

The Complete Wedding Planning Checklist

Every task from engagement to post-wedding, organized by timeframe with priorities and pro tips — print it, or tick as you go.

A wedding is dozens of small deadlines wearing one big event as a disguise. This checklist breaks it into timeframes — so at any point in planning, you know exactly what should already be done, what's due now, and what can wait.

12+ Months Out Engagement & foundation

The decisions everything else depends on — budget, date, and guest count come before any vendor conversation.

PRIORITY	TASK	PRO TIP
HIGH	☐ Set your overall budget and who's contributing	Decide this before venue tours start — every option looks "reasonable" otherwise.
HIGH	☐ Draft a rough guest list headcount range	Guest count drives catering, venue and décor cost more than any single vendor choice.
HIGH	☐ Shortlist 2-3 possible wedding dates	Check family conflicts and, if relevant, an auspicious muhurat with your pandit first.
HIGH	☐ Shortlist and tour venues in your target city	Popular venues book 12+ months out for peak season (Oct-Feb).
MEDIUM	☐ Check legal eligibility & marriage registration requirements	Requirements vary by state — start early if either partner is registered abroad.
MEDIUM	☐ Book a wedding planner, if you want one	Full-service planners get booked out fastest for popular dates — decide early.
MEDIUM	☐ Set up one shared planning tracker for both families	One shared doc beats ten different WhatsApp groups with ten different "final" lists.
LOW	☐ Agree on a rough wedding style or theme direction	Even a loose direction (traditional, fusion, destination) narrows every vendor call later.

9–12 Months Out The big bookings

Venue, catering and photography — the vendors that book up first and anchor every date around them.

PRIORITY	TASK	PRO TIP
HIGH	☐ Confirm venue and pay the booking deposit	Get exact inclusions — power backup, parking, décor restrictions — in writing.
HIGH	☐ Book your caterer and schedule a tasting	Lock a headcount range before final menu pricing — it changes the quote significantly.
HIGH	☐ Book photographer & videographer	These book earliest of all categories for popular dates in metro cities.
MEDIUM	☐ Book decorator and share your mood board	Confirm which flowers are seasonal — late swap requests get expensive fast.
MEDIUM	☐ Start bridal & groom attire shopping	Custom/tailored outfits need 3–4 months' lead time at minimum.
MEDIUM	☐ Set up a wedding WhatsApp group or website for guest updates	Out-of-town guests need lead time to book their own travel.
LOW	☐ Research honeymoon destinations and a rough budget	Book flights early — peak wedding season overlaps with peak travel pricing.

6–9 Months Out Vendors & details

The categories that round out a full Indian wedding — mehndi, entertainment, invitations, and guest logistics.

PRIORITY	TASK	PRO TIP
HIGH	☐ Book mehndi artist and DJ/entertainment	Sangeet-season weekends fill up fast in every metro city.
HIGH	☐ Send save-the-dates	Non-negotiable lead time for destination or multi-city guest lists.
MEDIUM	☐ Choose your makeup artist and lock the date (trial comes later)	Book the trial itself closer to the wedding — just secure the date now.
MEDIUM	☐ Choose and order wedding invitations	Confirm the final guest count first — reprints cost more than the original order.
MEDIUM	☐ Reserve a hotel room block for out-of-town guests	Negotiate the block rate now — it only gets harder closer to the date.
LOW	☐ Book a choreographer for sangeet performances	Start rehearsals early if multiple family members are performing together.
LOW	☐ Set up a gift registry, if you're using one	Share the link once, in the invite or wedding website — not repeatedly.

3–6 Months Out Confirmations

Numbers get locked in this window — guest count, vendor contracts, and transport logistics.

PRIORITY	TASK	PRO TIP
HIGH	☐ Finalize the guest list and collect addresses	Lock this before invitations go to print — not after.
HIGH	☐ Confirm every vendor contract and payment schedule	Keep one master sheet: vendor, contact, deposit paid, balance due, due date.
HIGH	☐ Book transportation — baraat car and guest shuttles	Luxury car availability tightens fastest in peak wedding season.
MEDIUM	☐ Finalize the menu with your caterer	Include exact dietary-restriction counts — Jain, vegan, allergies — not estimates.
MEDIUM	☐ Mail wedding invitations	6–8 weeks out for local guests, earlier for destination or NRI guests.
MEDIUM	☐ Plan mehndi, sangeet and haldi event logistics	Check timing across multi-day events doesn't clash with vendor availability.
LOW	☐ Purchase wedding rings	Leave time for sizing and any engraving.
LOW	☐ Finalize honeymoon bookings	Lock flights and hotel once the post-wedding calendar is confirmed.

1–3 Months Out Finalizing

Final numbers, final fittings, final legal steps — everything downstream of these gets set this window.

PRIORITY	TASK	PRO TIP
HIGH	☐ Collect final RSVP count	Give caterer and venue your final number at least 2 weeks before their deadline.
HIGH	☐ Final dress/suit fittings — bride, groom, bridal party	Schedule the last fitting no more than 2–3 weeks before the wedding.
HIGH	☐ Apply for your marriage license / complete legal paperwork	Processing times vary widely by state — start now to avoid a last-minute scramble.
MEDIUM	☐ Reconfirm final headcount with every vendor	Most vendors lock final pricing off this number — get it to all of them, not just the caterer.
MEDIUM	☐ Build the wedding-day timeline and share it with every vendor	Every vendor should be working off the same timeline — not five different versions.
MEDIUM	☐ Finalize the hotel room block, release unbooked rooms	Release rooms before the cutoff date to avoid attrition penalty charges.
LOW	☐ Break in wedding shoes	A genuine comfort tip, not filler — do this well before the big day.
LOW	☐ Assemble welcome bags for out-of-town guests	Do this the week before — not the night before, when time disappears fastest.

Final Week Last-mile prep

Confirmation, not new decisions. This week is for making sure everything already booked actually shows up.

PRIORITY	TASK	PRO TIP
HIGH	☐ Call to confirm arrival times with every vendor	Call, don't just message — confirm a real person actually read and understood it.
HIGH	☐ Distribute the day-of timeline to the wedding party	Include vendor phone numbers next to each relevant time slot.
HIGH	☐ Assign one point-of-contact per vendor for the day	This should not be the bride or groom — pick a levelheaded family member or planner.
MEDIUM	☐ Do a final venue walkthrough	Check power outlets, parking, and vendor load-in access in person.
MEDIUM	☐ Pack for the honeymoon	Pack the day before the wedding — not the morning after.
MEDIUM	☐ Assemble an emergency kit (safety pins, stain remover, tailoring kit)	One named person should own this bag — not "someone" in general.
LOW	☐ Book grooming/salon appointments	Schedule 1-2 days before — not the morning of.
LOW	☐ Prepare final vendor payments in advance	Many vendors expect balance payment on the day — have it ready, not scrambled.

Backup & contingency essentials

Weather backup for outdoor events — confirm exactly what the venue's indoor/tent backup looks like, not just that one exists.

Backup vendor contacts — ask your planner or venue for 1-2 backup names per category in case of a last-minute no-show.

Travel insurance for destination weddings — good policies cover date changes and vendor cancellations, not just flights.

One printed copy of the timeline and vendor contacts — phones die and batteries run out; keep a paper copy with your point-of-contact.

After the Wedding Post-wedding tasks

The wedding is over; a handful of tasks still need closing out.

PRIORITY	TASK	PRO TIP
HIGH	☐ Register the marriage legally, if not done pre-wedding	Carry all required documents — processing timelines vary widely by state.
HIGH	☐ Send final payments and tips to vendors	Settle balances within the agreed window — it protects the relationship for future events.
HIGH	☐ Update legal documents if changing your name	Passport, bank and ID updates can take weeks — start as soon as documents are ready.
MEDIUM	☐ Send thank-you notes to guests	Aim for within 4–6 weeks of the wedding while it's still fresh.
MEDIUM	☐ Return any rented items	Confirm return deadlines with each rental vendor to avoid late fees.
MEDIUM	☐ Review and rate your vendors	Honest reviews help other couples — and good vendors remember loyal ones.
LOW	☐ Preserve the bridal outfit and bouquet, if desired	Professional preservation needs booking within the first few weeks.
LOW	☐ Order photo albums or prints	Don't wait too long — some photographers archive raw files after a set period.

