

ULTIMATE BUDGET WEDDING GUIDE

Weddings are expensive!

The average wedding in the U.S. costs \$30,000. Planning a wedding on a budget can be a major headache. Believe it or not, **it IS possible to have a fabulous wedding on a tight budget.**

Whether your budget is \$20,000 or \$2,000, here are some cost-cutting ideas that will help you to manage your money so you don't blow all of it on one day.

THE RECEPTION VENUE

- \$\$\$\$\$ - Choose a venue that offers a discounted deal with an all-inclusive package.
- \$\$\$\$ - Pick a venue that allows you to choose your own (*reasonably priced*) caterer.
- \$\$\$ - Select a budget-friendly venue.
- \$\$ - Have the reception at a VFW.
- \$ - Know anyone who lives on a farm or out in the country? Have the reception at their house.

FOOD

- \$\$\$\$\$ - Have a buffet.
- \$\$\$\$ - Buy a small cake for the cake cutting and use a sheet cake to serve to the guests.
- \$\$\$ - Choose your own (*affordably priced*) caterer.
- \$\$ - Offer appetizers only.
- \$ - Cater the event yourself or have a trusted friend/relative cater the event.

ALCOHOL

- \$\$\$\$\$ - Fully host the bar at a reasonably priced venue.
- \$\$\$\$ - Offer a limited host bar up to a certain time frame (*until 9:00 p.m., for example*).
- \$\$\$ - Provide a limited host bar up to a certain dollar amount (*\$500 or \$1,000, for example*).
- \$\$ - Limit the beverage options to beer and wine only – no hard liquor.
- \$ - Offer a cash bar or skip the booze entirely.

PHOTOGRAPHY

- \$\$\$\$\$ - Choose an inexpensive photographer.
- \$\$\$\$ - Select one of the more basic packages that the photographer offers.
- \$\$\$ - Limit the amount of time the photographer is there if he or she charges by the hour.
- \$\$ - Create your own “open” photo booth instead of renting an expensive closed photo booth.
- \$ - Hire a talented friend whom you trust to do the photography.

OFFICIANT

- \$\$\$\$ - Pick a reasonably priced religious officiant.
- \$\$\$\$ - Choose a non-religious officiant to avoid the extra cost of premarital counseling.
- \$\$\$ - Find an officiant who charges by the hour and have a short ceremony.
- \$\$ - Ask a family friend to perform the ceremony at a discount.
- \$ - Have an ordained friend or relative perform the ceremony for free or a low cost.

TRANSPORTATION

- \$\$\$\$\$ - Rent a limo for a limited amount of time (*if they charge by the hour*).
- \$\$\$\$ - Rent a party bus.
- \$\$\$ - Rent a sports car.
- \$\$ - Borrow a sporty car from a friend or relative (*this could be their gift to you*).
- \$ - Drive your own car.

FLOWERS

- \$\$\$\$\$ - Choose inexpensive flowers, such as hydrangeas or baby's breath.
- \$\$\$\$ - Opt for fake flowers instead of real ones.
- \$\$\$ - Buy fake, used flowers at a bridal consignment shop.
- \$\$ - Create your own floral arrangements.
- \$ - Skip flowers entirely, or only have a small amount of them.

THE DRESS

- \$\$\$\$\$ - Purchase your dress on sale at a reasonably priced bridal boutique.
- \$\$\$\$ - Buy a dress that fits so you can skip the alterations. Do the bustling yourself.
- \$\$\$ - Rent your dress from an online retailer.
- \$\$ - Purchase a prom dress, bridesmaid dress, or other formal white dress.
- \$ - Borrow a dress from a friend or relative for free.

BRIDAL HAIR AND MAKEUP

\$\$\$\$\$ - Go to a budget-friendly salon.

\$\$\$ - Get clip-in extensions instead of permanent ones.

\$\$\$ - Schedule an appointment with a cosmetics counter.

\$\$ - Skip any overly expensive headbands or hairpieces.

\$ - Have a friend do your hair and/or makeup.

ITEMS YOU MAY WANT TO CUT FROM YOUR BUDGET ENTIRELY

- The candy buffet or dessert bar
- Videography
- Aisle runner
- Wedding favors
- Champagne pour
- Save the dates (*just go with formal invitations instead*)
- Elaborate décor
- Extra guests or plus ones
- An overly fancy rehearsal dinner
- Wedding programs
- Flower petals (*for the flower girl*)
- A cake topper
- Groom's cake
- Garter

WEDDING BUDGET

For the Bride	Budget	Cost
Dress		
Dress alterations		
Bustling of dress		
Veil		
Hairstyle		
Hair pieces (<i>headband, etc...</i>)		
Makeup for the day of		
Makeup trial run		
Manicure		
Pedicure		
Waxing		
Tanning		
Facial		
Shoes		
Jewelry		
Wedding ring		
Total		

For the Groom	Budget	Cost
Tux rental		
Shoes		
Haircut		
Wedding ring		
Total		

Ceremony	Budget	Cost
Event space rental		
Chairs		
Music / audio equipment		
Pre-marital counseling		
Aisle runner		
Flowers & decorations		
Ring bearer pillow		
Flower girl basket & petals		
Bouquets		
Boutonnieres		
Total		

Reception	Budget	Cost
Event space rental		
Food (<i>dinner & appetizers</i>)		
Cake		
Alcohol		
Flowers		
Decorations		
Table numbers		
Seating chart		
Guest book		
Bridesmaid gifts		
Groomsman gifts		
DJ		
Security		
Tips for Staff		
Total		

Other	Budget	Cost
Transportation (<i>limo, etc.</i>)		
Photography		
Videography		
Save the date cards		
Formal invitations		
Total		

Other pre and post-wedding expenses	Budget	Cost
Engagement photos		
Bridal shower (<i>food, games, décor</i>)		
Bachelorette party		
Rehearsal dinner		
Honeymoon		
Total		

	Budget	Cost
Total		

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