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INSIDER TRICKS FOR WEDDING-DAY BLISS

This may be your first time down the aisle, but it's not ours. We polled our editors and other top industry pros for behind-the-scenes secrets that will help you make the most of your big day.

TEXT BY JAIME BUERGER



Clever Cost-Cutting

"If you're going with an expensive printing process, use it for the invite, and have the supporting pieces flat-printed."—*Elisabeth Engelhart, associate art director*

"Flowers cost a lot, so skip them on the bar and along the aisle. Nobody will miss them."—*Brooke Porter Katz, senior editor*

"Have a logo designed (seek out affordable design websites) and a stamp made. Use it on favors, bar signs, and menus for chic branding on the cheap."—*Cara Sullivan, contributing editor, and owner of Wild Floral Design, Chicago*

Trust Yourself

"Once you have a blueprint for your day, stop obsessive Pinterest-browsing! Seeing all the options out there will make you second-guess yourself."—*Brooke Porter Katz*



SIPPING SMARTS

"Overstaff the bar! You can't have too many bartenders. It's a surefire way to keep guests happy—no one wants to wait at a party."—*Kristin Newman, founder and owner, Kristin Newman Designs, Charleston, South Carolina*

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Rough percentage of guests likely to skip prepped Champagne at the cocktail hour. Ask servers not to overpour.

Tasty Takeaway

"Go for edible favors at a destination wedding, so guests don't have to squeeze them into a suitcase."—*Calder Clark, owner and creative director of event design firm Calder Clark, Charleston, South Carolina, and Raleigh, North Carolina*

DETAILS COUNT

"After the first cut, have your caterer slice and garnish the cake out of sight. There's nothing worse than watching a sous chef hack away at your beautiful, towering cake."—*Calder Clark*

"Number R.S.V.P. cards before mailing (on the back, in pencil) to keep track of anyone who doesn't respond or forgets to write his or her name."—*Jamie Moore, co-owner, Sinclair & Moore Events, Seattle*

"Write vows in pretty notebooks, or tape them into a vintage book. A folded piece of paper is not super-elegant."—*Cara Sullivan*



THE MUST- HAVE LIST

1.

Ask the florist to bring a spare boutonniere or two, in case one gets lost or damaged.

2.

Pack an emergency kit with eye drops, mints, a stain-remover stick, nail polish, and fashion tape for wardrobe malfunctions.

3.

Bring along a few pairs of earplugs for any guest who finds the music at the reception a bit too loud.

4.

If there's rain in the forecast, stock up on umbrellas and arrange for friends to help guests get from their cars into the venue.

5.

Maybe it's your something old, but be sure to have a hanky at the ready. You never know when tears will flow.

6.

Tuck a contact list of all vendors in your handbag. Be sure to get the weekend on-call numbers!

7.

Print a copy of the shot list for your photographer. You've likely already reviewed it together, but handing it to her day-of will ensure that no essential pics are missed.

8.

The rings! Who's got 'em? Make sure they are in the right hands (traditionally, this is the job of the best man).