



# Stress Free Wedding Guide



# *Table Of Content*

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3	Introduction
4	Does a Stress-Free Wedding Exist?
5	“Quiet Life” Weddings
6	Step 1: Getting Started
8	Step 2: Get Organized
10	Step 3: Make Decisions
13	Step 4: Prepare for the Big Day!
15	Step 5: Post-Wedding Tips
17	About The Candlewood Inn





## *Introduction*

Congratulations on your engagement!

These first steps on your wedding journey are exciting, but they can also feel stressful and overwhelming.

The good news: we have tips and strategies to make wedding planning fun.

Here are some of our favorites!





## *Does a Stress-Free Wedding Exist?*

Yes!

Many people feel overwhelmed by the sheer number of decisions involved in planning a wedding.

It can feel like a full-time job! But it can be a stress-free process if you follow two key mantras: pacing your planning decisions and embracing the process.

Wedding planning is a journey with inevitable highs and lows. But the end result is a spectacular day, marrying the love of your life, and celebrating with friends and family.

What could be better?

Read on for tips on how to enjoy the journey.





## “Quiet Life” Weddings

Having a stress-free wedding doesn't mean you have to sacrifice things that are important to you and your fiancé.

A recent trend toward “Quiet Life” weddings has some common themes that can be a part of any celebration, large or small.

1. **Build a relaxed schedule.** Don't pack your timeline too tightly. Have time buffers built in for time to simply relax and take in the day.
2. **Simplify!** Modern weddings only include traditions that are important to the couple. Don't want a receiving line? Hate the bouquet toss? Skip it!
3. **Focus on what you do want.** Make a short list of your must-haves and share them with your vendors and bridal party. And don't overthink details that won't make a real difference on the day.
4. **Plan for the weather.** Mother Nature happens. Make sure you have a weatherproof plan for your ceremony and reception and communicate it to your event team and bridal party.
5. **Celebrate!** When you reach the end of your wedding planning journey, shift from planning mode into celebration mode. Relax, drink in every moment, and simply enjoy.

Looking for more details? We have specifics!



## *Step 1: Getting Started*

### ***Initial Planning***

Begin by picturing your dream wedding together.

What is the overall mood? The setting? Time of year? What is most important to you? And what would upset you the most if you left it out? Do you have any deal-breakers? What vibe best represents the two of you as a couple?

Talk about your guest list, and convenient venue and hotel locations for your guests.

This overall vision will guide all of your planning decisions, from the venue to the decor, and having a clear idea of what is most important to you both will make decisions easier.

### ***Budgeting Basics***

Talking about finances can feel very unfun when dreaming up your perfect day, but creating a realistic budget is an absolute must.

When you allocate funds to key categories like venue, catering, attire, and entertainment, you can focus on these high-impact vendors and avoid overspending on trivial items.

Sticking to your budget will help to head off stressful financial conversations later.



## ***Timeline Creation***

The easiest way to de-stress planning is with a detailed timeline that spans from your engagement to the wedding day.

Mapping out - and spacing out - major milestones like booking the venue, booking vendors, sending invitations, and finalizing the guest list will help you visualize the whole process.

And don't forget to build in time for yourselves: schedule times for you and your partner to drop planning altogether and just focus on each other.





## *Step 2: Get Organized*

### ***Planning Tools***

No need to reinvent the wheel: Zola, WeddingWire and The Knot offer checklists, budget trackers, and vendor directories.

These tools help you stay organized, manage your budget, and keep track of all the details in one place. Pick one and stick with it!

### ***Checklist Creation***

Further break down your timeline with a checklist for each stage of planning.

Breaking down tasks into manageable steps will actually help you feel less overwhelmed.

And, once you have a list, you can always ask for backup!

Researching vendors, planning a bridal shower, and creating DJ playlists are all great tasks you can delegate to key members of your wedding party.



## *Document Management*

It is important to keep copies of your contracts and receipts in a dedicated wedding binder or digital folder.

Contracts in particular have a huge amount of detail including important payment dates that you will likely reference multiple times during planning.

Having everything in one place will save you time and reduce stress when you need to reference important information.







## *Step 3: Decision Time*

### *Choose the Venue*

Booking your venue can feel stressful because it's one of the most consequential decisions you will make. However, once you've made your selection, many of your other details will fall into place.

All-inclusive venues can streamline planning by offering everything onsite, eliminating logistical challenges, multiple vendors and costs.

You can keep your venue shopping stress-free by limiting your venue tours to a manageable number, and by carefully considering whose opinion you value (maybe it's just you and your fiancé!) and including only them on the tours.

Pay attention to every interaction with your venue:

were they responsive to your tour request? How did you feel on the tour? Did the overall vibe of the location match your wedding vision? Did they answer all of your questions?

The right venue will just feel right - but pay close attention to the service you receive before you book, and the transparency of the package and pricing. All of these interactions are good indicators of how the experience of working with this venue will be throughout the planning process.



## *Enlist Professional Help*

If your budget allows, hire or choose a venue that provides a professional planner and day-of coordinator.

During planning, an experienced, professional event planner will make all the difference.

They can help guide you through decisions such as menu planning and day-of timelines and also be your go-to person day-of.

Turning dreams into reality can be bumpy.

A professional can smooth this transition with ideas and solutions gathered from years of planning events.

And some of the best ideas aren't the most expensive.





## ***Vendor Selection***

You'll need a team of vendors for your wedding day.

The big three are a photographer, DJ and/or band and a florist.

Today many experienced vendors offer robust services such as floral + decor, photography + video, DJ + photo booth. Managing fewer vendors is always simpler and easier!

Aside from matching your budget and style (always choose vendors you feel comfortable with and who are responsive to you from day one), ensure your vendors carry appropriate damage and liability insurance.

Remember you are contracting with them directly, and insurance will cover you both should the worst (an accident, damage to the venue, etc) occur. \$1M of coverage is a good starting point, and vendors who don't have insurance should move to the bottom of your list.

## ***Make a Plan B***

No matter how carefully you plan, disaster can strike on your wedding day.

Having a Plan B mapped out will turn a disaster into a speed bump and keep your celebratory mood on track.

Things you should plan for include: rain backup, missing/damaged bridal party attire, unexpected guests (children, plus-one), traffic delays/late arrivals, hotel mix-ups.

Have a Plan B outlined, and then delegate to either a wedding party member or your event planner.





## *Step 4: Prepare for the Big Day!*

### ***Day-Of Plan***

Wedding planning stress can be replaced by wedding day jitters.

Butterflies are completely normal, so plan to give yourselves time and space to process your emotions as your wedding date approaches.

Set aside time for a massage, a yoga class, or just go for a walk.

Print copies and review your Day-Of timeline and checklist with your planner and bridal party so that everyone has all of the information, and you aren't the eye of the needle.

### ***Emergency Kit***

Prepare a wedding day emergency kit with items like safety pins, sewing kit, stain remover, pain relievers, band-aids, allergy medications, mints, and snacks.

Having an emergency kit on hand provides peace of mind and ensures you're prepared for any minor mishaps - and to dance all night!



### ***Focus on Your Fiance***

At the end of the day, you're not having a wedding just to plan a party: you're marrying the love of your life!

The last week of planning can be hectic, so schedule time out to focus one-on-one and reconnect as a couple.

Bonus! Your partner can help you stay grounded and connected to what really matters when stressful situations arise, and laugh off the crazy and unexpected things that are bound to happen.

You can also plan private moments day-of to maintain your connection, such as a first look or touch, private dinner for just the two of you (use your bridal suite!), exchanging vows privately pre-ceremony, and scheduling a private first dance before guests enter your ballroom.







## *Step 5: Post-Wedding Tips*

### ***Thank You Notes***

Thoughtful and timely thank you cards never go out of style.

Show your gratitude with a personalized note and plan to send them within three months of your wedding.

### ***Handling Clean-Up***

Plan ahead for the management of leftover food, decor, and rentals.

You can delegate perishable items such as your wedding cake topper to a family or a bridal party member.

Vendors such as florists, decorators and rental companies should take care of their own breakdown and clean-up, but check your contracts and plan accordingly.

### ***Honeymoon Planning***

A stress free honeymoon is one that works for you and your new spouse!

If you plan to depart immediately following your wedding day, have your passports, visas (if required), tickets, and all of the logistical details worked out well in advance.

Many couples opt to take their honeymoon at a later date, making planning less stressful.

Do make sure you have plenty of downtime on your honeymoon.

Don't feel pressured to plan a trip right away - do what works best for you - and then enjoy!

You can also create a honeymoon registry (The Knot offers a good one) so that guests can contribute directly to your dream vacation.

### ***Final Thoughts***

Your wedding day is a celebration of love and commitment.

By following the tips in this guide, you can minimize stress and focus on what truly matters—cherishing each moment and creating beautiful memories.

Remember, the journey to your wedding day should be as joyful as the day itself.







## *About The Candlewood Inn*

Set like a jewel on the shores of the largest lake in Connecticut, Candlewood Inn is an exclusive venue that offers panoramic water views and a spectacular setting for private events.

The Inn underwent a million dollar update and expansion before opening exclusively for private events. Crisply styled for hosting elegant gatherings, the classic main dining room seats up to 250 guests and offers lake views through every one of its 8-foot-high picture windows.

### **Ready to get started?**

[Contact our team](#) to discuss your vision!

### **Need more inspo and planning guides?**

[Visit our Planning page](#) for more helpful information to get you closer to bringing your dream wedding celebration to life.



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