

# First 5 Things To Do After Getting *Engaged*



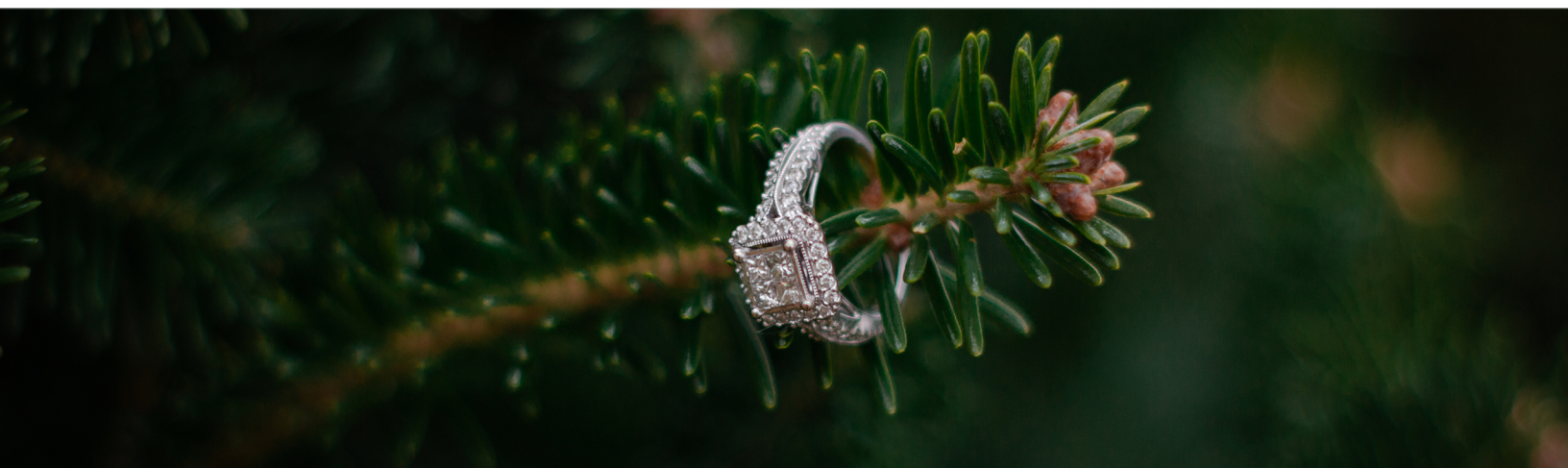
MAIN STREET PHOTOGRAPHY



*Step 1.*

# Soak it all in...

Don't get overwhelmed with decisions that first day. You can go to sleep tonight without knowing what color your tablecloths will be and whether you will rent or buy them. Take time to enjoy each other's company and relish in the fact that you're finally engaged! No matter how short your engagement, there is still time to enjoy it. Go on a date to someplace you've never been. Have fun! It will all get done in due time.





*Step 2.*

# Make a budget...

No one can set this number for you unless they are paying.

This will depend on a number of factors, including:

**The area you are getting married.** Coastal areas tend to be higher priced by thousands of dollars per vendor.

**The type of venue.** A castle wedding is priced differently from your backyard or a state park.

**The number of guests.** Serving dinner for 200 people will not be the same as 25. Have you, your fiancé, and each of your parents create a guest list. Combine all the lists and if you can't afford to invite everyone, work together to decide who can be culled. Remember approx. 85% of invited guests will attend a local wedding, and the numbers go down from there for destination or out of town.

**Whether you choose to DIY or hire vendors for each purpose.** A DJ may cost \$1500 and a bluetooth speaker \$0 but one may have a better result if you want your guests to party all night.

**The type of meal you serve.** Typically a BBQ buffet is the most cost efficient option for a full meal, whereas a 4 course steak dinner will be much more.







## *Step 3.*

# Choose a venue...

Do you want indoor or outdoor?

What season do you envision for your wedding?

Is it temperature controlled? Will you need heaters or fans?

Do you want all-inclusive, where you don't have to worry about individual details?

Or do you want full control to choose your favorite vendors?

Do they include a venue Day of Coordinator, or will you hire someone else or DIY?

Are you allowed to bring your own caterer or do you like the menu they provide?

Do they provide tables and chairs or will you need to furnish everything yourself?

Do they have a closet of dishes for you to choose from or will you need to supply your own?

If you've always envisioned yourself walking down a center aisle, does the venue have one? Or will you be able to arrange the seating that way?

Is there a dance floor? Or will you need to rent one?

Do they offer decor or is it a blank canvas? Will they decorate for an added expense?

Are there any buildings or clutter behind the ceremony area that you will want covered to look better for photos? Do you have a plan for how to accomplish this?

What time do you have to be out? Do they give you the entire weekend so you can decorate on Friday, get married on Saturday, and clean up on Sunday?

Do they offer discounts for off seasons or days?

Will there be staff onsite to help if you need anything?

How much of a deposit is required and is it refundable if you have to postpone or cancel? What does their contract say?

What dates do they have available?



## *Step 4.*

# Set a date...

Between date and venue, first choose which is most important to you. You may already know your dream venue, but if you have your heart set on the most popular date of the decade as well, you will only be able to choose from venues who still have that date open or who announce a cancellation. You may not be able to have your dream date and your dream venue unless you're planning 3 years in advance, so inquire ASAP so that someone else doesn't snag it before you.

Don't have a clue where to begin with a date? Do you have an anniversary that is easy to remember? A favorite number? A favorite season? Be sure to check both national and local calendars for holidays and events. You may put thought into dates like Memorial Day, but don't forget to also look up whether there is anything going on nearby that day. You don't want to unknowingly schedule an Indianapolis wedding during the Indy 500. And local events, like a regionally known Strawberry festival, can leave all the area hotels with no vacancies for your out of town guests.

Lastly, if you have any vendors that are must haves, such as a photographer you've been dreaming of using since grade school, make sure to check their availability before signing any contracts with a venue.







*Step 5.*

## Book a photographer...

Photographers and other popular vendors typically begin booking 1-2 years in advance. Out of all vendors, photographers and venues are most likely to not have your date available if you wait too long to book. During COVID-19 times, photographers are booking up twice as fast for the future, as 2020 couples move their dates to '21 and '22. As soon as you are able, research photographers, find one you love, and pay a retainer to lock in your date. This also locks in your rate as well, there's no guarantee their prices will be the same months down the road if you wait to book.

### **How to choose? A few things to consider:**

Do you like the photographer's style? Whether you're looking for posed, lifestyle, light and airy, dark and moody, or true to color, the most important thing is that you love the photographer's work AS IS. Just as in dating relationships, expecting them to change for you will only lead to heartbreak. Let them be themselves and find someone whose work you love when they are true to themselves. This will always lead to the best results.



STILL UNSURE  
WHERE TO  
START?

I'D LOVE TO HELP!

I COULD TALK ABOUT  
WEDDINGS ALL DAY!

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