



# Wedding Wisdom

## You're Engaged: Now What?

(NAPSA)—If you're planning a wedding, you have lots of company. More than 2 million weddings occur every year. The good news is that tying the knot is a lot less daunting when you stay loose and break down the initial planning phase into steps:

### Step 1: Cap Spending

Before you start number crunching, set your priorities. Can you give up that string quartet in order to have nicer flowers? Is serving filet mignon at a four-course dinner more important than hiring an incredible photographer? Once you know what elements you can and can't live without, you'll have a much clearer idea of how to allocate your money. Try using tools such as the [WeddingChannel.com](http://WeddingChannel.com) budget tool for the typical breakdown on a wedding spending limit.

### Step 2: Your Wedding Style

An intimate beachside ceremony is a very different undertaking than a formal church wedding with 300 guests. That's why choosing a wedding style should be an important step in your planning process. Discuss the type of wedding you and your fiancé want to have. Talk about the size of the wedding, the season in which it will take place, the level of formality, the time of day and any themes you may be interested in.

### Step 3: Make The List

Between two families, two sets of friends and two groups of co-workers, guest lists can add up quickly—even if you've agreed to keep things small. Limiting the list to immediate family and then branching out in layers—aunts, uncles, close friends, first cousins—is a fair way to bring the number down. And remember, you can't choose a venue until you've



Photo Credit: Todd Rafalovich



**You can stay a lot looser when planning to tie the knot if you break down the initial planning phase into steps.**

decided on an approximate number of guests.

### Step 4: Save The Date

A good way to choose a date is by envisioning the time of year during which you'd like your wedding to take place. Take into consideration the weather and any themes you may have been leaning toward. Then choose two tentative dates and check the area city guide to ensure there won't be any major events that day that could make it difficult to find guest accommodations or reliable vendors.

### Step 5: Location, Location, Location

Once you've decided on two possible dates, a guest count and your ideal wedding style, it's time to start looking into locations. You can view prospective ceremony and reception sites by visiting the [WeddingChannel.com](http://WeddingChannel.com) local vendor directory, then start setting appointments to visit your favorites in person. Most locations will allow you a courtesy two-week "pencil hold" while you make your final decision.