

New  
Hampshire

# Bride & Groom

Quarterly guide to the perfect wedding



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Hampshire

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Quarterly guide to the perfect wedding

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# Inject fun personality into a wedding ceremony and reception

When planning a wedding, you'll receive plenty of advice via to-do lists in bridal magazines, from friends and coworkers who've already been through the wedding process and even from professionals in the industry who have helped many couples achieve their "I dos."

The advice might feel a bit overwhelming, but most brides and grooms figure out how to sift through the stories of wedding successes and disasters to personalize all the final touches on their special day. By showcasing their personalities through different aspects of the wedding, guests will remember the special day for years to come. Here are some ways to inject your personality into a wedding ceremony and reception:

♥ **Tell or show your story.** Every couple has the "how we met" and "how we got engaged" stories, and often they can be incorporated quite easily into the ceremony or the reception. For example, if you met at a sporting event, consider using sports paraphernalia as table centerpieces. Or if he proposed in a beautiful field of wildflowers, incorporate wildflowers into the decorations for the ceremony or the bouquets held by the bridesmaids. A couple of ways to tell personal stories are with a small write-up in the wedding program or a picture slideshow during the reception.



♥ **Incorporate personal details.** Every bride has a style. Some brides create an elegant wedding, while others prefer the edgy urban style. Some brides want an outdoorsy look to their weddings, and some think the vintage look matches their personalities perfectly. No matter your style, look for ways to incorporate that style in the details of the wedding. For example, start off with your wedding invitations. Invitations by Dawn has laser-cut wedding invitations to match your personality. Elegant lace, romantic flowers, creative fonts and delicate cutout shapes allow brides to hint at the wedding theme and show off their personality from the very beginning. All wedding invitations can be personalized online with fonts and colors, allowing a couple to match the wedding style

perfectly. In a rush? Invitations by Dawn can process and deliver wedding invitations in a week.

♥ **Write your own vows.** Personalized vows allow a couple to share with each other, and their guests, how much they love each other, and how they plan to spend the rest of their lives together. The Internet has many examples to help a couple get started, and your guests will be impressed by the creativity and individuality that goes into the vows as you pledge your love to each other.

♥ **Play some favorite tunes.** If you're planning a religious ceremony, ask the minister performing the wedding if there are any restrictions on music played. Churches typically will ask that music performed or played during the wedding ceremony be religious or classical, but the music played during the exit march can often be secular. For example, if the couple loves Star Wars, they could exit the church while the Imperial March is played. If the church is not open to secular music at all, another option is to play a favorite secular tune during the grand march into the reception venue.

The personal elements will have everyone talking about your wedding for many anniversaries to come. (BPT)

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# Getting hitched at home? Things you should think about first

(BPT) - Deciding to get married is one of the biggest and most important decisions many people will ever make. According to The Knot and WeddingChannel.com, the average wedding costing more than \$28,000 - the cost of a new car or a down payment on a home, so your next biggest decision may be figuring out how to pay for it. With that in mind, many couples are opting to tie the knot at home. Although hosting your special day in your own backyard can cut costs and give you more flexibility, you must address some critical details before you walk down the aisle.

**♥ Beginning basics**

First things first - make sure you have enough space to accommodate everyone. If you need to make extra space, get creative. Did you know you can fit more guests at round tables than rectangular or square ones? You can also invest in a short-term storage locker, which can temporarily house excess furniture as well as valuables you don't want left out among wandering and rowdy guests. You'll also want to check into local noise ordinances, which might require a permit to host a loud party. You might need a permit to park cars along your street, too.

**♥ Prepared and protected**

In addition to these important basic details, couples need to make sure they are protected if anything goes wrong on their big day. Joe Vahey, vice president and product manager at Erie Insurance, suggests happy couples think about the following three key insurance issues when planning a wedding at their home or someone else's to make sure they're prepared for the unexpected:

**♥ Personal property**

Keep valuable wedding gifts protected. Depending on how many guests attend your event, you could end up with thousands of dollars' worth of gifts. Since personal property like this is covered by your homeowners insurance policy, make sure to talk to your agent. They'll look into your policy's personal property limit - it's usually a percentage of the value of your home - to ensure everything is covered.

**♥ Liability issues**

It's important to make sure you're protected from liability, too. If your uncle falls while doing the chicken dance or your cousin trips while diving to catch the bouquet, you ▶



this extra protection will provide you and your future spouse with needed peace of mind on a hectic day.

♥ Rings

Wedding rings are an important part of the ceremony, a symbol of your special bond. Consider "scheduling" the rings rather than relying on the blanket coverage provided by a standard policy, which may have a value limit. A scheduled ring has additional coverage up to the specific value of that ring, so you won't have to worry about replacing a lost or stolen ring.

♥ Looking good

Once the behind-the-scenes details have been addressed, it's time to pull back the curtain and focus on putting on a spectacular show. Properly welcome guests by getting your landscape in tip-top shape and making sure to clean your house top to bottom a week before the wedding. Consider hiring professionals to lessen your responsibilities leading up to the big day. Keep wedding decor and flowers in line with the look and feel of the home. Getting married at a beach house on the lake? Then, stick to a more casual, understated feel. If you're hosting a black-tie gala at a friend's mansion, don't be afraid to embrace elegance and opulence.

Regardless of how you choose to celebrate your big day, planning ahead to ensure you're prepared and protected is one way to enjoy it worry-free, with the one you love.

could end up in trouble. While some liability coverage is included on standard homeowners policies, you'll want to review the liability limits with your agent in order to assure you have

enough coverage. Additionally, it's always wise to consider adding an inexpensive personal catastrophe liability policy (sometimes called an umbrella policy) to your insurance. Having

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# Make your big day as unique as you are

(BPT) - Weddings are steeped in tradition - no matter whom you are or where you live. But what if you're not interested in wearing the same dress your mother did, getting married in the same location your sister did or wearing something blue?

Don't worry, you're not alone. Plenty of brides search for ways to make their special day as unique as they are. Here are five ways to put your own special spin on this classic tradition.

♥ **A guest book you'll use.** Signing the guest book is a common tradition at most weddings; you've probably signed a few in your lifetime. After the wedding is over, however, this priceless keepsake often disappears into a box never to be seen again. Break from tradition by creating a guest book you'll actually use. Take a trip to the book store with your partner and browse the coffee table books. Once you find one that interests both of you, claim it as your guest book. Your wedding guests can sign their names in the margins and afterwards you'll be left with a permanent, functional guest book to display for visitors and friends.

♥ **Dance under the stars.** Looking to create a one-of-a-kind wedding? Don't rent the



same ballroom as all of your friends. Host your reception outdoors. You can rent a dance floor

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dance on a traditional wood floor while looking up at the stars - what could be more original than that? Don't forget to rent a tent so that weather doesn't dampen the mood. You can find more unique flooring ideas at RentalHQ.com, where you can locate your local rental store.

♥ **Treasure the memories.** Get your guests involved in the event by placing blank cards and pens at each seat location. Ask your guests to write about their favorite memory of you and/or your spouse. Collect all of these cards and turn them into a scrapbook for a treasured keepsake.

♥ **Prepare a menu that is uniquely you.** Chocolate fountains were once unique and elegant, but now they're commonplace. Don't despair, though, because there are plenty of unique edible snack options you can include in your special day. If you're getting married in the blistering heat, rent a snow cone machine to offer your guests some sweet relief. If you and your spouse are big movie buffs or your wedding has a Hollywood theme, rent a popcorn machine to complete the look. And for the bride who's still a kid at heart, nothing captures that better than renting an authentic cotton candy machine.

♥ **Find the color that suits you.** Maybe wearing something blue doesn't suit you, but perhaps you're not too wild about black and white either. At many venues, though, these colors are the only choices you have when it comes to tablecloths and napkins. Remember, you don't have to settle; you can provide your own materials simply by renting them. This opens up a color palette of limitless options. If you are planning a fall wedding, look for napkins that reflect the colors of the leaves. Did you meet in college? Choose linens in your school's colors. Whatever shade speaks to you, you can find it and give your wedding a look no one will expect.

Keep the tradition, but be uniquely you with options limited only by your own imagination. To learn more about what you can rent and how renting can help you create the wedding you've always wanted, visit RentalHQ.com.



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# Shedding pounds for the wedding

Michelle McCormick, personal trainer at Life Time - The Healthy Way of Life Company knows the pressure brides and grooms often feel. She understands that all eyes are on the couple from the moment they walk down the aisle until the last dance of the night.

"When I work with brides and/or grooms-to-be, I tell them it's usually best to start thinking about their health and fitness goals about three months before the wedding day to allow plenty of time to set goals, establish a regular routine and adjust to a healthier diet," says McCormick. "Crash diets or extreme exercise programs are not something I ever recommend given the risks for injury or illness before the big day." McCormick's four-week plan broken up in increments.

### Weeks one to four:

#### Nutrition and exercise education

Focus on creating new and healthy habits. Nutrition is key when trying to lose weight, decrease body fat, or increase your overall health. Begin with a fitness program that incorporates weight training and cardio intervals. Start with two or three days of weight training, two or three days of cardio and one day of Pilates or Yoga. McCormick recommends couples lay out a nutrition plan that consists of carbohydrates,



protein and healthy fats with each meal between 300 and 600 calories.

Carbs should mostly consist of fruits, vegetables and complex carbs such as lima beans, squash, sweet potatoes and black eyed peas. Proteins should be lean and free of hormones and antibiotics whenever possible. Try chicken, almonds, turkey, fish, flank steak or even tofu. Make sure to get monosaturated and polyunsaturated fats, known as "good fats" into your diet. Incorporate olive oil, sunflower oil, coconut milk, avocados, soybean oil or flaxseed oil to your recipes for a healthier meal.

### Weeks five to eight: Creating momentum for your wedding day

In this phase, McCormick suggests focusing on switching up exercise and cardiovascular routines. Working with a certified personal

trainer might be a good step - or for those on a tight budget, group fitness classes are a great way to shake up a workout routine. Try personal training or group fitness one or two days every other week and continue with a healthy nutrition schedule. Exercise should include one to two weight-training exercises per body part once or twice a week. Try to continually switch up the amount of weight and the number of repetitions to help stimulate change within your body. Continue this routine two to three days per week and add in another day of Pilates or Yoga. Focus on having three to five meals throughout the day.

### Weeks nine to 12:

#### Sleep, relax, and enjoy

In the final weeks before the wedding, it is important to continue the fitness and nutrition routines you have developed over the last few months. However, a new focus on rest and relaxation is key as the big day approaches and life can start to feel a bit stressful. Try taking a Yoga class in the evenings to help you sleep better at night and use a sauna for 10 minutes at least three days a week. Remember, you can eat well and exercise perfectly but without sleep, stretching and resting, your adrenals have a higher chance of not functioning efficiently.

At the end of four weeks, brides and grooms will feel great and be ready to face the world as a married couple. (BPT)

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# Turn your fantasy fairytale wedding into reality

Every girl dreams of her fantasy wedding. It usually includes a Prince Charming standing next to her at the altar, saying "I do," while surrounded by friends and family in a fairytale atmosphere.

Now it's time to turn that fantasy dream into reality. And while Prince Charming has been replaced with Mr. Right, the rest of the fairytale doesn't have to change. Every bride should feel like a princess, and here are some ways to pull off the special wedding:

♥ **The dress:** The right wedding dress and accessories can make any bride look like a princess. A strand of pearls around the neck for a Cinderella look or a long, decorative braid down one side of the head completes the Rapunzel look. Many brides love the look of a simple tiara woven into an elegant hairstyle. And the dress can have a full or puffy skirt, or long flowing tresses to really bring out the princess style. Disney also has a collection of designer princess cut dresses based on several of the Disney princesses.

♥ **The invitations:** Set the tone for your fairytale wedding right from the start with Disney Princess Wedding Invitations from Invitations by Dawn. The collection features eight elegant princess invitations inspired by Ariel, Sleeping Beauty, Rapunzel, Belle, Cinderella, Jasmine, Tiana and



Snow White. You'll love the deep embossing, the shimmer paper and the raised print that looks

like an invitation from royalty. The flowers and motifs will capture the eyes of your guests and evoke a sense of fairytale nostalgia, having them anticipating the wedding itself.

♥ **The decorations:** Shimmery gossamer, twinkle lights and decorative candles provide beautiful touches to help make the fairytale a reality when it comes to your wedding and reception. If you are a crafty person, use DIY crafting sites like Pinterest to find centerpiece and table decoration ideas you can make yourself. Also ask your florist and cake decorator if they have any suggestions on decorating your reception and the wedding hall in a fairytale theme. They may suggest a fountain centerpiece, or creating a forest backdrop behind the cake to help enhance the theme.

If you've been dreaming about your wedding for many years, you probably already have some ideas for those special romantic touches that will make your wedding memorable and special. Share those ideas with the wedding specialist helping you plan your special day, and let the magic happen. Your guests will be awed by how you pulled together the entire fairytale theme, from the invitations to the special gifts they'll take home to remember your special day. (BPT)

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# Hosting a bridal party? Clever food shortcuts big on taste, low on stress

It's that time of year - bridal showers, are likely dotting your calendar. If you're the lucky host of one of these milestone events, you might feel excitement paired with a bit of trepidation as you start the party-planning process. The good news is, there are some simple ways to be the "hostess with the mostest" and limit stress at the same time.

### 1. Make a plan

Sit down and brainstorm your ideas. Record them on paper or electronically. Once you have a list of themes, decor, food and activities, you can start narrowing your options down to what really aligns with the guest of honor's tastes and preferences.

Remember, you want the party to reflect you since you're the host, but make sure it speaks to the person whom the party is being hosted for.

### 2. Accept help

Planning a party can be time-consuming and costly. If the mother of the bride

or best friend of the mother-to-be offers to help, don't turn her away. The best way to ensure you get the help you need and no one oversteps boundaries is to assign specific tasks. For example, assign someone to make a dessert, plan an activity or stop at the store to pick up colored napkins and cutlery.

### 3. Determine a menu

The warmer months beg for fresh party fare, so be sure to highlight healthy foods and everyday favorites in your menu. Salads, fresh veggies and fruit are light and versatile. Furthermore, you can highlight the best of your region's seasonal produce by visiting your local co-op or farmers market to select items that were locally grown and made.

### 4. Think dips

With your menu focused on lighter, fresh fare, you need to add extras to complement those items, and nothing works better than a classic variety of dips.

Luckily, you don't have to rely on fatty sour cream-based dips anymore. Consider




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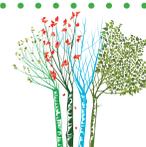
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#### 5. Decide on drinks

Make sure you provide a variety of drink options for guests, especially if you're hosting your event outdoors. Always stock water, but be sure to add other beverages to your menu also.

For example, lemonade and sweet tea is perfect for afternoon parties. A popular trend is to select a specialized drink to serve - for example, you might serve pink rose tea for the gal expecting a baby girl or create a tropical concoction for your friend who will be honeymooning in Hawaii. No matter the type of bridal party you are hosting, a few trendy touches and clever food shortcuts will wow guests and keep them raving long after it has ended. Above all else, have fun and enjoy these special moments with loved ones because the memories will last a lifetime. (BPT)

## Quick tips

**Accessorizing the new statement neckline:** Remember when strapless was the standard neckline for brides? Those days are gone! The new go-to neckline is all about illusion, covering more of the bride's décolletage with sheer lace, net, or tulle. Since this neckline is such a statement-maker, you don't want your bridal bling (specifically, your earrings) competing with it. So ditch the chandeliers and choose something a bit more dainty, like pearl or diamond posts, or delicate drop earrings.

**Get it in Black & White:** To ensure your wedding photos are everything you dreamed of and more, ask your photographer to print a handful of your favorite shots in black and white, as well as color. Black and white wedding photos are forever timeless, and display beautifully throughout the newlywed home.

**Do a wedding day style test run:** You know to bring your veil, shoes, and accessories along with you to your final wedding dress fitting. But don't forget the blooms! Ask your florist to create a sample bouquet for the final fitting, so you can see what you'll look like, head-to-toe, as a beautiful bride when you walk the white aisle. This will allow you to make minor tweaks before the big day, so that your dream bridal vision is executed to perfection.

**Don't forget the lips:** One of the biggest blunders a bride can make on her wedding day is to forget to touch up her pretty pout. A bare lip in wedding photos just isn't a good look, so make sure to keep lip liner, lipstick, and gloss on hand... and use it.



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# 3 invitation styles guaranteed to 'wow' guests

When it comes to planning a wedding, you have a lot of details to consider. Invitations, however, merit extra attention. The perfect wedding invitation doesn't just excite guests about your event, it leaves them guessing at the themes, colors and other surprises that await them on your big day.

"As the first thing your guests see in relation to your wedding, an invitation really sets the tone for your entire event's style and personality," says April Hallett, creative director for Invitations by Dawn, an online wedding invitation specialty retailer. "Some of today's hottest wedding invitation trends incorporate unique materials and artistic styles into the design to perfectly reflect the couple's personality."

Hallett predicts three wedding invitation trends will gain momentum in 2014 and are a great way to make your invitation stand out from the crowd.

## 1. Burlap wedding invitations

Whether you adore all things natural or love to live the country life, burlap is big when it comes to wedding invitations. A burlap background with elegant or bold printing takes rustic style to new heights. Burlap is per-



fect for a Western, vintage or nature-inspired wedding themes.

## 2. Lace wedding invitations

If your goal is sheer elegance, nothing makes clearer statement than a lace wedding invitation. Try adding a delicate lace border to your invitation, or boldly place a lace applique surrounding both of your names. Delicate scrolling fonts are a perfect pairing to lace invitations, conveying a tone of grace, style and sophistication.

## 3. Art deco wedding invitations

With the recent release of the new "Great

Gatsby" movie, America is falling in love with art deco styles all over again. If you gravitate toward strong colors, geometric shapes and bold lines, an art deco wedding invitation might be ideal for you. Look for invitations featuring clean lines, sharp shapes and visually stunning patterns.

"No matter what you select for your wedding invitation, make sure that it speaks to you and your partner," says Hallett. "Unique materials and specialty designs are just some of the ways that you can create an invitation as special as you both are." (BPT)

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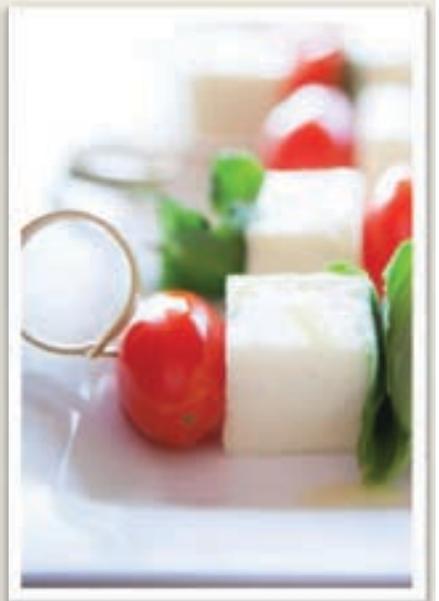
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