

# Budget Wedding Checklist

Checklist · 37 items · 14 sections

Have the wedding you want without overspending, smart savings strategies included.

Open the editable version online:

<https://genechecklist.com/checklist/budget-wedding-checklist>

## PLANNING FOUNDATIONS

- Set a firm total budget with spending limits per category  
**HIGH**
- Reduce guest list: fewer guests = lower per-head costs (aim for 30-50)  
**HIGH**
- Choose an off-peak date (Sunday, Friday, January–March for discounts)  
**HIGH**

## VENUE

- Book a venue that allows outside catering and BYOB  
**HIGH**
- Consider non-traditional venue (park pavilion, community hall, backyard)
- Book venue for ceremony and reception together to reduce fees

## ATTIRE

- Buy wedding dress from sample sale, consignment, or secondhand shop  
**HIGH**
- Borrow or rent bridal jewelry instead of buying new
- Let bridesmaids choose their own dresses in a matching color

## PHOTOGRAPHY

- Hire a newer photographer with a strong portfolio (lower rates)  
**HIGH**
- Skip videography or ask a talented friend to record
- Book photography for 4-6 hours instead of full day

## ENTERTAINMENT

- Use Spotify playlist and a Bluetooth speaker instead of DJ
- Ask a musically talented friend to perform during ceremony

## STATIONERY

- Send digital invitations or design and print your own
- HIGH** Print DIY ceremony programs at home or local print shop
- Use free wedding website builder (The Knot, Zola, Minted)

## FLORALS

- DIY floral arrangements using seasonal, locally-sourced flowers
- HIGH** Use candles, greenery, and potted plants instead of cut flower arrangements
- Order flowers from wholesale florist (Sam's Club, Costco) and arrange yourself

## CATERING

- Opt for buffet-style catering instead of plated service
- HIGH** Serve beer, wine, and signature cocktail only (skip full open bar)
- Order wedding cake from local bakery rather than specialty cake studio
- Skip dessert table extras: just one simple wedding cake tier

## DECORATIONS

- DIY table centerpieces (mason jars, candles, foliage)
- Rent decor instead of buying (arches, charger plates, vases)
- Make DIY wedding favors (seed packets, homemade jam, candles)
- Skip favors entirely: most guests don't take them

## BEAUTY

- Do your own hair and makeup or hire a beauty school student
- Book a hair and makeup trial to avoid day-of surprises

## **VENDORS**

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- Negotiate package deals with vendors (bundle discounts)

HIGH

## **RINGS**

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- Buy wedding rings during seasonal sales (November, February)
- Choose lab-grown diamonds or moissanite for significant savings

## **HONEYMOON**

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- Book domestic honeymoon or travel during off-season
- Use credit card travel points for honeymoon flights and hotels

## **BUDGET MANAGEMENT**

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- Track all wedding spending in a spreadsheet weekly
- HIGH
- Ask family and friends for help with specific tasks (decorating, cooking)