, the bride and groom's family each invite half of the total number of guests. Usually, the major check writers are calling the shots. If you and your fiancée are paying for the wedding, you should decide the majority of the guest list.

Author: George Meszaros

<http://www.sweet-reflections.com>

## How To Plan Your Dream Wedding

By Susan Jones

Planning a wedding and keeping your sanity is not an easy task. Everyone knows that planning a wedding can be an extremely stressful and trying time, especially as the big day approaches.

One of the most important details of the wedding is the actual wedding date. This is usually the detail that is taken care of first. Factors in choosing a date include the availability of the venue where the wedding will take place and availability of friends and family on the assigned date.

It is also advisable to set a budget before you start to make plans. This way you're able to organize the details according to your budget.

Some venues where weddings are held offer discounts on days when traditionally, weddings are not held. Also, the time the wedding takes place also becomes a factor in the expense. For example, mornings and afternoon receptions are usually cheaper than receptions held in the evening.

Venues can offer discounts depending on the time of year. Just after the holidays could be a good time to hold a wedding if you are considering the cost. This time is not considered a 'peak time', therefore the price tends to be less expensive.

It's important to talk to your fiancée about the size of your wedding. Your dream wedding might not be your fiancée's. So it's necessary for you to discuss details such as the location of the venue/reception, the number of people who get invited to the wedding/reception, and the choice of entertainment.

It's important to reach an agreement on the guest list. If you want to keep the wedding an intimate affair, only family and/or friends would be invited. If you wanted to have the wedding of the century, friends and family, long lost relatives, the whole neighborhood and high school buddies could be invited. When making the guest list, consider the space capacity of your chosen venue.

It's a good idea to hire a professional to capture this momentous occasion. Sure, your friends can take good pictures and some of them may own a camcorder. But for this special occasion, you would want something special, lasting, and visually presentable. This way you could also share them with your friends and family.

Don't forget the cake! It's a good idea to have a tasting first, before settling on a cake. Invite your family and friends for the cake tasting. This way, this task becomes fun for everyone!

Order wedding invitations. If you want to get creative, you can always print your own. This way, you can customize them, and add a more personal touch to the invitation.

Don't forget to start looking for a wedding gown months before the wedding so the bride has plenty of time to make a selection. Also, the groom should make arrangements to rent or buy a tuxedo preferably in advance in case there is trouble with the fitting.

## Settling On The Size Of Your Wedding

Couples who don't have enough time on their hands or just find the preparations that go into planning a wedding too overwhelming can always just hire a wedding planner. This way, everything gets

organized and coordinated for them. But if you decide to go the wedding planner route, don't forget to add this cost into your budget.

Susan Jones loves wedding planning and sharing her knowledge with others. For more exciting information on planning your dream wedding, visit Wedding Secrets Online

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