



# Invitation Timeline & Checklist

for Catalog Designs

## Get Started

### INSPIRATION

- \_\_\_\_\_ Make a list of words that you want to inspire your wedding, such as:
  - styles (i.e. vintage, beachy, eco-friendly)
  - feelings (i.e. cozy, luxurious, energetic)
  - colors (i.e. peacock blue, metallics, greens)
  - themes (i.e. sci-fi, animals, library)
  - objects (i.e. roses, seashells, corks)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Create a “wedding ideas” board on Pinterest. Search Pinterest using your list of words to find Pins that inspire you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Once you have a bunch of Pins, find a common thread. What did you Pin the most? This is your **concept**. Write down a list or a paragraph that details your concept and why you like that concept, and keep it with your planning supplies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Delete any Pins that don't fit the concept.
- \_\_\_\_\_ When you need to make a wedding decision, go back to your inspiration board and the paragraph you wrote. Reread it and decide if it fits with your concept.

### DETAILS

- \_\_\_\_\_ Start your guest list.

## 8-10 months out

### DETAILS

- \_\_\_\_\_ Finalize your date and location. Make sure they fit with your concept.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Decide if you're sending out save-the-dates. Save-the-dates aren't mandatory, but if you're having a weekday, holiday, or destination wedding, your guests will appreciate the heads-up.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Finalize your guest list. Make sure you have current addresses for everyone.

### SAVE THE DATES

- \_\_\_\_\_ Browse save-the-date options for designs you like that match your concept. They don't have to match your invitations, and many people choose more informal save-the-dates.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Order your save-the-dates. Be sure to include the date, the location, and your names!

## 6 Months Out

### INVITATIONS

- \_\_\_\_\_ Start your invitation research. Browse websites and blogs, and Pin any ideas on Pinterest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make your stationery budget (also include the cost of stamps, day-of stationery, and thank-you cards). Don't forget what you already spent on your save-the-dates.

\_\_\_\_\_ Order samples or sample kits from companies you're seriously considering.

#### SAVE THE DATES

\_\_\_\_\_ Mail your save-the-dates.

## 4 Months Out

#### INVITATIONS

\_\_\_\_\_ Pick your invitation design.

\_\_\_\_\_ Pick your customizations:

- which colors do you want?
- which fonts?
- which paper?

This is where a sample kit comes in handy! If you want to tweak the design in some way, ask. Working with a small designer is the better choice over a large invitation mill if you want more options to customize.

\_\_\_\_\_ Order your invitations

\_\_\_\_\_ Respond to all proofs and correspondence from your designer. Once your order is processed, you'll enter the proofing stage. Proofing can take a day or several days depending on your schedule. Remember that your response time to the designer will affect turnaround time.

## 3 Months Out

#### INVITATIONS

\_\_\_\_\_ Proofread your invitations. Be sure you've proofed the spelling, dates, times, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ Have at least two other people proofread your invitations. Reprints are expensive!

\_\_\_\_\_ Approve your final invitations for printing.

## 10 weeks Out

#### INVITATIONS

\_\_\_\_\_ Your invitations should arrive in the mail. You should get tracking information to see the progress of your shipment.

\_\_\_\_\_ Assemble one invitation set first and ask the post office to weigh it so you know how much postage each one needs.

\_\_\_\_\_ Assemble the rest of your invitations. Unless you've ordered assembly, your invites will come as separate pieces. You'll need to stuff them, stamp them, and address them (if you didn't order addressing service). My recommendation? Pick something on Netflix to watch and make it a date (just keep the food away from the invites!)

## 6-8 Weeks Out

### INVITATIONS

- \_\_\_\_\_ Time to mail those invites! Drop them off at the post office; don't just put them in your mailbox. If you want the envelopes to stay cleaner, ask that they be hand-canceled.

## 5 Weeks Out

### DAY OF STATIONERY

- \_\_\_\_\_ Start your day-of stationery. Decide which (if any) you want: programs, menus, escort/place cards, signs, thank-you cards.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Decide if you want them to match your invitations. It's nice to have continuity, but you may want to explore other options.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Start drafting the wording for each day-of piece you're ordering. Even if you don't have all the wording set, send your designer a draft so you can start to see how they will look.

## 3 weeks out

### DAY OF STATIONERY

- \_\_\_\_\_ This is your RSVP deadline; start collecting any missing RSVPs! You'll not only need the final guest count for other vendors, but this will tell you exactly how many day-of items you need. You can also make sure you've got everyone's escort cards ready, if you're using them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Finalize the design for your day-of stationery.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Confirm things like the menu with your caterer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Send the final wording to your designer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Proofread your day of stationery.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have at least two other people proofread your day of stationery.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Approve your day of stationery.

## 1 week out

- \_\_\_\_\_ Your day-of stationery should arrive! Follow the shipment with your tracking. This is where using FedEx and UPS comes in handy: their shipments are 100% guaranteed. I always use them, but if you're using another service, be sure to request courier shipping.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you ordered programs that require assembly, you'll need time to assemble them.

## Wedding Day

- \_\_\_\_\_ Enjoy the day!