

Avoid Wedding Regret!



Thank you for requesting your copy of *“The 9 Things Brides Would Do Differently”*!

It’s always nice when we can avoid pain by learning from the mistakes of others. I believe this report will be a real eye-opener for you, and hopefully offer you some peace-of-mind as you start your wedding planning. If you EVER have a question about local vendors, pricing, traditions, whatever— call me and I’ll be happy to help you— even if you choose someone else to shoot your wedding.

At the end of the report, I’ve also added your copy of our 2020 Pricing. Once I understand your needs, I can create a package that fits your needs.

-Don Lawler, Chief Story Officer, STORYTELLERS

The 9 Things Brides Would Do Differently... If They Were Doing It All Over Again

By Don Lawler, STORYTELLERS
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Avoid Wedding Regret

The 9 Things Brides Would Do Differently

You know that fear, that absolute panic, that you'll do something...or forget to do something... that will RUIN your wedding day?

That fear can ruin your excitement and happiness about being a bride. It transforms smart, capable, sane young women into neurotics suffering from panic attacks, headaches, stomach pain and sleepless nights.

If you don't learn from the mistakes of the brides who gone before, YOU might end up that stressed out, panicked bride. But if you listen to the advice of the already married brides, you can avoid their mistakes and relax, knowing your dream wedding lies ahead of you.

I interviewed dozens brides after their weddings and asked them, "If you were planning your wedding all over again, what would you do differently and WHY?"

The brides gave the same answers over and over again. They made these 9 common mistakes that still haunt them...months and sometimes even years after the wedding.

Here are the 9 things brides said they would do differently if they had the chance to do it all again:

1) I Would Have Spent the Money To Hire a Professional.

These brides were smart with their money; they knew what they wanted and they cut expenses where they didn't think they would miss it.

When it came to saving money, they figured, "Why hire a professional when I can do it myself?"

It's true...they DID save money by doing it themselves. But it came at a hidden cost.

Gwen knew she wanted a professional photographer to capture the memories of her wedding day, but she had a limited budget. So she found the photojournalistic photographer of her dreams and struck a bargain. He would take digital photos and give her the disc at the end of her wedding day. Then Gwen could put together her own albums instead of paying him to do them. Gwen saved \$2,000 on the cost of her photography. A good deal, right?

WRONG. Talking to Gwen eight months after her wedding, she STILL didn't have an album put together. In fact, her parents have the disc and were the only ones to see the photos.

Gwen says she will get to her album "eventually." But looking back, she regrets not paying to have a professional album done. If she'd paid a little extra money then, she'd have an album of beautiful photos to look back and remember her wedding. Now, she has nothing.

Tara's regret is a little different. She was a budget-conscious, creative bride. Her bouquets and boutonnieres were purchased through an online flower distributor at a deep discount. But when it came to her floral centerpieces, she figured she was capable enough to put together her own arrangements.

She got a book on flower arranging and bought her roses wholesale. Tara saved hundreds on the cost of her flowers. But now that her wedding is over, does she consider that a bargain?

Nope.

"Yes, doing my own bulk flower arrangements was a huge money saver. But what a hassle! These boxes of flowers showed up at my mother's house the week of my wedding, and it drove me crazy spending hours and hours putting them together. It would have saved my SANITY if I'd paid someone else to do it. I regret never even asking a florist for prices. And the professional bouquets we had done were WAY better."

What's the lesson here?

You've got to think about the big picture. If you're thinking about a Do It Yourself project, ask yourself...

Do I have the skill to pull this off? Will I enjoy doing it or will it create more stress? Do I have the time? Can I accept amateur results?

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If something is super important to your dream wedding, don't try to do it yourself. Many times a talented professional can create an option that fits in your budget AND give you the results you want...without the hassle.

2) I Would Have Given Myself More Time To Plan.

When we imagine how long it takes to do something, we plan based on how long it should take when everything goes RIGHT.

We often forget to consider all the distractions and delays, the interruptions and the unexpected time-consuming tasks we don't know about. It's human nature. We UNDERESTIMATE how much time we need to complete something.

But when you're planning a wedding, this mistake can be deadly.

Amanda was a bride and a professional photographer. She planned her wedding for June...her busiest time of the year. She had months to plan and figured she would have more than enough time for everything.

Unfortunately for Amanda, she DIDN'T have time. Her photography business was booming. She was shooting weddings right up until her own wedding date.

Amanda had planned to send invitations to her B list...but she never found the time.

"I regret not having more people at my wedding," she said sadly. "It would have been so much more fun."

Rebecca allowed herself eight months to plan her wedding. She was a human resources manager who knew how to manage her time. Eight months seemed like more than enough.

It wasn't.

Rebecca felt rushed to book by vendors who insisted she had to book NOW or risk losing her first choice. In hindsight, she would have allowed at least a year to plan everything so that she could enjoy it.

Allowing MORE time is always better than LESS.

3) I Would Have Communicated Better About MONEY.

Money is a touchy subject, especially when it comes to gifts. I mean, if your parents are giving you money for your wedding, talking about it feels just...AWKWARD.

Stacie learned the importance of communicating about money the hard way.

She was fortunate enough to have both her parents and her future in-laws chip in toward the wedding. Stacie thanked them for their contributions and went about setting up her budget.

Then the DRAMA started.

"You're spending the money I gave you on a dress?" her mother asked. "You should be paying for the dress, not me."

"What do you mean you bought wedding favors with my money? I didn't want to pay for your stupid favors!"

Lots of arguments, misunderstandings, and hurt feelings came about as a result of not communicating. Stacie wishes she had known then what she knows now:

Talking about the money saves lots of drama down the road.

When her parents offered to contribute to the wedding, Stacie wishes she had said, “Thanks so much! How would you like to contribute, specifically?” and then let them put that money toward the parts of her wedding that were most important to them.

Laura ran into another money communication issue. She met with her photographer, who she loved. She was so impressed with his services that she paid his full asking price without question.

Four months later, she found out that her friend booked the same photographer with the same package...for \$800 LESS.

Not communicating about money, whether it’s with your family or your vendors, causes stress and wastes valuable time and money.

4) I Would Have Been Less Stressed When I Was Planning.

Mia did a terrific job planning her wedding. She delegated tasks to her family members and to her fiancé, letting them gather information for her to make the final decisions. She even had many of her tasks completed before her deadlines.

But when I asked Mia what she would do differently if she was planning her wedding all over again, she told me she wishes she hadn’t been so stressed during the planning process.

“I made my decisions and then I started second-guessing myself,” Mia sighed. “I kept worrying about whether I’d made the right choice. I burned up all this energy being stressed out, instead of enjoying what it felt like to be engaged.”

Mia told me that in the end she discovered that all her planning and research paid off...she DID make the right choices. “I should have trusted myself, instead of worrying. In the end, everything turned out fine.”

Christine agreed. “I wasted so much time worrying!” she said. “My fiancé had it right; once we made a decision he just let go and was confident that we made the right choice.”

All the planning these brides did was vital to the success of their weddings. But it was just as vital to trust themselves to make the right decisions and then let go. Keeping yourself tied up in knots with worry takes the fun out of getting married.

5) I Would Have Savored My Engagement More.

Lisa had a two year engagement. She gave herself months and months to plan. Still, as soon as he proposed, she dove right into planning.

“I’d been casually shopping around for a dress months before Aaron proposed,” Lisa admitted, “so when it finally happened I knew exactly which one I wanted. I started hunting down my photographer and location right away, without even taking a breath.”

Lisa was so busy doing things for her engagement that she forgot to notice what it felt like to be engaged. “Looking back, I wished I had slowed down my engagement and let it last longer. Everything went so fast!” she said.

There’s a lot to do when you’re planning a wedding. But as important as it is to do those tasks, it’s also important to take the time to enjoy the experience.

Every few moments, slow down, take a deep breath, and reflect. “This is my wedding I’m planning. I’m getting married!”

No matter how long your engagement, it’s going to FLY. Take the time to savor it.

6) I Would Have Taken More Formal Portraits With My Family.

Kristin hired a photojournalistic photographer for her wedding because she wanted to capture the fun and emotion as it happened, instead of setting it up for the camera. She gave her photographer a brief list of family photos to take, and instructed her to take candid the rest of the time.

That was great on the wedding day. But afterward, Kristin had a lot of regrets.

“I gave my photographer a list of pictures I wanted,” Kristin said, “but I didn’t get one shot with my grandmother. She complains about it every time I see her! I wish I’d been more specific.”

Michelle was dead set against “cheesy” posed shots. “I didn’t want any fake smiles and unnatural poses in my wedding album,” she said.

But after the wedding, Michelle realized that some of those posed photos would have been nice to have. “I hated the idea of having our photographer position us for a photograph in front of the fireplace or kissing in front of the cake. But when I look at other people’s wedding albums, those are the really great photos. I wish I’d taken more posed shots.”

Nobody wants to be pushed around on her wedding day. But once it’s over, your memories...and those photographs...are all you have left. If you want to remember your big day clearly, make sure you take pictures with your closest family and consider posed photos as a way to capture your day forever.

7) I Would Have Invited Fewer Guests.

Rebecca was a smart bride. She set up her budget, decided which parts of her wedding were most important, and spent her money there. By cutting in areas of lesser importance, she was able to have her dream wedding.

“My one regret,” Rebecca said, “was having so many people. I chose an average location for my wedding so that I could invite everyone on my list and stay in budget. But I wish I hadn’t invited those ‘obligated’ guests. I could have invited fewer people and afforded a much nicer place.”

Brooke found herself in a similar situation. “I only had so much money to spend,” she told me. “My parents pressured me to invite a lot of their friends. There were people at my wedding that I didn’t even know!”

In hindsight, Brooke wishes she had stuck to her guns and only invited the people she wanted at the wedding. “If I hadn’t let my parents push me into inviting more people, I could have had my wedding at a castle, my dream wedding location. Instead, I had to settle.”

On your wedding day, you owe it to yourself to be surrounded by your closest family and friends. PERIOD.

Especially if you are on a budget, don’t invite someone unless you really want there. Otherwise, you’ll regret it.

8) I Should Have Hired a Day of Coordinator.

Stacie managed a lot of do it yourself projects for her wedding. Most of them turned out great.

But when it came to coordinating the last minute details, she had some regrets.

“I really wish I had someone to look over the ‘little things’ on my wedding day, so that I wouldn’t have worried about it. I didn’t have anyone getting me food and making sure I ate, and my sweetheart table was set up all wrong. These things really bugged me! With all the time I put into planning, it would have been worth it to pay someone a few hundred dollars to be the Chief so I could relax.”

Kate even tried to run her own ceremony rehearsal. “It was nuts!” she laughed. “There I was, telling everyone how they needed to line up, even trying to tell my friend who married us how to say his lines, and I was supposed to be getting married!”

Kate wishes she had given each person who was supposed to be “helping” her a list of specific responsibilities for the day of the wedding. Since no one knew what to do, and her family and friends were caught up with nervousness and excitement, some of the little details she’d been looking forward to were missed.

Somebody’s going to coordinate your big day. Coordinating is a full time job. Make sure it isn’t YOU, so that you get enjoy being the bride on your wedding day.

9) I Should Have Added Extra Time To My Day Of Schedule.

This is the number one regret brides have after their weddings.

Leah had to practice good time management; she was a lawyer studying for the Barr exam right before her wedding. For her, wasting time wasn’t an option.

When I asked Leah what she would do differently, she told me she wished she hadn't felt so rushed. "I was still so hyper from all the hard work of planning the wedding and getting everything done in time. I didn't even have ONE drink! I wished I had made the day last longer."

Delia told me, "Everything was CRAZY on my wedding day. Everyone always tells you it goes so fast...and they're right. It was over before I knew it."

Even though Delia's married friends told her to make sure she stopped to look around and really soak everything in on her wedding day, she was too busy to pause. She missed a lot of moments she didn't know about until her guests told her afterwards.

Make sure you allow more time than you think you will need for all the little details of transportation, photos and events.

On your wedding day, plan little "time outs" with your fiancé to look out at your loved ones all gathered in one place for you. Steal as many of these moments as you can throughout your day, stepping out of the party to catch your breath.

Those are the moments when you'll remember what it felt like to be a bride on your wedding day.

No More Regrets!

I work with some of the smartest, most creative and inspiring brides out there. I am so proud of them!

For more information or to set an appointment to discuss your needs, contact Don Lawler. Call or text him at: 901.485.0327, or email him at don@storytellersmemphis.com. Please visit our website for information and great examples of what we can do to help you.

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"I can't say enough about you! You are truly a master of your craft and I feel so blessed and grateful to have had you capture our special day! We've watched the highlights...I can't tell you how many tears I shed on that alone ...I want to thank you for EVERYTHING!!! You made our dreams a reality and I want to thank you from the bottom of every heart in my family!!! You rock!!!!!! "- Ashley Boyd, Bride

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A LA CARTE

VIDEOGRAPHY

- Main Videographer. 200/hr
- Extra Videographer 150/hr
- Documentary Film 1000
- 5 Minute Highlights Film 750
- Extend Highlights edits 100/finished min
- Rehearsal Dinner Coverage 600
- Rehearsal Coverage 300
- Love Story Film 1000
- Same Day Edit 1000
- Premier Showing 500

PHOTOGRAPHY

- Main Photographer 200/hr
- Extra Photographer 150/hr
- Engagement Session 350
- Bridal Session 350
- Rehearsal Dinner Coverage 600
- Rehearsal Coverage 300
- Albums start at 500
- Coffee Table Books start at 250
- Photo Booth with Photographer 800
- Photos Delivered Digitally 500

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