

# Wedding Photography And Films

## Guide to Saving Money Best Practices & Tips

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Hello friends, thank you for showing interest in our website and our services. For the last 22 years, I have been putting together some of the BEST money saving tips and tricks that you can use for you wedding planning.

The guide comes in bullet pint form to make it easy to get the information that you need without all the 'fluff' of a typical blog post.

If you ever have any additional wedding related questions, I invite you to reach out to me and ask, chances are I have an answer or I can find one for you.

My email address [connect@weddingphotographyandfilms.com](mailto:connect@weddingphotographyandfilms.com) feel free to drop me a hello or a question.

Now, let us begin.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joshua". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal tail on the final letter.

## Wedding Tips for Saving Money

- Before you start wedding planning, set a [wedding budget](#). Discuss it with your soon to be spouse and decide on how much you are going to spend on the wedding overall.
- When working on a budget, consider how many guests you will have. The more guests, the more it will cost to have your wedding.

- While places like WeddingWire and theKnot tend to say the average wedding, cost is somewhere in the \$33,000-\$35,000 range, truth be told most weddings range in the \$24,000-\$27,000 range on average.
- The best time to book a wedding venue is during the off-season and that's typically late October through Mid-March.
- Speaking of time, book the wedding venue during the week if you want to save the most amount of money, that is a Monday-Thursday. Wednesdays are usually the prime "savings rate"
- We highly recommend that you hire a wedding planner and for the long-haul. Why? Planners typically save couples money by offering vendors repeat business. In return for that business, many will offer savings of 5-15%. That can add up to larger savings than the cost of the planner many times.
- Wedding planners offer a great way to control the elements of the day, helping wedding vendors like me and my wife Carole, plus they keep the day moving right along.
- Consider hiring the planner long term. It will cost you more, but as I mentioned before, it will save you in the end. Most couples opt for the 'Day-of', we suggest you skip that.

- Skip any DIY décor. You may think that by doing things yourself you are saving money, but chances are you are spending just as much if not more. It is a misconception that you are saving money by making your own centerpieces or flowers most times.
- Speaking of décor, consider asking the venue if they have décor that you can use. It will save you money from the décor portion of your budget.
- One wedding décor trick is to repurpose what you use at the ceremony into the reception. For example, if the ceremony is outdoors and you have lanterns along the aisles of the walkway, reuse them as centerpieces at the reception.
- Did you know that nearly 80% of all wedding dresses come from China and are mass produced? If you want a unique wedding dress and save a lot of money, buy one direct from a US manufacturer on [Etsy](#). It will save you a lot of money than going to the local bridal shop.
- Most couples don't know, but our company actually owns other companies too, such as a wedding DJ and wedding planner. We can offer a 'Super Collection' where you get all four vendors at a huge discount.

- If you want to save the MOST amount of money for the wedding, consider having what's called a micro-wedding. It's halfway between a full-blown wedding day and an elopement.
  - Less than 50 guests
  - Roughly 3-5 hours in length instead of 8-10
  - Can save you roughly 40% or more on the wedding day
- Do NOT skip on hiring a wedding DJ. Why? A wedding DJ will do more than just play music, they keep the flow of the evening, they work with the planner on keeping things on track and they also MC the day.
- When searching for that perfect dress for the ladies in the bridal party, consider letting them choose the style and you choose the color. They'll have a better chance of being able to wear the dress another time at parties, gatherings or special events, which will save them in the long run.
- Often times the ring bearer or flower girl will not know what to do, start crying or just make a scene. A great tip that we've learned over the years is to have a candy bar or fun toy with the groom or groomsmen to entice them to get down the aisle.
- Do you have a BFF and they too are engaged? If so, consider doing a double wedding, having the same vendors cover double everything will save both of you money, that is, if you're into sharing the day.

- It's a myth that telling vendors "it's for a wedding" will increase the overall price of the product or service with specifically designed vendors. That's ONLY true for vendors that don't usually offer wedding services most times.
- The reason that weddings are so expensive, couples from the recent past. See, couples demand a LOT more today than 20 years ago and most no longer get married in a church, thus putting the burden on venues and that's an increased cost. In addition, photographers and videographers, DJ's and others have had huge demands in newer services such as live streaming, drones, redundant technology, etc.
- Buy wedding sparklers in the 18-24" range. Any shorter and they will go out faster by the time the end of the wedding exit line gets them started and any longer, is a waste of money. Couples can usually "go twice" during the exit for the photos and video with a 18-24" sparkler.
- Buy a smaller wedding cake to cut into and have the baker do sheet cakes with the same flavor, it costs less and the people serving it will be able to do it faster too.
- When purchasing alcohol for the wedding reception, use [our online calculator](#) to help figure out how much to purchase. Its based on the number of guests, how long the reception is and what you want to offer.
- Consider tipping lower paid vendors like the pastor/officiant, hair and make-up artists and the DJ. While its not expected to give

tips, those that make less will truly appreciate it MORE. We have some [guidelines](#) on how much to tip on the blog.

- Did you know here is a timeframe on when to send the save-the-dates and wedding invitations? We have a free [guide](#) that can tell you when based on your wedding month.
- ONLY hire a second shooter when you have more than 150 guests at the wedding day. The more you have, the more work the photographer and videographer have to do. Having the 2<sup>nd</sup> shooter is worth the cost with more guests, otherwise, it's a waste of money most times.
- When hiring a DJ, photographer and videographer, make sure they all offer backup gear. For example, the photographer should have a second or even third camera, the videographer should have more than one and the DJ should have a backup source of music in case power goes out or there is a technical issue.
- Wedding insurance is a good practical idea and most times you can get it for around \$200-300. It helps cover you if a vendor is a no show or you need to cancel or reschedule the wedding. It's a great investment if you're spending a lot on the wedding.
- We suggest that you skip a photobooth and instead buy a couple of the Instamix/Polaroid style cameras with a wall or frame to hang them on. It's cheaper, plus you'll get to keep the cameras or resell them on local wedding groups.

- Plated dinners usually cost a lot less than a buffet, yet people believe the other way around. See, a plated dinner costs less because the vendor knows exactly how many to make, which saves wasted food. Additionally, a buffet tends to cost more if people go back for seconds, thirds or if there are lots of leftovers.
- Consider having a 'fake' exit earlier. This will allow those that have small kids, elderly and the like to see you off, plus if there is just dancing afterwards, you can let the photographer/videographer go, which in some cases saves money.
- Did you know on average, nearly 2.2 million couples marry each year? That's roughly 42,000 couples getting married each weekend. That in a nutshell means you should book vendors 1-3 months after your engagement. The longer you wait to book, the less likely the best vendors will be available for your date as other couples will get there first.
- A wedding secret that most will not tell you is about neighboring marketplaces. For example, if you live in Washington, DC, you're going to pay a premium for wedding vendors. However, if you book them a couple hours out of the region, even with a travel fee, it's usually cheaper, plus you many times get the same quality of work or services. Consider looking in nearby markets that cost less to live to save money.
- Bundling services can also save you money, although vendors that don't bundle will tell you otherwise. Bundling is when vendors get together and offer multiple services under one roof. Some venues for example will offer catering in house that they own, or



photographers and videographers will offer services together at a discount. Not only will you save money, but you will usually get better services dealing with one business instead of many.

- Wedding vendors that educate couples tend to be industry leading, which also means they have a wealth of knowledge about the industry. Those are vendors you want to book compared to those that just showcase the product or service and nothing else.
- The more experience a vendor has, the less likely mistakes will happen. That, in turn means a better wedding experience during the day and less stressful you will be during your wedding day.
- Most venues are what's called a "big box" venue. Meaning the weddings they do tend to be the same each weekend. While you may have a vision for the day, chances are a big box venue will only offer one place to have your ceremony, first dance, dinner etc. Look for venues that offer multiple locations on the property to do the wedding, those will generally be more unique. Examples of a "big box" wedding venue is a hotel, winery or community center.
- Did you know that in most markets, there are far more wedding photographers than any other vendor, including venues? It's true, just head to wedding wire and look in your marketplace for venues, check out the number, then do the same for photographers. There has been an oversaturation of photographers since the mid 2010's. The reason has to do with cheaper technology and very everyone wanting to get a piece of the action.

- Speaking of wedding vendors, did you know that roughly 46% of them will not make it 3-5 years in the industry? According to the Department of Labor statistics, most fail because they don't know how to run a profitable business, rather they focus on their craft instead.
- If you're getting married outdoors, buy a perfume called Bombshell from Victoria Secret and wear it on the wedding day. It's a natural bug repellent, in fact, many college football teams in the south west portion of the US use it when practicing.
- Additionally, if you plan on wearing high heels in the grass, purchase what's called a high-heel guard, a small device that goes on the tip of the heel. It prevents the shoe from sinking into the ground and you falling.
- Most couples fork out large deposits for vendors. Seeking out vendors like ours for example that offer in-house monthly payment plans. It's easier to swallow \$150 a month than it is \$1,500 for a deposit.