

FOUR PRINTABLE PLANNING PATHS

Choose Your Wedding Planning Timeline Pack

Compare four realistic planning paths, choose the timeline that matches your available time, and print only the section you need.

12 MONTHS · 9 MONTHS · 6 MONTHS · 3 MONTHS

START HERE

Choose the Path You Can Actually Follow

The best timeline is not the longest one. It is the one that matches the time remaining, your availability, and the decisions already made.

12 MONTHS

Choose this path if you want steady pacing, broad vendor choice, and more time between major decisions.

9 MONTHS

Choose this path if you can build the foundation quickly and manage several workstreams at once.

6 MONTHS

Choose this path if you can decide quickly, stay flexible, and prioritize vendor availability.

3 MONTHS

Choose this path if simplicity, fast responses, and clear backup choices matter more than unlimited options.

CHOOSE BY TIME REMAINING

Count from today to the wedding date. Do not choose a longer track simply because planning began earlier if important decisions are still open.

OUR SELECTED PATH

12 months [] 9 months [] 6 months [] 3 months []

Complete page 7 once, then print only your selected timeline track. Carry any unresolved standard into that track as a critical task.

COMPARISON

Four Timelines at a Glance

Use the differences below to choose a realistic operating style, not an idealized calendar.

TRACK	PLANNING PACE	VENDOR REALITY	COMPRESSION	MAIN SKILL
12 months	Steady and progressive	Broadest choice	Low to moderate	Early preferences
9 months	Fast foundation, steady middle	Good with quick booking	Moderate	Parallel work
6 months	Decision-heavy from week one	Availability led	High	Flexibility
3 months	Weekly sprint	Limited and changing	Very high	Simplification

ASK BEFORE CHOOSING

- How much time is truly available each week?
- Which major decisions are already complete?
- How flexible are we about vendors, date, and design?

A SHORTER TRACK CAN WORK WHEN

- The guest list is controlled.
- One person owns follow-up.
- Decisions have deadlines.
- Backup options are accepted before they are needed.

DECISION ORDER

Dependencies: What Must Come First

A dependency is a decision or confirmation that another task needs before it can move forward.

BUDGET + GUEST RANGE

Venue search, catering estimates, rental quantities

DATE + VENUE

Vendor bookings, invitations, transportation, hotel blocks

CEREMONY FORMAT

Officiant, processional, music, rehearsal needs

FINAL GUEST COUNT

Seating, catering total, rentals, place cards

FINAL TIMELINE

Vendor arrivals, transportation, deliveries, handoffs

SEQUENCE RULE

Do not spend time polishing a task that depends on an unresolved decision. Identify the blocker, assign it, and set its deadline first.

USE THE SYSTEM

Task, Decision, Deadline & Checkpoint

These four labels prevent a timeline from becoming a long list with no operating logic.

TASK

A specific action with a visible finish, such as request three catering proposals.

DECISION

A choice that unlocks other work, such as approve the venue or final guest range.

DEADLINE

The last useful date for action, based on a contract, lead time, or dependency.

CHECKPOINT

A scheduled moment to review progress, money, guest count, or risk before continuing.

PRIORITY LEGEND

- ☐ **A - CRITICAL** Blocks the venue, legal process, core vendor, or guest communication.
- ☐ **B - IMPORTANT** Protects the experience but can move within a reasonable window.
- ☐ **C - FLEXIBLE** Can be simplified, replaced, or removed without stopping the wedding.

ADJUST WITHOUT RESTARTING

How to Move to a Shorter Timeline

If time becomes compressed, preserve dependencies and outcomes. Do not simply move every unfinished task to this week.

1 AUDIT

Mark what is complete, contracted, waiting, and no longer necessary.

2 PROTECT

Keep legal requirements, venue commitments, guest communication, and core logistics.

3 COMBINE

Run independent tasks in parallel when different people can own them.

4 SIMPLIFY

Reduce custom work, optional events, complicated decor, and slow approval loops.

5 REBUILD

Start with the current week of the shorter track and assign only the next actions.

NEVER COMPRESS LEGAL TIMING

Verify marriage-license rules, delivery lead times, cancellation terms, and payment deadlines with the official source or signed contract.

COMMON STANDARDS

Non-Negotiables for Every Timeline

Complete this review once, no matter which planning path you choose. These responsibilities should not disappear when the calendar becomes shorter.

LEGAL & OFFICIAL RULES

- ☐ Marriage-license timing verified
- ☐ Permits and insurance confirmed
- ☐ Contract deadlines recorded

ACCESSIBILITY & ROUTES

- ☐ Real routes and surfaces field-checked
- ☐ Seating and restrooms verified
- ☐ Accessible transportation backup

GUEST CARE

- ☐ Dietary and allergy protocol
- ☐ Sensory, rest or medication space
- ☐ Caregivers and service animals

SAFETY & EMERGENCY

- ☐ Venue procedure obtained
- ☐ Exact address and responder access
- ☐ Professional contacts confirmed

WEATHER & TRANSPORTATION

- ☐ Trigger and decision deadline
- ☐ Route or location backup
- ☐ Named activation owner

COMMUNICATION & PRIVACY

- ☐ Guest update channel
- ☐ One vendor contact number
- ☐ Photo and privacy boundaries

AUTHORITY & BACKUPS

- ☐ Who may act without approval
- ☐ Backup for unavailable owners
- ☐ Couple-reserved decisions

VERIFICATION & HANDOFF

- ☐ Current written version identified
- ☐ Receiver accepts responsibility
- ☐ Plans are available offline

SHORTER DOES NOT MEAN LESS RESPONSIBLE

Simplify design and optional events first. Do not compress legal timing, accessibility verification, life-safety procedures, or critical guest communication.

PRINTABLE TIMELINE

12-Month Wedding Planning Timeline

A steady month-by-month path with wider booking windows, progressive decisions, and regular budget and guest checkpoints.

PRINT THIS TRACK

PAGES 8-15

- ☐ Best for couples starting about one year before the wedding.
- ☐ Use one owner and one due date for every active task.
- ☐ Review budget and guest assumptions at each checkpoint.

12-MONTH TRACK

Months 12 & 11

Build the foundation first.

MONTH 12

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Set the budget ceiling			☐
Estimate the guest range			☐
Choose the location and date window			☐
Tour and compare venues			☐
Book the venue			☐
Choose planning support			☐

MONTH 11

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Book planner or coordinator			☐
Book photographer			☐
Book videographer if wanted			☐
Confirm officiant availability			☐
Start hotel research			☐
Create planning files and email			☐

12-MONTH TRACK

Months 10 & 9

Book the core team and begin guest communication.

MONTH 10

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Book catering and bar			☐
Book music or entertainment			☐
Book florist or designer			☐
Reserve core rentals			☐
Begin attire shopping			☐
Launch the website framework			☐

MONTH 9

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Build the guest address list			☐
Send save-the-dates if appropriate			☐
Reserve hotel blocks			☐
Outline transportation needs			☐
Review insurance requirements			☐
Checkpoint: budget and guest range			☐

12-MONTH TRACK

Months 8 & 7

Shape the ceremony, reception, and guest experience.

MONTH 8

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Plan ceremony structure			☐
Book hair and makeup			☐
Choose invitation direction			☐
Start registry			☐
Plan rehearsal or welcome event			☐
Schedule attire fittings			☐

MONTH 7

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Complete menu tasting			☐
Book cake or dessert			☐
Review rentals and floor plan			☐
Plan guest transportation			☐
Confirm wedding-party roles			☐
Check honeymoon documents			☐

12-MONTH TRACK

Months 6 & 5

Translate the plan into wording, layouts, and specific choices.

MONTH 6

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Finalize invitation wording			☐
Order invitations			☐
Choose ceremony readings			☐
Purchase wedding rings			☐
Draft day-of timeline			☐
Draft priority photo list			☐

MONTH 5

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Confirm decor and signage scope			☐
Choose key songs			☐
Review vendor balances			☐
Plan favors or welcome gifts			☐
Confirm attire progress			☐
Checkpoint: spending and headcount			☐

12-MONTH TRACK

Months 4 & 3

Move from design decisions into confirmations.

MONTH 4

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Send invitations if appropriate			☐
Set RSVP follow-up system			☐
Develop seating approach			☐
Confirm ceremony participants			☐
Schedule beauty trial			☐
Review weather backup			☐

MONTH 3

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Track RSVPs			☐
Hold vendor detail meetings			☐
Finalize vows and ceremony wording			☐
Confirm transportation routes			☐
Plan item handoffs			☐
Research license timing			☐

12-MONTH TRACK

Months 2 & 1

Close guest, vendor, legal, payment, and handoff details.

MONTH 2

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Close guest-list questions			☐
Finalize seating assignments			☐
Complete final fittings			☐
Confirm vendor arrival windows			☐
Build payment envelopes plan			☐
Prepare packing list			☐

MONTH 1

TASK / DECISION	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS
Submit final headcount			☐
Distribute final timeline			☐
Obtain marriage license			☐
Pay scheduled balances			☐
Pack and label items			☐
Confirm weather decision process			☐

CHECKPOINT

12-Month Track Review

Use this page at the end of each month. Record changes before they become silent delays.

REVIEW ITEM	CURRENT STATUS	OWNER	NEXT CHECKPOINT	DONE
Budget status				☐
Guest-count status				☐
Contracts signed				☐
Payments due next				☐
Decision blocking progress				☐
Task to delegate				☐
Risk requiring backup				☐
Next three actions				☐

PRINTABLE TIMELINE

9-Month Wedding Planning Timeline

A compressed timeline that builds the foundation in the first two weeks, then uses safe parallel work without breaking decision dependencies.

PRINT THIS TRACK

PAGES 16-23

- ☐ Make budget, guest range, date, and venue the first operating sprint.
- ☐ Assign separate owners to independent workstreams.
- ☐ Protect sequential decisions that affect contracts or guest communication.

9-MONTH TRACK

First Two Weeks

Build the foundation before polishing details.

TASK / DECISION	MODE	MAIN RISK	OWNER	DONE
Approve budget + guest range	SEQUENTIAL	Wrong venue scope		☐
Choose date window + location	SEQUENTIAL	Limited availability		☐
Tour and book venue	SEQUENTIAL	Contract delay		☐
Choose planning support	PARALLEL	Unclear ownership		☐
Contact priority vendors	PARALLEL	Lost availability		☐
Create file and payment system	PARALLEL	Missing records		☐
Draft guest address list	PARALLEL	Save-the-date delay		☐

CHECKPOINT

What must be complete before the next planning window begins?

9-MONTH TRACK

Months 9-8

Book the team while guest communication is prepared.

TASK / DECISION	MODE	MAIN RISK	OWNER	DONE
Book photo and video	PARALLEL	Limited dates		☐
Book catering and bar	SEQUENTIAL	Venue rules		☐
Book music	PARALLEL	Limited dates		☐
Confirm officiant	PARALLEL	Ceremony conflict		☐
Book florist and rentals	PARALLEL	Scope changes		☐
Begin attire orders	PARALLEL	Lead time		☐
Send save-the-dates	SEQUENTIAL	Guest list errors		☐

CHECKPOINT

What must be complete before the next planning window begins?

9-MONTH TRACK

Months 7-6

Shape the experience and close major supplier gaps.

TASK / DECISION	MODE	MAIN RISK	OWNER	DONE
Book hair and makeup	PARALLEL	Limited dates		☐
Choose invitation direction	PARALLEL	Proofing delay		☐
Plan ceremony outline	PARALLEL	Participant conflict		☐
Confirm menu direction	SEQUENTIAL	Caterer schedule		☐
Book cake or dessert	PARALLEL	Production dates		☐
Plan lodging and transport	SEQUENTIAL	Route uncertainty		☐
Checkpoint budget + guests	SEQUENTIAL	Scope drift		☐

CHECKPOINT

What must be complete before the next planning window begins?

9-MONTH TRACK

Months 5-4

Convert choices into layouts, wording, and schedules.

TASK / DECISION	MODE	MAIN RISK	OWNER	DONE
Order invitations	SEQUENTIAL	Guest data errors		☐
Draft day-of timeline	SEQUENTIAL	Vendor gaps		☐
Draft floor plan	SEQUENTIAL	Rental mismatch		☐
Choose songs and readings	PARALLEL	Approval delay		☐
Purchase rings	PARALLEL	Sizing delay		☐
Schedule trials and fittings	PARALLEL	Calendar conflicts		☐
Review license requirements	PARALLEL	Invalid timing		☐

CHECKPOINT

What must be complete before the next planning window begins?

9-MONTH TRACK

Months 3-2

Move into guest, vendor, and handoff confirmation.

TASK / DECISION	MODE	MAIN RISK	OWNER	DONE
Send invitations	SEQUENTIAL	Late responses		☐
Track RSVPs	SEQUENTIAL	Final-count delay		☐
Hold vendor detail meetings	PARALLEL	Unclear scope		☐
Finalize ceremony wording	PARALLEL	Officiant changes		☐
Confirm transportation	SEQUENTIAL	Capacity issue		☐
Prepare payment schedule	PARALLEL	Missed due date		☐
Build packing and handoff list	PARALLEL	Missing items		☐

CHECKPOINT

What must be complete before the next planning window begins?

9-MONTH TRACK

Month 1 & Final Week

Stop expanding the plan and close every open loop.

TASK / DECISION	MODE	MAIN RISK	OWNER	DONE
Submit final headcount	SEQUENTIAL	Contract deadline		☐
Finalize seating	SEQUENTIAL	Late RSVP		☐
Distribute final timeline	SEQUENTIAL	Vendor confusion		☐
Obtain marriage license	SEQUENTIAL	Legal timing		☐
Pack and label all items	PARALLEL	Missing handoff		☐
Prepare balances and tips	PARALLEL	Payment error		☐
Assign day-of authority	SEQUENTIAL	Couple interrupted		☐

CHECKPOINT

What must be complete before the next planning window begins?

COMPRESSION REVIEW

Parallel Work Without Chaos

Use this page to separate work that can happen at the same time from decisions that must stay in sequence.

WORKSTREAM / DECISION	OWNER	CAN RUN WITH	MUST FOLLOW	DONE
Workstream 1				☐
Workstream 2				☐
Workstream 3				☐
Sequential decision				☐
Current blocker				☐
Compression risk				☐
Next checkpoint				☐
Task to remove				☐

PRINTABLE TIMELINE

6-Month Wedding Planning Timeline

A decision-focused path that protects the most important priorities while using flexibility and backup choices to handle limited availability.

PRINT THIS TRACK

PAGES 24-31

- ☐ Make the irreversible decisions in the first week.
- ☐ Protect only the priorities that define the celebration.
- ☐ Approve backup choices before a preferred option becomes unavailable.

6-MONTH TRACK

Month 6

Secure the foundation and accept availability as a planning constraint

DECISION / TASK	PROTECT	FLEXIBLE OPTION	BACKUP	DONE
Budget + guest range	High			☐
Date + venue	High			☐
Planner / coordinator	Medium			☐
Photo / video	High			☐
Catering + bar	High			☐
Music + officiant	High			☐
Attire lead time	Medium			☐

CHECKPOINT

Which priority must be protected, and where can flexibility save time or preserve availability?

6-MONTH TRACK

Month 5

Book remaining core services and begin guest communication

DECISION / TASK	PROTECT	FLEXIBLE OPTION	BACKUP	DONE
Florals + rentals	Medium			☐
Hair + makeup	Medium			☐
Hotel + transport	Medium			☐
Invitation direction	High			☐
Save-the-dates, if useful	Low			☐
Ceremony structure	Medium			☐
Cake / dessert	Low			☐

CHECKPOINT

Which priority must be protected, and where can flexibility save time or preserve availability?

6-MONTH TRACK

Month 4

Turn bookings into specific guest and production plans

DECISION / TASK	PROTECT	FLEXIBLE OPTION	BACKUP	DONE
Order invitations	High			☐
Menu decisions	High			☐
Floor plan + rentals	Medium			☐
Day-of timeline draft	High			☐
Rings	Medium			☐
Readings + music	Low			☐
License research	High			☐

CHECKPOINT

Which priority must be protected, and where can flexibility save time or preserve availability?

6-MONTH TRACK

Month 3

Send, track, and confirm

DECISION / TASK	PROTECT	FLEXIBLE OPTION	BACKUP	DONE
Send invitations	High			☐
Open RSVP tracking	High			☐
Vendor detail meetings	Medium			☐
Fittings + beauty trial	Medium			☐
Transportation routes	Medium			☐
Weather backup	High			☐
Payment schedule	High			☐

CHECKPOINT

Which priority must be protected, and where can flexibility save time or preserve availability?

6-MONTH TRACK

Month 2

Close open decisions and prepare handoffs

DECISION / TASK	PROTECT	FLEXIBLE OPTION	BACKUP	DONE
RSVP follow-up	High			☐
Seating approach	Medium			☐
Ceremony wording	High			☐
Final photo priorities	Medium			☐
Packing list	Medium			☐
Vendor arrival plan	High			☐
Final-count deadline	High			☐

CHECKPOINT

Which priority must be protected, and where can flexibility save time or preserve availability?

6-MONTH TRACK

Month 1

Confirm, pay, prepare, and stop adding scope

DECISION / TASK	PROTECT	FLEXIBLE OPTION	BACKUP	DONE
Final headcount	High			☐
Final seating	Medium			☐
Final timeline	High			☐
Marriage license	High			☐
Balances + tips	High			☐
Pack + label items	Medium			☐
Day-of authority	High			☐

CHECKPOINT

Which priority must be protected, and where can flexibility save time or preserve availability?

FLEXIBILITY REVIEW

Protect What Matters Most

Use this page to prevent every preference from becoming a nonnegotiable.

PRIORITY / RISK	OWNER	PROTECTED OUTCOME	FLEXIBLE CHOICE	DONE
Priority 1				☐
Priority 2				☐
Priority 3				☐
Availability risk				☐
Cost risk				☐
Approved backup				☐
Decision due this week				☐
Detail to simplify				☐

PRINTABLE TIMELINE

3-Month Wedding Planning Timeline

A 12-week sprint built around critical tasks, the fastest workable path, accepted backups, and deliberate simplification.

PRINT THIS TRACK

PAGES 32-39

- ☐ Sort every task into critical, flexible, or unnecessary.
- ☐ Use standard options and short approval loops.
- ☐ Remove details that create work without protecting the guest experience.

3-MONTH TRACK

Weeks 12-10

Secure a workable wedding foundation immediately

CRITICAL TASK	FASTEST PATH	BACKUP / SIMPLIFY	OWNER	DONE
Budget + guest ceiling				☐
Available date + venue				☐
Legal requirements				☐
Planner / coordinator				☐
Photo + music				☐
Food + beverage				☐

CHECKPOINT

If the preferred path fails today, what approved backup keeps this task moving?

3-MONTH TRACK

Weeks 9-8

Book remaining essentials and contact guests

CRITICAL TASK	FASTEST PATH	BACKUP / SIMPLIFY	OWNER	DONE
Officiant				☐
Attire with safe lead time				☐
Digital or fast invitations				☐
Guest address list				☐
Rentals based on venue gaps				☐
Hair + makeup				☐

CHECKPOINT

If the preferred path fails today, what approved backup keeps this task moving?

3-MONTH TRACK

Weeks 7-6

Build the ceremony, reception, and movement plan

CRITICAL TASK	FASTEST PATH	BACKUP / SIMPLIFY	OWNER	DONE
Ceremony outline				☐
Menu + bar choices				☐
Basic floor plan				☐
Transportation routes				☐
Day-of timeline draft				☐
Rings				☐

CHECKPOINT

If the preferred path fails today, what approved backup keeps this task moving?

3-MONTH TRACK

Weeks 5-4

Collect responses and close design decisions

CRITICAL TASK	FASTEST PATH	BACKUP / SIMPLIFY	OWNER	DONE
RSVP follow-up				☐
Final attire appointments				☐
Music + readings				☐
Signage only where needed				☐
Photo priorities				☐
Weather backup				☐

CHECKPOINT

If the preferred path fails today, what approved backup keeps this task moving?

3-MONTH TRACK

Weeks 3-2

Confirm counts, vendors, payments, and handoffs

CRITICAL TASK	FASTEST PATH	BACKUP / SIMPLIFY	OWNER	DONE
Final guest count				☐
Seating assignments				☐
Vendor confirmations				☐
Marriage license				☐
Balances + tips				☐
Packing + delivery list				☐

CHECKPOINT

If the preferred path fails today, what approved backup keeps this task moving?

3-MONTH TRACK

Final Week

Stop planning and prepare the physical handoff

CRITICAL TASK	FASTEST PATH	BACKUP / SIMPLIFY	OWNER	DONE
Distribute final timeline				☐
Assign day-of authority				☐
Pack rings, vows, IDs				☐
Label venue items				☐
Confirm transport + weather				☐
Protect sleep + meals				☐

CHECKPOINT

If the preferred path fails today, what approved backup keeps this task moving?

WEEKLY REVIEW

The 20-Minute Planning Reset

Complete this review once a week. Keep the next seven days realistic and visible.

REVIEW ITEM	OWNER	DUE	DECISION	DONE
Critical this week				☐
Waiting on a response				☐
Decision due in 48 hours				☐
Backup to activate				☐
Task to delegate				☐
Detail to simplify				☐
Item to eliminate				☐
Next checkpoint				☐

Notes