



Saving Money Tips

1) Consider...How serious are you about saving Money?

Although, most brides say they want to save money...most don't want to give up *anything*. To save money, you will have to sacrifice somewhere. That means you may have to eliminate or cut down in some key area. Make a list of those items you have dreamed about forever and rate them from most to least important. Then, when you start planning and getting quotes, you will have a better idea of where to cut down.

Remember, to save money, you must compromise.

2) Cut your Guest List

The most obvious way to save money is to reduce your guest list. Remember, for each guest you will pay not only for food, but also for dinnerware, chairs & tables, linens, centerpieces, cake, favors, and beverages. Don't invite anyone you haven't talked to in four to five years. And don't feel obligated to invite non-live-in boyfriends or girlfriends. Avoid feeling pressure to invite all your work colleagues. Many couples have decided to have a smaller more intimate wedding and reception so they do not have to sacrifice the details of their dream wedding.

3) Choose a day other than Saturday, or during less popular months

Have your wedding on a Friday or Sunday, or even a weeknight. There is less demand for these days, so vendors will often be willing to give you a better rate. Also, you may save big during months that are considered off-season. Many times vendors will be delighted to give you better pricing due to less demand. (See Top Ten Reasons for Having a Wedding on a Friday or Sunday.)

4) Save Money on Decorations

Consider having your wedding near a major holiday, particularly Christmas. Many venues will already be decorated, saving you lots of money on flowers. Alternatively, look for a venue with beautiful gardens or one that is already decorated to save money.

5) Alcohol

Alcohol is the most expensive item for your reception other than food. You may be very surprised at how much it will cost you. Here are some suggestions for saving money.

- Find a venue that will allow you to provide your own liquor. This could save you a significant amount!
- Serve only wine and beer, which is much cheaper than a full bar.
- Serve specialty signature drinks instead of a bar. Your caterer can concoct a drink to represent you and your groom to serve to your guests.
- Consider having the bar open ONLY during your cocktail hour, then serving only wine with dinner.
- If you and your fiancée don't drink, think about having a dry wedding. This is a growing trend, due to huge liability costs associated with serving alcohol.

6) Wedding Food

Don't cut down on the amount of food you serve just to save money. This is particularly important if you are serving alcohol. Remember if your wedding is at dinnertime, your guests will be hungry. If you don't have enough food, they will leave early to eat!

Ask your caterer to help with your budget. They will give you expert advice on choosing items for your event. Many people think serving hors d'oeuvres is less expensive, but that is not always the case. Your caterer will tell you whether a dinner menu is less expensive than hors d'oeuvres. Also, ask if a buffet dinner is cheaper than a seated dinner. You may be pleasantly surprised.

7) Thermography vs. Engraving.

Eliminate engraving – Printed invitations work just as well. Since you will probably want to order a whole matching package (Save the Date, Invitations & response cards, seating cards, menu cards, napkins, etc.) this could cut down on costs considerably. Check out the budget section in invitation books!

8) Sample Sales for Less Expensive Wedding Dresses, or Ebay

If you wear a 6, 8, or 10, check out sample sales, which happen generally once a year. It's a great opportunity to get a designer dress at dirt bottom prices. Remember that cleaning the delicate fabric of a wedding dress may cost up to \$250, so avoid the cheap dress with the filthy hem. In addition, some brides have shopped successfully on Ebay, but be careful. That fabulous dress in the wrong size could cost you hundreds of dollars in alterations.

9) [Ebay](#)

Ebay, Ebay, Ebay- a great source for everything from second-hand dresses to wedding favors, cake toppers, ring pillows and more. Be sure to allow ample time for the auction to end, and for shipping.

10) DJ, Band, or an Ipod - Can you DJ your own wedding?

Have you thought of DJing your own wedding using an Ipod? [An article](#), from Marketwatch, discusses how many couples are doing just that. Some of the drawbacks of using an Ipod at your wedding are that a DJ does much more than play music. She or he emcees the wedding reception and makes sure that people are out on the dance floor having fun. However, the cost of a DJ is typically \$800-\$1500, and a band usually starts at \$2500, while an MP3 player, sound system and songs are usually under \$500. When you're pinching every penny, it might just be worth it. A caution, someone will have to be there early to set up the equipment, emcee the event, manage the system and break down the equipment. Not an easy task!