



20 WEDDING PLANNING TIPS FROM  
PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS

*Planning a wedding can be overwhelming because, oftentimes, you don't know what you don't know! We reached out to some of our wedding planning colleagues from across the country and asked them to tell us their top wedding planning tips for couples. They certainly did not disappoint!*



**Amanda Crabtree**  
**Spark & Sage Events**  
**San Diego, CA**

"Don't pack the timeline. Even though there's a temptation to add a lot of formalities (special photo moments, dances, toasts, etc), keeping your celebration simple and limited to just a few formalities allows for more open dance floor and opportunity to talk to your guests. So, unless you're really committed to that bouquet toss, I'd recommend skipping it and getting an earlier start on the dance floor!"



**Terra Nickelson**  
**Plan It Terra**  
**Jefferson City, MO**

"Be sure to check with your caterer & venue on all roles and responsibilities. So many times I see couples not think about room flips, busing tables, emptying trash throughout the evening, and cleaning plates, glassware, etc. If you rent glassware, plates, and other table items, be sure to check with your rental company on cleaning policies/costs or see if your caterer or venue can handle that clean up. Do not let these tasks fall back on family & friends or even your wedding planner. If your caterer and/or venue do not provide these services, ask your wedding planner for recommendations."



**Sierra Morgan**  
**Agape Wedding Co.**  
**Houston, TX**

"It's not a production. Your wedding day shouldn't be about topping the last wedding you went to, or impressing that snooty cousin you never talk to. It's about the two of you and the love you have for each other. If you love camping, do some smores for dessert. If you love tacos, forget the steak and potato dinner! Make your wedding day reflect y'all so that when a guest walks in, they KNOW they're in the right place. Or when those late night honey butter chicken biscuits (where's my TX gals at?) come out, your guests go "Oh wow, that's so them!". You do you, girl!"



**Asha Mayfield**  
**Mayfield's Magical Moments**  
**Greenville, SC**

"My wedding planning tip would be: The Bride and Groom should both take part in the planning process. After all, this is the start of life TOGETHER. "



**Savannah Gryskiewicz**  
**Your Inspired Event**  
**Fresno, CA**

Little things are big things. How is everyone getting to and from each location? Where are the flower girl and ring bearer going to be during the ceremony? What should the bartender do if someone drinks too much? When do parents need to arrive for the day? Considering these things is absolutely key for a smooth, stress-free wedding day that you're able to fully enjoy. Yes, these decisions are unglamorous... and they're even more unglamorous on wedding day. If you don't nail down these details ahead of time, one of two things will happen. One, you'll need to figure it out in the heat of the moment or, two, someone else will decide for you how it should be handled."



**Diane Brisk**  
**DJB Group Chicago, Inc.**  
**Chicago, IL**

"I have pre-made place cards for both sets of parents that read "Reserved for the parents of the Bride & Groom" so that when they finally get to their table they are assured to have the best seats at their table to see the couple without needing to look through others all night long!! This practice came from a night where the need for this was painfully clear to me as I watch a FOB who shelled out beaucoup-bucks and spent the night swaying between others to see his daughter."



**Talia Hair**  
**Four 26 Events**  
**Fayetteville, NC**

"Talk about a budget BEFORE booking your vendors. Often times couples book a venue that has a high F&B minimum or restricts what vendors they can use which in many cases are the higher range."



**Virginia Fernandez-Swope**  
**V & V Wedding Planning**  
**Northern VA**

"My top wedding planning tip: set your priorities from the beginning and stick to it. Remember to make it all about you and your fiancee."



**Bianca Anderson**  
**Nimbus Events**  
**Dallas, TX**

"My wedding planning advice is: Take 15 minutes of quiet time for just the two of you sometime after the ceremony. Soak in that newlywed feeling before joining your guests, the day goes by so fast!"



**Claudia Masciarelli**  
**Claudia & Co.**  
**Toronto, CAN**

"My wedding planning tip: make your guest list before you book a venue. You want to have an idea of how large, or small your wedding will be to ensure the venue can accommodate. It doesn't have to be exact, just an idea so you know what you're working with."



**Heather Hollingsworth**  
**The Squirrel's Nest Events**  
**Asheville, NC**

"When you see an idea you love on Pinterest, instead of copying it exactly, tweak it to give it your own personal twist so that instead of thinking "I've seen that before", your guests will be thinking "Wow, what a unique idea!"



**Alisha Freeman**  
**The Productionista**  
**New York, NY**

"Every couple has different priorities and yours may not include hiring a full-service wedding planner. That is ok! However, at the very least, hire a wedding professional to help you manage your planning process in the home stretch. You will be glad you did when the reception is over, all the guests have left and you're not stuck tearing down all of the DIY decor in your beautiful wedding gown. Let someone else manage the logistics so you can enjoy time with your new husband or wife."



**Megan Brewer Gillikin**  
**A Southern Soiree**  
**Raleigh, NC**

"Hire a professional videographer. It's a vendor that often gets dropped off the list of priorities but it's the one decision where when my couples opt not to hire one, they come back to me after and say it was their biggest regret. Your wedding day is a blur and having those live moments to look back on...to hear your dad's voice during the toast, to hear your own voice quiver during vows...these things aren't captured in photos and I PROMISE you, it will be a treasure years down the line!"



**Tiffany Nicole**  
**Embellir Events**  
**Los Angeles, CA**

My tip would be don't be afraid to nix "wedding traditions". You don't have to please people, cut cake, toss a bouquet or have a wedding party. Work with a planner to design a day that's authentic to you as a couple and the story and ambiance YOU want to share."



**Gloria Schulz**  
**Gloria Schulz Events**  
**Atlanta, GA**

"Small Intimate Weddings are in style! Keep It Special, Keep it Simple, Keep it Small! Have the people there with you who mean the most to you on your special day. You will be able to spend more of your budget on the things you love instead of feeding 250 guests!"



**Kayce Mae**  
**Kay Mae Designs**  
**New England Area**

"Pro wedding planning tip: Eco-friendly options are easy to make! Simply add a compost and recycling bin, do not use single use plastic items, and consider donating foods, decor, or dresses to local organizations"



**Suzanne Frazer**  
**Toasted Events**  
**New York, NY**

"To thine own self be true." Listen to your instincts and go with your gut on the decisions in this process. It's YOUR wedding so YOUR opinion is the most important one in the cacophony of opinions around you."



**Keli Schoonover**  
**Taking the Leap**  
**Rushville, IL**

"During the planning stage, chose one friend or MOH and your mother to accompany you. Save all of your bridesmaids for showers and bachelor parties. Too many opinions can sway what you really want. Your dress appointments and floral meetings should be your mother and MOH only. Things will go so much smoother and you will be able to enjoy it fully!"



**Kaitlin Ford**  
**Pocketful of Plans**  
**Monterey, CA**

"My advice: know your guest count, budget and priorities prior to booking anything! It's so easy to set off in the wrong direction without a clear path if you don't know these things. Guest count is huge. I can't tell you how many couples start out saying we think we have 150 people but then end up with an invite list of 200 because they didn't write it down to start!"



**Angela B. Cameron**  
**An Event Lady Production**  
**Raleigh, NC**

"Pro wedding planning tip: Before things get hectic take a pre-honeymoon. Sneak away for a weekend and relax."