

# CHICAGO BRIDE

## The Busy Woman's Guide to Wedding Planning

### 1. Prioritize

The easiest way to cut down on the planning process is to reduce the number of things to plan. Prioritize what you and your future spouse really want for the wedding. Do the invitations need to reflect the latest innovations in origami? Are programs really necessary? Weddings are pretty commonplace, after all -- most people know what's going to happen. Not only will this save you time, but it will save you money, too.

### 2. Register Online

Online registries are all the rage these days, reflecting the needs and lifestyles of modern couples. Avoid spending your precious weekend in the aisles of Bed Bath & Beyond and create a wedding gift registry at [CardAvenue.com](http://CardAvenue.com). The site allows you to select gift cards from hundreds of favorite retailers, restaurants and even airlines. It's as easy as creating a registry, selecting the cards, and sharing the link with friends. Done and done!

### 3. Delegate

People close to you enjoy being part of your big day, so let them! I relied heavily on my mom during planning and she was thrilled to be involved. Similarly, a good friend of mine asked me to set up her reception space while she prepared herself for the aisle. Granted, her meticulous instructions took time to create, but ultimately it allowed her to focus on what's most important - getting ready for the ceremony.

### 4. Get Pinning

The days of shopping for wedding magazines and scouring wedding websites are over, thanks to [Pinterest](https://www.pinterest.com). Ideas ranging from the highly traditional to the totally off-the-wall are all available in one easy-to-use website. Better yet, there are several DIY ideas that help you stay within budget and make your day truly unique. No time for DIY? Refer to tip 3 - that's what bridesmaids are for!

### 5. Go All-Inclusive

Depending on your budget, couples might find it easier to select a venue that offers access to music, catering, rooms to get ready in, and all the other details that make wedding planning chaotic. The all-inclusive convenience will likely jack up the price of the venue, but if you can afford it you'll save a lot of time.

### 6. Keep it Simple

Avoid pouring over dress styles and let your girls select their own dresses in your preferred color palette. Ditch the formal dinner in favor of a buffet to bypass seating arrangements and dish preferences. And finally, make the reception as carefree as possible -- the big moment is over and it's time to relax and enjoy time with your guests.

## **7. Think Small**

It's a fact of life -- it's much easier to organize a small group of people than it is a large one. Keeping the guest list small has multiple benefits, not the least of which is saving you money. After the wedding, send a marriage announcement to everyone in your extended network, thanking them for their well wishes.

## **8. Stay Local**

From food to flowers, keeping your vendor selections local will reduce the headache associated with coordinating out-of-town services. It's much easier to have a friend swing by a shop to pick something up than it is to order a last-minute necessity and hope it gets where it needs to be on time.

*Kendal Perez is a frugal fashionista and bargain shopper who helps fellow shopaholics find hassle-free ways to save money. As the deals expert for [FreeShipping.org](http://FreeShipping.org), Kendal has the resources to be an extreme couponer but prefers a less complicated approach to staying in-budget. Kendal has been quoted in such media outlets as CNN Money, TIME Moneyland, FOX, ABC, NPR and Kiplinger Personal Finance. For savings tips and more information, visit [HassleFreeSavings.com](http://HassleFreeSavings.com).*