TOAST WRITER · FREE PRINTABLE

Wedding Planning Checklist

Month by month, from "we're engaged" to thank-you notes. Tick as you go.

12+ months out

- ☐ Set a working budget and decide who's contributing
- ☐ Draft a guest-count range (it drives venue size and cost)
- ☐ Pick a season and 2–3 possible dates
- ☐ Shortlist and tour venues; ask what's included (tables, chairs, catering rules, end time)
- ☐ Book the venue and get the contract in writing
- ☐ Start a shared planning folder and a guest-list spreadsheet

9–11 months out

- ☐ Book the photographer and/or videographer
- ☐ Book catering if your venue doesn't include it
- ☐ Choose your wedding party
- ☐ Book an officiant
- ☐ Send save-the-dates for destination or holiday weekends (or plan to at 6–8 months)
- ☐ Reserve a hotel room block for out-of-town guests

6–8 months out

- ☐ Shop for attire; ask about alteration timelines
- ☐ Book music (band or DJ) and florist
- ☐ Create your registry
- ☐ Send save-the-dates if you haven't
- ☐ Plan the rehearsal dinner: who hosts, where, guest list
- ☐ Book transportation if guests need it

4–5 months out

- ☐ Order invitations (or design printables)
- ☐ Choose the menu and schedule a tasting
- ☐ Order the cake or dessert
- ☐ Plan the ceremony outline with your officiant
- ☐ Decide who's giving speeches and ask them now

2–3 months out

- ☐ Mail invitations (about 6–8 weeks before)
- ☐ Book hair and makeup trial
- ☐ Buy rings
- ☐ Confirm vendor arrival times
- ☐ Check marriage license rules where you're marrying (requirements and waiting periods vary by state and county)

1 month out

- ☐ Final guest count to caterer and venue
- ☐ Seating chart
- ☐ Write a day-of timeline and share it with vendors and the wedding party
- ☐ Final fittings
- ☐ Pick up the marriage license within its valid window
- ☐ Speech-givers: first full practice out loud

The week of

- ☐ Confirm every vendor (time, address, contact on the day)
- ☐ Pack an emergency kit (sewing kit, stain pen, pain reliever, snacks, phone charger)
- ☐ Hand off the timeline to your day-of point person
- ☐ Prepare tips and final payments in labeled envelopes
- ☐ Rest. Delegate anything that isn't yours to carry

After the wedding

- ☐ Send thank-you notes (aim for within about 3 months)
- ☐ Return rentals
- ☐ Preserve your attire or bouquet if you want to
- ☐ Update your name on documents if you're changing it
- ☐ Back up your photos in two places

Who speaks when

Rehearsal dinner
Host (often a parent or the couple) welcomes everyone; 1–3 short toasts from family or close friends; the couple thanks everyone last.

Reception, common order
1. Welcome from the host or a parent · 2. Maid or matron of honor · 3. Best man · 4. The couple thanks everyone (optional, usually last)

How long
Most toasts run about 2–4 minutes. That's a common guideline, not a rule. Shorter almost always lands better than longer.

When
Many couples do toasts right after guests sit for dinner or between courses, so guests are seated and the room is quiet.

Speech prep checklist

- ☐ Know your slot and your time limit
- ☐ One story, not five
- ☐ Practice out loud three times, with a timer
- ☐ Print it or use cards (phones die)
- ☐ End by raising a glass to the couple

Planning guidelines only; check your venue, vendors and local marriage-license rules. © 2026 Toast Writer. Free for personal use.