

THE ONLY ELOPEMENT PLANNING GUIDE & CHECKLIST YOU NEED

HOW TO PLAN YOUR ELOPEMENT

First off, Congratulations!

Although an elopement doesn't have as much planning as a fully orchestrated wedding, there are still things you don't want to miss.

Eloping gives you so much flexibility to do what you want on your wedding day that really reflects the two of you.

But all of this freedom can also bring this overwhelming weight of...where do I start? That's why I've created this guide to help you plan your special day with ease!

BEFORE WE DIVE IN...

Frequently Asked Questions About Elopements

WHAT IS AN ELOPEMENT?

Is getting married without a wedding. Although you can choose to get married and have a small gathering after. You can have some close people present for it. Your options are only limited to your imagination!

HOW MUCH TIME IS NEEDED TO PLAN ONE?

The average length of planning one is about 4-10 months. This gives you time to book flights at good prices and find the best options for you two.

HOW MUCH DOES IT TYPICALLY COST?

This can cost between a couple hundred to a couple of thousand depending on what you want for your special day and how you want to celebrate. Fortunately, its much cheaper than a wedding.

IS AN ELOPEMENT RIGHT FOR US?

At the end of the day its your experience. Some questions to ask yourself... Will this make you happy? Things to consider would be finances, family, the dream day you imagined. There are so many ways you can create the day. Be sure this is something you and your partner want and have fun with it!

THE ELOPEMENT JOURNEY IN 5 STEPS

Although there are many ways to plan this, an elopement doesn't always follow a linear process. However, I have found that this sequence is helpful for couples planning their elopement!

1

Brain Storm/Dream it up

Come up with the overall feel and vision you have for the day. Will you be at home or will it be a destination elopement? Will anyone else join you two?

2

Make a Budget

While you are dreaming, consider how much you would like to spend and on what? Where will you splurge and where will you be conservative with money?

3

Research and Start Booking

Research photographers, places you can elope and look for someone who can marry you two. Consider the area, the weather, and the type of clothes you want to wear.

4

Finalize Details

Finalize airline tickets, rentals for car and hotels. Consider reservations at restaurants etc.

5

Enjoy!

Step 1

Brain Storm

BRAIN STORM & DREAM

This is the part of the process where you can dream about what you would like to do. Do you want this to be an elopement with just you two and no-one else? Do you want a couple of important people present for this?

Do you want to make this a destination elopement? Do you want an after party?

There are so many options and ways of enjoying this day, so just grab a paper and jot down all kinds of ideas you would be interested in doing.

So dream: IF you could get married anywhere in the world, where would it be?



TIPS FOR THE BRAIN STORMING & DREAMING STAGE:

BRAIN DUMP

Grab a pen and paper and just write out all the ideas you both have about what you would like to do.

DON'T LIMIT YOURSELF

If you have a dream in mind, don't give up on it, find ways to make it happen! Do your research!

FIND INSPIRATION

Go on Instagram or Pinterest and just start creating and imaging.

Step 2

Make a Budget

MAKE A BUDGET

Now that you have an idea painted of what you would like, you can start deciding where you want to spend the most money.

If you haven't done research already on prices, then this is the time to do that.

If you found that some of the things you were hoping to do are too expensive, then this is the time to find cheaper alternatives, deals, and ways to create your special day.



TIPS FOR CREATING YOUR BUDGET

Make a list of everything that will cost money:

- Destination
- Rings
- Dress, Suite, Shoes
- Food
- Photographer
- Reservations

Then what you want to do is decide how much your total budget is and how you will break it up. So if you wanted to spend the bulk of your money on a dress, then you would plan accordingly.

Some things to consider to save money:

- Rent a suite
- Look for second hand dresses
- Get married on a weekday
- Do an all inclusive cruise
- Ask a friend to borrow their boat, nice car, or cabin

Step 3

Research & Start Booking

RESEARCH & START BOOKING

Once you've come up with the overall vision and budget for it. Now is time to move to step three and start doing some research and booking!

Your goal with this research is to make this vision a reality. This is where you start looking at places you want to elope and check logistical issues such as time allowed, rules of the venue or park you are going to.

Its in this stage that can become overwhelming, ask a friend for help and delegate some stuff. Just because you don't have a bridal party does not mean you can't ask your loved ones for help, nor does it mean you can't utilize a wedding day planner!



TIPS FOR HOW TO RESEARCH:

DO SOME DIGGING:

Find out the general rules. Some of the biggest mistakes people make is thinking they don't have to worry about all this extra stuff that they end up over looking things like: Hours of operation, are candles allowed, is photography allowed, can there be more than just us?

DON'T GET DISCOURAGED

You mind find something won't work exactly how you want it due to restrictions and budget. Don't let this ruin your dream. Find ways to make it work!

ASK FOR HELP:

Utilize a wedding planner! So many people think just because they are getting eloped that they can't use one...this is false! Utilize their planning expertise for some extra support.

Ask friends and family who are good with researching to help as well! You don't have to do this alone.

TIPS FOR BOOKING

1

Depending on where you are going it might be necessary to do some extra research. Check out websites like Yelp, Trip Advisor and read reviews.

2

For good prices check out Airbnb, [hotels.com](https://www.hotels.com), and Hotel Tonight to find some steals. Also, it doesn't hurt to look at reviews and Google Maps to be sure your location is safe and has plenty of activities to do stuff at.

3

Keep all receipts, call in advance to double check bookings!

Step 4

Finalize Details

FINALIZE DETAILS

This is the exciting part! You are almost done!

Step 4 is about filling in the details now that the main parts are all set.

So below I provided an Elopement Checklist for you to keep track of all the small details that could be included.

ELOPEMENT CHECKLIST

Attire & Accessories

○ Dress/Suit

Bridals shops typically suggest that you get it 6-12 months in advance for fittings and for delivery of dress.

○ Shoes

Keep in mind the area you will be getting married. If you will be out in nature, its smart to bring a pair to hike in.

○ Jewelry

Will you buy jewelry? Or will you borrow? Do you have something special that runs in the family? Make provisions to keep that jewelry safe and to not forget it on the wedding day!





ELOPEMENT CHECKLIST

Vendors & Details

Photographers

Find someone you connect with and who can help you with the elopement.

Flowers

Be sure to plan ahead so you have the bouquet ready for you if you are wanting flowers.

Hair & Makeup

Will you be doing your own hair & makeup? If not, finding someone who can work with your location and time is important.

Musician/Music

You might want someone to play for you...check this in advance people get booked! Also, consider location and if they are able to get there with their instrument.

Officiant

ELOPEMENT CHECKLIST

Ceremony Timeline

○ **Finalize ceremony Details**

Decide what you want to happen for your ceremony. Will there be music? Will you have special vows or do any symbolic things?

○ **Write out your wedding day timeline**

Sure there isn't a bunch of things like hosting a wedding, but what will you do? Where will you get ready? Who will you meet up? Where will you eat? The day still needs planning!

○ **Photography**

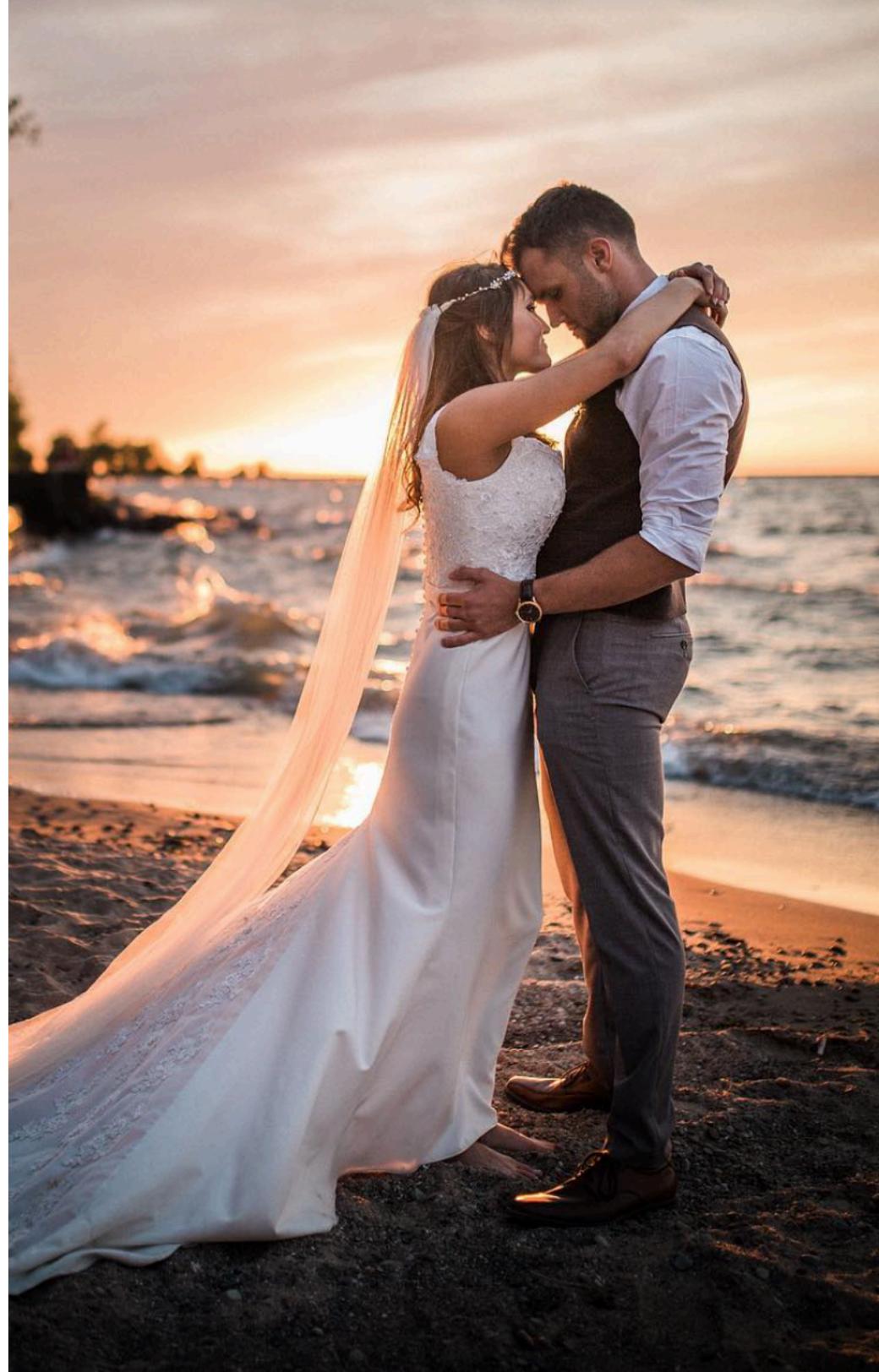
When will you take photos? Will you take any before you see the groom? Will you have any family photos if anyone comes?

○ **Be Prepared**

Where is your ceremony going to be located? Will you need an extra pair of shoes? Umbrella? Will it possibly rain and you'll be stuck in the wilderness? How about a back pack with some small items? Who will carry all that? Will you have a friend come along to help? Those are all things to consider when planning the ceremony! Also, if you plan to have a couple of people there don't forget to tell them to bring water or provide it for them!

Step 5

Enjoy!



SUMMARY OF THE TOP 3 THINGS TO DO FIRST:

1

Decide on a date

2

Choose a location

3

Book Vendors