

# Green Bride Guide

## Green Bride Guide's Green Wedding Checklist

With so many decisions to make during your wedding planning, it can be difficult to know how to structure them. Our Green Wedding Checklist can help you get organized and stay focused on the most important aspects of wedding planning as opposed to minor, unnecessary and/or costly details that add to your wedding's impact.

Of course, these are just suggestions, and the timelines may vary depending on the length of your engagement and the type of wedding you are planning. Bear in mind that, first and foremost, your wedding should reflect your style and green values, so adapt it to suit your needs and remember that every choice makes a difference.

### As Soon as You Can

- Announce your engagement (Online announcements are a great green choice!)
- Take a few weeks to enjoy the novelty of being engaged.
- Meet with your families and discuss the budget and your commitment to green choices.
- Start creating a vision for the style, theme, and/or colors of your wedding.

### Twelve to Fourteen Months

- Begin researching venues and their capability/willingness to offer eco-friendly options.
- If you intend to use a wedding planner, research and hire one who shares your vision and has experience planning earth-friendly weddings.
- Think about the guest list: How many guests make sense for your budget and your plans for a green wedding? Use a [carbon calculator](#) to determine your wedding's possible impact based on number of guests and travel needs.
- Visit and compare venues.

## **Nine to Twelve Months**

- Create a [wedding website](#).
- Start your [gift registry](#), adding essential items that you know you'll need. If you are well-stocked in home goods, consider creating a charity or cash registry.
- Finalize the guest list.
- Ask friends and relatives to be in the wedding party.
- Pick a date and time – have a few different dates and times in mind just in case your initial preference is not available.
- Book your wedding venue(s).
- Research and book a caterer who offers local, seasonal and/or organic foods, or is willing to prepare them for your wedding.
- Book an officiant, and ask about his/her schedule for meeting before the wedding.

## **Six to Nine Months**

- Decide on the type of music: DJ? Band? CD/iPod playlist? Research and book any entertainment you choose.
- Research photographers, ask about their green practices, and book the one that best fits your needs.
- Think about your floral décor. Local and seasonal flowers are eco- and budget-friendly, or you can go organic. Book a florist that embraces your values, assign talented friends/family members to purchase and arrange the flowers, or plant a garden yourself with the blooms you'd like for your wedding.
- Start dress shopping. Will you purchase a new dress and donate/resell afterwards, wear a vintage or gently used wedding gown, or have a gown made from eco-friendly materials?
- Discuss and buy/order attire for bridal party. Consider wear-again possibilities, or allow your bridal party members to select their own attire within your color scheme.
- Make all rental arrangements: tents, chairs, tables, linens, dinnerware, etc.
- Meet with the caterer to plan your menu. Be sure to discuss options for recycling, composting, and/or donating leftovers after the wedding.

- Send save-the-dates: Consider using recycled or alternative papers or sending electronically through your wedding website or via email.
- Think about invitations: How will they represent your wedding's style and your commitment to green?
- Start reserving blocks of rooms at nearby hotels or other guest accommodations, preferably within walking distance to your wedding, or with nearby public transportation.
- Mull on your honeymoon, and update all travel documents including passports.
- Round out your registry. Consider adding honeymoon travel or experiences if you already have enough "stuff" on your list.

### **Three to Six Months**

- Make/order invitations.
- Obtain a dress and all accessories, including appropriate undergarments.
- Get fitted and book final fitting.
- Make honeymoon reservations (check visa requirements).
- Make/buy any non-perishable favors. DIY projects are great for favors, and allow you to choose earth-friendly materials to create the gifts for your guests.
- Plan rehearsal time and location, and make reservations for rehearsal dinner or party to follow.
- Decide on and make arrangements for groom and groomsmen's attire. Rentals and wear-again choices are both green options.
- Research eco-friendly wedding ring options, and shop for the perfect bands.
- Meet with florist to discuss floral design, style and color, as well as arrangements to donate centerpieces or ceremony decorations afterward (if applicable).
- Order wedding cake or dessert items. Be sure to ask about options for donating any leftovers.
- Make/buy gifts for wedding party.
- Assemble/prepare invitations for sending.
- If planning an outdoor ceremony or reception, make a rain plan—reserve tent, heaters, etc.
- Mail invitations if you skipped save-the-dates.

Hire or arrange for wedding-day transportation for the bridal party, including shuttles for guests, and update your website with this information.

### **One to Two Months**

Mail paper invitations or send email invitations.

Get marriage license, and any necessary permits.

Meet with officiant to finalize ceremony details.

Work on your vows and the ceremony.

Decide on and obtain all ritual objects.

Pick ceremony and reception music and share your list with musicians/DJ.

If using an iPod, make playlists, test speakers, and burn backups.

Pick up wedding rings.

Get hair and makeup supplies and do a trial run.

Create programs or events schedule (if applicable), and update your wedding website with this information to share with your guests.

Put together [welcome baskets for out of town guests](#).

Schedule final fitting, and have your maid-of-honor tag along to learn how to bustle your dress (if needed).

Check with bridesmaids to make sure their attire is all set.

Appoint a director of “day of” activities if you do not have a planner.

### **Two Weeks Before**

Create [seating chart](#).

Contact guests who did not yet RSVP to obtain final head count, and share this count with caterer and venues.

Give picture lists to photographer(s) and determine where/when portraits will be taken.

Make detailed lists of activities and objects (ie, favors, ritual objects) to share with vendors.

If using a DJ/band, give final list of song requests, and be sure to note any songs you do not want played.

The bride should have her hair cut/colored if needed. Any closer to the wedding date, and there won't be time to change or correct if she does not like the result.

Plan specific roles (ie, Recycling Coordinator, Rental Return Director, etc) and ask friends/family members to take on these responsibilities. Create and send them lists of what they need to do.

Break in your shoes (if new).

Write toasts.

### **One Week Before**

Make perishable favors.

Create place and table cards.

Confirm arrangements with all wedding vendors, including after-celebration recycling, composting, donations, etc. Discuss any last minute changes.

Hair trim for groom.

Pick up dress and tuxedo.

Give ceremony and reception venues a schedule of vendor deliveries, set up times, and contact numbers.

Calculate and organize final payments to all vendors. Decide on gratuities, and place them in labeled envelopes.

Pack for wedding and honeymoon.

### **One Day Before**

Drop off welcome baskets and information packets.

Get pampered: manicure, pedicure, salon visit, etc.

Rehearse and enjoy dinner (make sure you eat something!)

Present wedding party with their gifts.

- Bring all necessary ceremony and reception accessories to the sites.
- Provide all necessary people with emergency phone number to call on the day of the wedding.
- Check in with all friends/family members about their duties.
- Get some sleep!

### **Wedding Day**

- Give wedding bands to maid of honor and best man for the ceremony.
- Give best man the officiant's fee to be delivered after the ceremony.
- Breathe! Soak it in. Enjoy the day.

### **Post-wedding**

- Send thank-you notes to guests and vendors.
- Enjoy married life!