



Wedding Planning
Starter Kit

Why I created this for you...

Hello! I am Kaitlin Cashwell, your wedding coach. I created this guide to help take the stress out of wedding planning for Soon-to-Be brides. Wedding planning does not have to consume your life and it can even be enjoyable. I planned my own wedding in 6 months while I was working full time and going to school to get my MBA. I did it by taking the right planning steps based on project management techniques to help me stay on track and mitigate risks. I want to help others enjoy the planning process so they can focus on their romance instead of worrying about their event being a success. This guide requires no prior event planning experience. It can be used to plan any type of wedding whether it is a small quaint ceremony or a large extravagant party. You can purchase my complete wedding coaching guide coming in Fall of 2019 including bonus Soon-to-Be Fitness and Wellness guides on my website, www.Soon-to-Be.com.

Stress does not look good on anyone. A Soon-to-Be bride wants to look well rested and radiant on their wedding day. I have created the tools, tips and resources to help you plan your wedding with ease. I am continuously researching, reading, and gaining experience in the industry to improve this guide for you. You too can be a master wedding planner by just following these steps. You do not need to have a background in event planning or be a business guru you just need to be an effective communicator. This planning guide will help you think through all the initial details, but you have to communicate those details effectively with your partner, your family, your friends, your vendors and anyone else that is helping you along the way.

In this starter guide, I will help you with the following:

- Create a wedding overview
- Create a budget
- Create a timeline

As your wedding coach, I am a part of your team. I am here to guide you along the way. At the end of this starter guide I will tell you ways to get connected with me and others who are going through the same experience as you. Let's get started.

Create your wedding overview...

You may have been dreaming of this day your entire life or you may have thought you would never get married. If you have not already been planning your wedding, it is ok. Do not worry because you are not behind. If you are one of those who already have a secret Pinterest board, it is ok also. During this step of the planning phase you will work with your future spouse and your families to see if they have any opinions about the wedding. I feel like nowadays Soon-to-Be hubbies are a little bit more engaged in the planning process than they use to be. I encourage this because it makes the wedding yours as a couple. A wedding is the first event you will host (co-host depending on the situation) as a married couple. It should be a representation of your family and a blend of you and your fiancée's personality. Like a marriage, planning a wedding is about give and take.

Now take some time together discussing which type of wedding you both want to have. Do you want it to be traditional in a church? Do you want to elope and then have a party afterwards? Do you want to have a destination wedding with just your closest friends and family? Do you want to invite everyone and their mother literally? I am a firm believer that the wedding should fit your personality as a couple.

Soon-to-Be Exercise: Let's play a simple game of who, when, and where to help you select a date.

- Who do you want at the wedding?

Start listing off who you want to attend your wedding. This is just a rough draft. We will do an exercise in my full guide to really nail down the guest list.

- When do you want the wedding to take place?

Start discussing timeframe (i.e. 12 months from now, etc.) and what season or time of year (i.e. Springtime, a specific holiday, etc.)

- Where would you like the wedding to be held?

Start describing not only the location (i.e. hometown, favorite vacation spot, etc.), but the landscape (i.e. in a church, outdoors, etc.).

Create your budget...

Now that you know what type of wedding you want and have a date, let's talk about the elephant in the room...budget. The wedding budget does not have to be that challenging. In order to mitigate future difficult conversations, it is important to nail down budget details early in the planning process. You need to determine who will be paying for what and how much are they willing to fund. I recommend discussing the who and how much for the top 3 wedding expenses: wedding/reception, rehearsal dinner, and honeymoon. There may be additional wedding events that your family is willing to fund such as the engagement party, bachelor/bachelorette party, and wedding showers. Those can also be added to the list as needed.

Soon-to-Be Exercise: Determine who will be paying for what and how much are they willing to pay.

- Event: _____
- Budget: \$ _____
- Responsible Party: _____

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- Budget: \$ _____
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Once you have determined how much money you can spend on each event, you will need to break down the budget into sections to make sure you are allocating funds effectively. Remember a budget doesn't have to be cookie cutter. There are many helpful budget guides that give you a range of what to expect. If you however want to emphasize photography or an open bar, you will need to adjust the expense allocation to fit your dream wedding.

Create your timeline...

Now you are ready to develop your timeline. You do not need more than 4 months to plan a wedding. Take a second to let that soak in. Does it take some weight off your shoulders if you have more time than that? If vendors try to tell you otherwise, just ignore it. This doesn't mean that you should procrastinate however. If you are planning a wedding in 4 months, you need to get a lot of the initial details ironed out within the first month to include a venue, caterer, band/dj, officiant, photographer and dress. This will be a very busy month and is not for the faint of heart. It is doable, but it is a challenge so consider your schedule, experience, budget and determination before taking on a 4-month engagement. With an unlimited budget, you can get anything done in 4 months but money doesn't grow on trees for most.

Optimal Timeline Overview:

- 6 Months Prior
 - Book All Vendors (Don't Forget Hair and Make-up)
 - Develop Wedding Theme
 - Recruit Wedding Party
 - Finalize Bride, Groom, and Wedding Party Attire
 - Start Fitness and Wellness Plan
 - Schedule and Plan Engagement Party, Showers, Bachelor/Bachelorette Parties
 - Take Engagement Photos

- 4 Months Prior
 - Finalize Guest List
 - Finalize Vendor Details (Including Trials and Tastings)
 - Send Save the Dates
 - Book Honeymoon
 - Order Invitations

- 2 Months Prior
 - Mail Invitations
 - Create Wedding Schedule of Events and Order Additional Printed Items
 - Order Marriage License
 - Purchase Additional Necessary Items
 - Review Vendor Details

- 1 Month Prior
 - Finalize Dress Fitting
 - Confirm Schedule with Vendors
 - Give Final Head Count
 - Relax
 - Say "I do"
 - Celebrate

Yes, there are details in between but that is the bulk of what you need to do to make your wedding dreams come true.

Book the vendors --> create a scheme --> invite guests --> review details --> check on final details --> say “I do”--> party.

That’s it. It doesn’t have to be overly complicated. When you have a longer engagement, you are still doing the same activities, just in a longer period of time. There are many checklist templates available, but please don’t get overwhelmed by the amount of items on the list. It helps by just taking one section at a time. The checklists are helpful because they help make sure you don’t forget anything. You don’t have to complete all the items on the check list. I never sent save the dates for my wedding because I planned it within 6 months and we had an intimate guest list. Everyone that we wanted to attend knew about the date as soon as we selected it. You don’t have to follow the same “To-do” list as everyone else. It is your wedding after all.

Soon-to-Be Exercise: Before you get bogged down with all the planning set your mind right.

List the top 3 reasons why you love your fiancée:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

If you ever get stressed during the planning process, just remind yourself that by the end of this you will be married to your love and that is all that matters

Your bonus track...

Earlier I mentioned my Soon-to-Be Fitness and Wellness guide. Now is a better time than ever to start your healthy habits. You are starting a new journey in your life and staying on top of your game is important. I am not talking about weight loss. I am talking about gaining energy and feeling like your best self. Planning a wedding can be stressful and taxing on your health. It is important to focus on a strong fitness schedule, a consistent sleep pattern, a soothing skincare routine and a meal plan that makes you feel great. You can invite your fiancée in on the fun as well. Below are my healthy habits tips listed in order of importance.

Meals:

- Remove excess sugar from your diet (Don't skip the cake tasting, you can splurge every once and a while) opt for fresh fruit to cut your sweet tooth
- Limit eating out and limit packaged foods
- Eat a green veggie for 2 out of 3 meals
- Drink an 8 oz glass of water every 3 hours

Sleep:

- Try to get 7 or more hours of sleep each night
- Limit screen time 30 minutes before bed to help you fall asleep faster

Fitness:

- Walk, run, or do some form of cardio 5 days a week for at least 30 minutes (preferably an outdoor activity)
- Engage in muscle toning/strengthening 2 days a week

Skincare:

- Use SPF daily
- Wash and moisturize your face every night before bed
- Get a facial every 6 weeks

If your schedule gets the best of you on some weeks, make sure you maintain your healthy meal habits and consistent sleep pattern to prevent you from catching any illnesses. That exercise class you had planned to attend can be the first thing to go if you are feeling bogged down. Instead, just sit outside in the sun for a bit to get some fresh air and vitamin D.

Stay connected...

Planning a wedding can be daunting, but I am here to help. Instead of feeling anxious about everything you have to do, I hope this starter kit has helped you consolidate your thoughts. I don't want you to feel like you are alone in this process. That is why I have created multiple ways for you to contact me.

Join my private Facebook group, **Soon-to-Be Wedding Party**, to gain more tips, tools, and resources, to connect with other Soon-to-Be brides, and chat with me LIVE every 1st Saturday morning of the month from 10 AM – 11 AM EST. [CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE PARTY!](#)

Follow me on Instagram, [@soontobeinc](#) to view inspiring wedding photos and catch my blog posts.

If you have specific questions for me regarding your wedding planning journey or you are interested in the next round of group (Spots are limited), please visit my website, www.soon-to-be.com or email me, kcashwell@soontobe.com.

I look forward to meeting you and hearing more about your love story.

Happy planning.

Sincerely,

Haitlin Cashwell