

CHICAGO BRIDE

10 Wedding Mistakes to Avoid by Melissa Phillips

Simply Perfect by Melissa

From the wrong date to the wrong skivvies, just about any mix-up can make your dream day turn into a nightmare. So before you jump into the chaos of wedding planning, keep in mind some mistakes you can live without making.

1. **Set a clear budget before planning:** Have a clearly defined budget. Based on that, then decide how many people to invite and the location for the wedding. Choosing an estimated guest count and/or signing on at a venue can lead to some surprises dollar amounts if this is not thought about ahead of time.
2. **Interview for comparison:** Couples get excited about the first vendor they interview and contract immediately. Even if they seem like the perfect fit, look at one or two more just so you have a basis of comparison. You never know what's out there until you look.
3. **Don't book solely on price:** Some things are too good to be true. We all have a budget to maintain, and a good deal is hard to pass up. Do your research and make sure you're clear on what you're getting for the quoted price. If the price may seem like a steal...make sure the quality is there, too.
4. **Time it right:** Most brides and grooms have never been married, so they don't know what is realistic in terms of timing throughout the day. If you are creating your own timeline, make sure to run it past all of your vendors to be sure they're able to work with the timing you have outlined. Travel, formal pictures, and dinner service are often not timed properly which can lead to problems on your wedding day.
5. **Small details:** Think through your day step by step. There are little things that are often left out of the grand plan: getting everyone to the church and then back, who is giving toasts, who's responsible for collecting all of your personal items at the end of the evening, how are you getting back to your final location for the evening, etc. With all of the big things to plan for, some of the small, yet equally important things, are forgotten about and can cause some logistical problems.
6. **Formal Pictures:** Make sure to take some time to think about all the formal pictures you want on your wedding day ahead of time. Your photographer most likely has some standard ones that he/she will take, but having a complete list with a few family members designated to help gather people will make the process go quicker and smoother. This

will also help to keep the pictures to those listed versus people adding them on the spot...and dragging out the pictures.

7. **Miscalculating reception costs:** tax and gratuity is often overlooked when setting your budget. Keep in mind the "price per person" fee listed on package information from a venue is the base price. Tax and gratuity still need to be added on which can increase the price by up to 35%...this is a big chunk of money to leave out.
8. **Alterations:** Be sure to have all undergarments purchased and with you when you have your dress fitting. Items such as bras, Spanx, etc will effect the way the dress is altered. Equally important are your shoes. A seamstress cannot complete a hem or bustle properly without your shoes. If you plan to change your shoes later in the evening...make sure they are the same height as your original shoe or else say goodbye to the bottom of your dress.
9. **Transportation:** If you plan to travel around to multiple photo locations in a major city, get a vehicle that will not only fit you and your bridal party comfortably, but also your photographer(s) and videographer(s). They most likely will not be able to follow the bridal car and then leave their car unattended on city streets. You will get better coverage by including them anyway.
10. **Emcee:** If your hired entertainment is also your emcee, make sure they have the phonetics of anyone's names they will be introducing. You should also be clear with them on how to handle song request or impromptu speeches.

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