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# Tying the Knot

*A Wedding Planner  
for Cape Cod and the South Shore*



CAPE COD MAGAZINE & SOUTH SHORE LIVING



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# What To Do Before 'I Do'

solutions to your wedding dilemmas

By Maria Ferri

*As it turns out, deciding to say "yes" to the love of your life was the easy part. Faced with a myriad of wedding decisions that must be made before the big day, it's not uncommon for couples to feel a bit overwhelmed.*

*If you're at all apprehensive that you may ask a "stupid" question, you can rest easy knowing that we have done the dirty work for you. After scouring the etiquette books and interviewing local wedding professionals, we've compiled a list of 35 common wedding quandaries and their answers.*

## How do I plan a beach wedding?

The ocean can be a stunning backdrop for a wedding and most public town beaches will allow ceremonies. You will, however, need to visit the town hall first and pick up a permit for your "gathering." Find out if folding chairs and arbors are allowed on the beach or if only standing is permitted. Couples also need to remember that on a public beach, dogs, kids, Frisbees as well as curious onlookers are all out of your control. If this is of great concern to you, then a beachfront hotel or resort property may be a better bet.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT RYAN

## What are the drawbacks to a beach wedding?

Wedding planner Allison Wildes Liset, owner of Elegant Engagements of Sandwich, has helped many a coastal wedding dream come true. Her experience has taught her that while beach weddings are beautiful and can be a cheaper option than renting a facility, they can also be unpredictable. "Always, always, always have a backup plan," warns Liset. "There is always a chance of rain, severe horseflies, or mosquitoes. Strong wind is often the greatest problem as it can pick up the sand and can make it unsafe to have an arbor." Pay close attention to where the high water mark is at your chosen beach, or else an unexpected tide could turn a nice day into a wet wedding. You can pick up a tidal chart at most fishing and tackle shops.

PHOTOGRAPHS FACE 41, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: HONOR OF MISTRESS DENISE MARCOTTE, MATT RYAN, KELLY MAHONEY



PHOTOGRAPH BY KELLY MAHONEY

*Who shells out the money for the wedding costs?*

Deciding who will pay for a wedding depends on multiple factors. While there was a time when the father of the bride would take responsibility for nearly all the wedding costs, these days, most families divide the bills between the parents of both the bride and groom. Generally, the bride's family will cover items such as the wedding dress, church fee, and flowers, and the groom's parents will pay for items like transportation and the rehearsal dinner. Oftentimes, couples over the age of 30 choose to pay their own way.



PHOTOGRAPH BY DENISE TASCOTTI

*Where should I seat my single guests?*

While some of your guests may enjoy mingling with strangers, others might rather be near familiar faces. Rather than seating all unattached guests at a "singles" table, locate them near couples they are acquainted with.

*Should I invite children to my wedding?*

There isn't much cuter than seeing little kids all dressed up to the nines. In reality, however, weddings can be murderous on a child's attention span. Children of the bride and groom should always be invited but that doesn't require you to invite the children of your guests. If you do choose to invite the children of your guests you should list their names beneath the names of the parents on the invitation. Many people opt to allow only children of a certain age at their weddings and others invite kids to the ceremony but have an adults-only reception. Compiling a list of a few dependable local baby-sitters is helpful for any out-of-town guests that need childcare. Check the bulletin board at the public library for postings. In any case, once you establish a rule, stick to it.



PHOTOGRAPH BY REBECCA BROWN

*Should I create an "A" and "B" list when making our guest list?*

The fact that weddings can be very expensive is a reality that nobody can deny. Aside from your nearest and dearest, most people will understand if your budget requires a shorter invitation list. It can be a good idea to have a second, "B" list of guests you wish you could invite. If members of your "A" list are unable to attend, then you can add someone from your "B" list. Linda Garland, owner of Cape Cod Wedding Designers in Mashpee, advises her customers to send "save the date" cards 6-9 months ahead of time. "Hopefully you will hear whether those guest from far away will or will not be able to attend," she says. She also recommends that couples send out invitations three months before the wedding. Having a little extra time will allow for early responses and if some people can't come, it gives you more time to invite a few of your "B" list friends.