Briddald Gardeles JANUARY 2025

INSIDE:

Have a Backup Plan

What couples should know about having a backup plan for their outdoor weddings.



Finding a Venue	2
Picking a Date	5
Questions for your Florist	6
Menu Planning	7
Wedding Budgeting	8
Trends in Tuxedos	9



How to find the perfect venue for your wedding

The wedding venue is the backdrop for your dream day. It should reflect who you are as a couple and it should be able to comfortably host the wedding of your dreams. No matter where you're getting married, the perfect venue is out there.

WHERE TO FIND IT

Wedding website The Knot has a database of venues that you can search by category (reception venues, hotels, rehearsal dinners) or by name, and of course, by location. You can filter the results by price, capacity, outdoor space and more. Other websites, such as Wedding Pro, Wedding Wire and more have similar databases. Search as many as you can to find the perfect place to exchange your vows.

WHEN TO BOOK IT

Ideally, you should book the wedding venue 12-18 months out. It's one of the first steps you should take after getting engaged because the venue controls so much else about your ceremony. Online research is great, but you should also visit the venue in person. If you are using a wedding planner, have them come with you and look over the contract to make sure the venue can really accommodate he type of wedding you have in mind.

BUDGET

The venue will take up a sizable portion of your budget. Know your bottom line before you sign anything. Nothing is more disappointing than finding the venue of your dreams and then learning you can't afford it. If you're finding the budget a hardship, consider



looking at locations in the off-season when there's less demand and prices may be lower.

CAPACITY

Have a rough idea of your guest list before you start visiting venues. Each venue will have a maximum capacity and it's up to you to make sure you don't surpass that. Finalize that list before you secure a venue.

HAVE A BACKUP

Just in case, pick a venue and a backup venue, especially if you're planning on an outdoor wedding that is subject to Mother Nature. When booking a venue, ask whether they have an alternate space and make sure you can visualize your ceremony there, too.

Did you know?

According to The Knot Real Weddings Survey, 57 percent of couples invited 101 or more guests to their weddings in 2023, suggesting that large weddings are in style. The Knot survey found that the average wedding size in 2023 was 115 guests, and that only 13 percent of couples invited between one and 50 guests to their big day. Warm weather weddings tend to lead to larger guests lists, as The Knot survey found that weddings were largest in July, with such affairs averaging 121 quests. By comparison, November and December weddings averaged 110 guests. Geography also appears to affect the size of a couple's quest list. Weddings taking place in the midwestern United States averaged 139 guests in 2023, which was the highest among six regions noted by The Knot survey. Weddings that took place in the south/southeast and the west had the smallest average size among those regions, averaging 102 guests. Destination weddings also tend to be smaller affairs. Domestic destination weddings in the U.S. averaged 77 guests, while overseas affairs averaged 69 guests in 2023.



JANUARY 2025| 3

How to create a backup plan for an outdoor wedding

A wedding day is a magical and memorable day for a couple and their family members. Months or even years of planning may go into making a wedding day special.

For some, an outdoor wedding and celebration amid the beauty of nature is the ultimate setting in which to tie the knot. When Mother Nature is your decorator, the setting can be hard to match. Perhaps that's why 62 percent of couples opted for outdoor nuptials in 2023, according to The Knot 2023 Real Weddings Survey. However, there may be some extra work involved when exchanging vows outdoors, hosting a reception outside or both. That work includes having a contingency plan in place if the weather does not cooperate. Here's what couples should know about having a backup plan for their outdoor weddings.

• Identify a second location. Couples who book outdoor receptions at catering halls can inquire how they handle inclement weather. Many will have a clause built into the agreement to move the party indoors in the event of bad weather. Others may enable the wedding to move to a different space for an added fee. Smaller, less formal weddings taking place at other locations may require a bit of ingenuity when looking for a backup space. Perhaps a friend has a large house where everyone can gather, or an employer may have a warehouse, loft or even a barn that can be transformed into unique venues at the last minute?

• Choose outdoor spaces with covered areas. The wish might be to have blue skies overhead, but it's impossible to control the weather. So it's safe to select outdoor spaces that offer a measure of weather protection, such as a pavillion in a park or a covered deck at a beachside locale. Such sites offer a little security without detracting from the ambiance.

• Look into a tent rental. A tent is a great investment because it keeps everyone out of the elements rain or shine. Even on a lovely summer day, the blazing sun can make being outdoors uncomfortable. A tent is the solution. Couples should coordinate with a wedding planner or the venue itself to be sure that a tent is allowed on the grounds.

• Think about event insurance. Special event insurance may protect against financial loss in the event that severe weather throws a wrench into outdoor wedding plans. Poor weather may make moving around the venue treacherous and might force a postponement. Liability and cancellation protection in an insurance policy helps couples avoid financial hard-



ship.

• Hire a wedding planner. The Knot suggests hiring a wedding planner or coordinator who can pivot to plan B in the event of bad weather. This helps take some of the stress off of the couple so they can enjoy the day.

• Plan wardrobe and hair/makeup accordingly. Brides and bridesmaids can choose fabrics for dresses that will be comfortable and not become blown around or seethrough due to rain and wind. The wedding party can ask hair stylists to create a wedding hairstyle that is somewhat weatherproof. Experienced makeup artists likely know some tricks to keep makeup looking flawless even when the weather isn't.

Outdoor weddings can be beautiful events, but it is important to have a backup plan in place in case weather doesn't cooperate.





Variables to consider before picking a wedding date

After announcing their engagement, couples may need to get used to being asked if they have chosen a date to tie the knot. Friends and family members who are thrilled for the happy couple may want to know when the partnership will become official, but choosing a date is not always so simple.

A host of variables must be considered before couples pick a wedding date. Though the choice of date is ultimately a couple's decision to make, consideration of the following variables can help engaged individuals make the most informed choice.

 Season: Time of year is an important consideration when picking a wedding date. Summer was once the season-of-choice when tying the knot, but data from the online wedding resource The Knot indicates that has changed a little in recent years. The most popular day to get married in 2024 was Saturday, September 21, which the experts at The Knot note reflects a notable shift in couples' preferences that began in 2015. Since then, fall has been the most popular season to tie the knot. Moderate temperatures and less rainfall likely contribute to that popularity. Before picking a date, couples can consider which time of year they prefer to get married.

• Convenience: The convenience of a particular date won't be the same for everyone, but couples may want to consider a date or season that is amenable to as many bridal party members and guests as possible. Couples planning to invite children to the wedding may learn from parents that fall, winter and spring are tough times of year due to youngsters' hectic school and activities schedules. Summer may be more convenient, but it's also likely that some quests with preexisting vacation plans may not make it if the date chosen coincides with their trips. There's no way to accommodate everyone, and couples should make their own preferences their top priority. But those with no such preference may want to look for a time of year when traveling to and from the wedding is convenient for as many guests as possible.

· Holidays: Holidays are another variable to consider. Travel and accommodations tend to be more expensive on holiday weekends, and roadways also can be crowded during three-day weekends. In addition, many people look forward to their own traditions during the holiday season and other notable events, such as July Fourth and Labor Day. Before choosing a wedding date that coincides with a holiday, it might be a good idea to get some feedback from bridal party members and other trusted confidantes.

· Local event schedule: It's common for couples to inquire about other events a wedding venue may be hosting when shopping for ceremony and reception sites. But it can be equally important to consider events inn the area where you plan to get married on and around the days you're considering. For example, tying the knot on the same weekend as the Super Bowl in the city where the event is taking place may not be wise, as hotel availability will likely be limited and room rates may be much higher than normal. Even more localized events like harvest festivals may affect the availability of accommodations, so this important variable merits consideration.

These are just a handful of variables couples should consider before choosing a date to tie the knot.



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Helpful questions to ask your wedding florist

Your florist is responsible for the blooms that are so important to making your wedding day perfect. Those posies can cost a pretty penny, too, so you need to make sure you and your floral professional are on the same page. Here are some questions The Knot suggests you ask your florist.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A FLORAL DESIGNER?

Ask your florist about their years of experience. What kinds of weddings have they participated in? Do they have photos? Can you talk to the brides?

DO YOU EMPLOY SUSTAIN-ABILITY PRACTICES IN YOUR BUSINESS?

More and more couples are insisting on greener ceremonies. Florists, with their use of plants, water and other goods, need to use green practices. Talk to your floral professional about sourcing the blooms for your wedding and make sure they use responsible vendors.

WHAT FLOWERS DO YOU REC-OMMEND FOR OUR WEDDING?

Ask florists what flowers you can use to maximize your budget and your style. Because florists have seen many weddings, they can recommend flowers to dazzle your guests and complementary decor.

HOW DO YOU SUGGEST WE MAXIMIZE OUR BUDGET?

Floral arrangements and bouquets are going to be a big line item in your wedding budget. Make sure you can cover everything you need by asking your florist for seasonal blooms or other ways you can make the most of the money you have.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICING?

Not only should you make sure you are crystal clear on the pricing, you need to know what's not included. Ask about any common service that there may be an extra charge for and make sure you factor that into your accounting. Some florists might charge extra for design, delivery, setup or delivery.

WHAT IS YOUR COMMUNI-CATION STYLE?

You and your florist will need to be in conversation in the days leading up to your wedding. Avoid any problems by making sure your communication styles sync. Ask whether your florist prefers calls, texts or emails, and ensure that it works for you as well.

WHAT ARE THE DAY-OF LO-GISTICS?

Know what your florist may need from your venue or any other vendors that you're working with. Ask when the flowers are arriving and whether the florist will need help unloading or setting anything up.





Wedding Timeline

12 Months+

- Select date, time and place. Then reserve venues!
- $\hfill\square$ Decide on wedding size and style.
- □ Hire wedding consultant (if applicable) and create wedding website.
- □ Shop for gown
- Begin guest list

9-12 Months

- Research honeymoon destinations
- Book musicians, dj, florist, photographer, videographer and limousines
- Order invitations
- Purchase gown and being alternations
- $\hfill\square$ Ask friends to be in wedding party and order bridesmaid dresses

6-9 Months

- Finalize guest list and send save-the-date cards
- $\hfill\square$ Book appointments for hair, nails, and makeup
- □ Reserve attire for groom and groomsmen
- Order cake(s)
- Purchase rings

3-6 Months

- Secure bridal accessories (such as shoes, jewelry, garter and mementos)
- Give musicians a list of songs you want them to play (or avoid)
- Make food choices with venue

2 Months

Mail invitations

1 Month

Give photographer a list of pictures you want taken

The day before

- Hold rehearsal ceremony and dinner
- Deliver everything to site and work out any kinks
- Give marriage license to officiant
- Present gifts to wedding party, parents, and any other honored guests

The day of

- □ Give rings and officials fee to best man
- Designate liaison for photographer to ensure all necessary pictures are taken.

Did you know?

Couples need not feel beholden to any particular tradition come their wedding day, and that freedom is perhaps reflected in the shifting attitudes toward white wedding dresses. Wedding trends come and go, so what's trending one year will not necessarily remain popular in any ensuing wedding season. However, a recent Etsy analysis of user data found that searches for colorful wedding dresses increased by 223 percent, suggesting that brides are looking to add at least a splash of color to their



wedding day look. That analysis reflects findings from other surveys as well. A 2021 survey conducted by Brides.com and Investopedia found that 28 percent of brides planned to forgo a white wedding dress in favor of an atypical alternative.



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Menu Ideas for the Big Day

Love isn't just in the air at a wedding, it should also be on the plate.

Get away from generic menus and go with food you love to create a memorable meal on an even more memorable day.

START WITH THE CONTRACTS

Before setting the menu, check the regulations for your chosen venue. There may be in-house catering services you must use or a list of preferred vendors you need to choose from. If you do choose another caterer, you may also have to pay an additional fee, and that should be included in your budget.

CONSIDER THE VIBE

Think about what type of food you want to serve and whether it matches the style of the ceremony you have in mind. There's plenty of room to bend the rules, but bear in mind dietary restrictions, cultural requirements and the abilities of your vendors. Look for caterers that have prior experience with the type of menu you have in mind.

MAP OUT A BUDGET

Set a budget and stick to it. Talk to vendors and be honest about your resources and rely on their expertise to maximize what you can afford. Ask your catering team for ideas that match your ceremony's style and your personality. Traditionally, a plated wedding menu will start with appetizers, then move to a salad course, entrée and wedding cakes and desserts. A buffet menu also starts with appetizers, then includes salads, sides, proteins and, lastly, wedding cake and desserts.

STATIONS

Serving foods that lend themselves to it, such as appetizers and desserts, at serve-yourself stations is a fashionable idea that also gives guests some control over their own dish. Think things like a coffee bar, an ice cream station or crostini bar.

DON'T FORGET THE DRINKS

Ask your caterer about what kind of drinks they make available. If local laws and your venue allows, you may need a separate vendor (and budget) for alcohol. Budget allowing, ask your bartenders to come up with a signature cocktail for your wedding.

TAKEOUT

Think about having to-go or takeout boxes for your guests to take desserts, cake or even whole entrees with them. This will en-



courage them to enjoy the party and the dance floor while they can and have a snack to enjoy when they get home or back to their hotel room.

Did you know?

Brides-to-be make many important decisions when planning their weddings, and one of the more notable ones is the choice of wedding gown. According to The Knot Real Weddings Study, the average wedding dress cost \$2,000 in 2023. Despite that hefty price tag, gowns remain a pivotal component of a wedding, as 98 percent of women who responded to The Knot survey indicated they wore a dress for their nuptials. If the sizable price tag is a cause for concern to some aspiring



brides, The Knot notes that customization can drive up the final price tag by a significant amount, which undoubtedly affects the median price of gowns. Brides who opt for no or minimal customization can likely find a dress that costs significantly less than the \$2,000 average price.



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How to allocate funds when planning a wedding

Whether it's a lavish, black-tie affair or a laid back gathering in the backyard, a couple's wedding day is a momentous, and often costly, occasion. According to the online wedding planning resource Zola, the average cost of a wedding in 2023 was \$33,000. That's a significant sum for couples to spend, and it's understandable if couples aren't sure how to allocate funds for their big day.

It's important that couples recognize what's most important to them when planning their weddings. Recognition of those priorities can help couples determine how to allocate their funds. Equally helpful can be how past couples have spent on their weddings. Utilizing data from its The Knot 2023 Real Weddings Study, the wedding experts at The Knot (theknot.com) have calculated general percentages of a wedding budget couples can devote to various components.

- Venue: 37 percent
- Catering: 28 percent
- Band: 12 percent
- Wedding rings: 9 percent
- Photography: 8 percent
- Flowers: 8 percent
- Alcohol: 8 percent
- Rehearsal dinner: 8 percent
- Videography: 7 percent
- Couples' attire: 7 percent
- Rentals: 6 percent
- DJ: 5 percent
- Wedding party attire: 4 percent
- Guest entertainment: 3 percent
- Transportation: 3 percent
- Ceremony music: 3 percent
- Cake and desserts: 2 percent
- Stationery: 2 percent





- Officiant: 1 percent
- Favors and gifts: 1 percent
- Additional jewelry: 1 percent

Couples with a keen eve might notice these percentages add up to significantly more than 100 percent. That's because the budgetary breakdown reflects personal preferences, individual couples' budgets and what couples can expect to spend on certain components. For example, The Knot data indicates a couple that prefers a band for their reception instead of a DI may need to allocate roughly twice as much of their budget to accommodate that preference. In addition, couples who do not intend to pay for wedding party members' attire can find other ways to allocate those funds, which The Knot data indicates typically accounts for roughly 4 percent of a wedding budget.

Another variable to consider is family. According to The Knot data. couples allocated an average of 8 percent of their budgets to their rehearsal dinner. However, couples' parents may offer to pay for that meal, which can leave more room in the budget for other expenses. In addition, The Knot reported that the percentage of couples asking a friend or family member to serve as their wedding officiant rose from 37 percent in 2015 to 51 percent in 2020. Wedding officiants do not often eat up a significant portion of a couple's wedding budget (1 percent), but this is another expense that modern couples may not need to account for.

Weddings can cost tens of thousands of dollars. Couples who determine how best to allocate their wedding budgets may find it far simpler to plan their big day.

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Emerging trends in men's tuxedos

Theories on the origins of the tuxedo vary significantly. Some believe that this formal garment was created by wealthy aristocrats attending an autumn ball in Tuxedo Park, New York. However, the Wall Street lournal has reported that the tuxedo might be a British invention, spearheaded by the fashion-conscious King of Wales Edward VII in 1865. No matter where the tuxedo originated, it has become standard attire for formal occasions, including weddings.

It may seem as though every tuxedo is the same, but that's not the case. Tuxes come in different styles, so those tying the knot or attending other formal functions can choose an option that fits their personality and physique. Here's a look at what sets tuxedos apart and some noteworthy tux trends.

Suits versus tuxedos

Some may wonder what sets a

tuxedo apart from a suit. One of the more notable differences is that tuxedo lapels are designed with silk, satin or textured grosgrain to provide that signature V-look, says Brides magazine. Suit lapels are made from the same fabric as the suit jacket. Tuxedos traditionally are held up with suspenders, while suit pants have belt loops for use with a belt. Suits are styled with a dress shirt while tuxedos are worn with a particular tuxedo shirt that likely has a spread collar, bib, decorative studs, and French cuffs fastened with cufflinks.

Change up lapel styles

Men who want to set themselves apart can opt for what The Knot calls the most popular styles of tuxedo lapels. Notch lapels are the most common and feature two lateral points. Shawl collars feature a smooth, sleek looped lapel without notches or peaks. Peak lapels have the low-

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er point of the lapel peak above the upper. Trying on the different jackets can give individuals an idea of which lapel look is best.

New color spectrum

A traditional tuxedo will be black, although navy tuxedos have gained a following. But individuals can find a tuxedo in any color. Those who want to add some extra flair to their weddings may opt for a tuxedo in a color that coordinates to the season or aligns with what the rest of the bridal party is wearing.

Alternative fabrics

The majority of tuxedos are made from wool and will have the silk or satin detailing as described. Newer trends include incorporating fabrics like linen or flannel, although these are rare and may be harder to come by.

Community Corners

Neckties grabbing hold

People can set themselves apart with everything from lapels to tuxedo shirts to different colors, but only bowties or neckties can be worn with tuxedoes. While bowties once were the gold standard, those personalizing their wedding looks and taking liberties with style are increasingly opting for neckties. Gents can choose a necktie in a complementary texture that will coordinate with the elegance of the tuxedo.

Slim fit

Modern tuxedo choices feature a slim fit in both jacket and pant. It's a good idea to try on a few different options to see what feels comfortable before choosing a fit.

Tuxedos have been around since the nineteenth century and are the attire of choice for formal functions.



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Did you know?

A number of variables affect how much engaged couples will spend on their weddings. Personal preferences, location and the season in which couples get married are just some of the factors that can affect the final cost of a wedding. However, one aspect couples can count on regarding wedding spending is the reception will likely require the most significant financial investment. The Knot 2022 Real Weddings Study found that the average cost of a wedding in 2022 was \$30,000. The study also found that the biggest investment couples make is the venue. Couples indicated they spent about 37 percent of their overall budget on a wedding venue. Though some couples may spend more than that and others may spend less, engaged couples currently planning their weddings should know that the cost of the venue where they will tie the knot will likely end up requiring the most significant investment of any component related to their wedding.



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Wedding Budget

Invitations & Stationery	Favors
Save the Date Cards	Music
Invitations, Reply Cards	Security
Postage	Gratuities
Programs	
Menu Cards	Flowers
Place Cards	Ceremony
Thank You Cards	Reception
Calligraphy	Decorations
Miscellaneous	Bridal Bouquet
Bridal Attire & Beauty	Attendant Bouquets
Gown	Boutonnieres
Veil / Headpiece	Flower Girl
Alterations	Parents
Shoes	Grandparents
Lingerie	Photography
Accessories	Photography Db ata away hu
Jewelry	Photography
Makeup	Videography
Hair	Albums
Nails	Transportation
Nails Miscellaneous	Transportation Limousines
	Limousines
Miscellaneous	Limousines Gifts
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