

\$20,000 Sample Wedding Budget Based On A 175 Guest Count

Item	% of Budget	Our Suggestion	Estimated Cost	Final Cost
Wedding Gown And Alterations	6%	Order a gown that fits you well to minimize alteration fees. We recommend trying Alfred Sung, Jim Hjelm Visions or Galina.	\$1,200.00	
Bride's Accessories (shoes, veil, etc.)	2%	You can afford a pretty veil (\$150 or less). For veils, try Jennifer Leigh or Joyce Jackson. You can afford simple shoes (\$125 or less), such as Vanessa, Nina, dyeables or Kenneth Cole. Don't forget two pairs of stockings and your lingerie.	\$300.00	
Groom's Outfit And Accessories	1%	Rent a classic tuxedo but dress it up with your own studs, cufflinks and hand-tied bowtie.	\$150.00	
Makeup Artist	1%	You can afford to get your makeup professionally done, but you'll have to go to the salon.	\$125.00	
Hairdresser	1%	You can afford to have you hair professionally styled. Make sure to take your headpiece and veil along with you to the hair salon. Remember to wear a button-front shirt.	\$125.00	
Manicure/Pedicure/ Facial	1%	Lucky you! You can treat yourself to several beauty treatments, such as a manicure, pedicure and eyebrow shaping. Ask your favorite spa if they have special packages available.	\$150.00	
The Look Sub-Total	11%		\$2,050.00	
Rabbi/Priest/Officiant Fees	1%	Officiants will work within your budget, particularly if you have a long-term relationship with them.	\$250.00	

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Ceremony Location Fees	N/A	Churches and synagogues may ask for a small donation or charge a fee as high as \$1,000 to use their sanctuary for your wedding ceremony. Several factors will influence the fee you pay: whether or not you are a member and what you truly can afford. At a hotel, restaurant or country club, charges can also vary. Some won't charge a fee while others may require as much as \$1,500. Try to negotiate a deal, particularly if you are getting married off-season or on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon.	0	
Rings (for both)	2%	You can afford silver, gold or white gold rings with some etching or design work. We suggest also searching antique jewelry shops for that special band. Save her diamond band for your 1 st anniversary.	\$400.00	
Ceremony Accessories (Ketubah, yarmulkes, kiddush cups, kneeling bench, unity candle, ring pillow)	1%	If Jewish, purchase a Ketubah and have your names professionally calligraphed. Ask your rabbi if the temple has yarmulkes you can borrow, and use a family-owned kiddush cup. Use a family-owned tallis and create a hand-held Chuppah for your ceremony or ask the temple if they have one you can borrow. Embellish the poles with greenery and flowers. For a Christian ceremony, apply this extra money towards wedding programs thermographed on a classic stock. Add a dried flower or ribbon. If you have a ring bearer, don't forget the ring pillow. (Our Wedding Shop ring pillows range in price from approximately \$25-35.)	\$200.00	
The Ceremony Sub-Total	4%		\$850.00	

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Wedding Cake	3%	Select a very simple (plain) stacked cake. Try lemon pound cake layered with fresh lemon curd and raspberries or a chocolate cake layered with mocha filling, each frosted with fresh butter cream, colorful rose petals and few rose heads and soft greens for a beautiful presentation. You may be able to order your cake from the pastry chef at your location. Remember, the more sugared flowers and detail work you request, the more expensive your cake will be. If you have your heart set on a fondant cake, you can order a smaller token cake to show and have extra sheets of cake in the kitchen ready to cut and serve.	\$500-\$600	
Cookies Or Special Chocolates	N/A	Do you have a favorite cookie you love? Ask a friend to bake heart-shaped butter/sugar cookies. Figure two cookies per person. Ask the caterers to serve platters of cookies or brownies dusted with powdered sugar and beautiful seasonal fresh fruit at each dining table instead of a dessert course.	0	
Caterer	40%	We've accounted for the reception site fee in these costs. You will save yourself approximately 20% by having your reception at a country club, restaurant or hotel instead of a special location or at home because you'll avoid expensive rentals. For your budget, we recommend hosting a brunch or luncheon. If you choose a dinner reception, limit your menu. Consider a simple 3 course menu of salad, a chicken entrée and dessert. This estimate also includes simple hors d'oeuvres during the cocktail hour and service fees at approximately 18%.	\$8,000.00	

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Beverages/Bartenders	11%	People consume less alcohol during the day than at night, so a luncheon or brunch will keep your bar expenses down. Try tray-passing mimosas, regular and alcohol free, strawberry orange juice and glasses of mineral water garnished with fresh fruit slices. Serve a simple domestic or Italian red and white table wine (5 glasses per bottle) for dinner and a domestic champagne (6 glasses per bottle) for the toast at the cake cutting. You may opt to skip the champagne toast altogether. A nighttime wedding cocktail hour should last no longer than one hour. Serve one or two specialty drinks. Try a margarita bar, a beautiful champagne punch sprinkled with rose petals or a summer sangria. This estimate is based on approximately two and a half alcoholic drinks per person.	\$2,100.00	
Reception Location Fees	N/A	These fees have already been figured into the catering budget.	0	
Food, Beverage And Location Fees Sub-Total	54%		\$10,700.00	
Save-The-Date Cards	.25%	Design your own save-the-date cards on your computer. Add a great photo of you and your guy and mount it onto cardstock for a fun announcement. Or create a postcard with your favorite poem on the front with the details of the wedding on the back. Be sure to include travel information and accommodation recommendations.	\$50.00	
Wedding Invitations	2%	Select a classic card or folded invitation thermograved instead of engraved. Select an invitation with a nice weight, a reply card, reception card or direction card and envelope.	\$350.00	

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Personal Stationery	1%	You can afford at least 150 simple thank you cards and envelopes thermographed or blind embossed, with a return address on the back. Or select a monogram already available with your own initials.	\$125.00	
Calligraphy Charges	.10%	Professional calligraphy is still a little too expensive for your budget; opt to address your invitations on your computer. Or find that friend with perfect handwriting.	\$25.00	
Postage Costs	1%	You'll need to figure at least 3 stamps: 2 for your invitation and one for your RSVP card. Purchase several calligraphy pens to match your invitations and some glue sticks to close your envelopes.	\$127.50	
Ceremony Reserved Seating Cards	N/A	Remember that friend with beautiful handwriting? Ask her to write your reserved seating cards, too. Add double-sided tape to the back of the cards and attach them to your ceremony pews or chairs.	0	
Wedding Programs	.10%	Rather than printing 175 programs, design one large, beautiful program on your computer. Tell a story about each person in your wedding party and how they are important to you and your groom. Mount the program on beautiful card stock and layer it on top of a bed of rose petals surrounded by votive candles. Place it in a frame at your guest book table for a beautiful and heartfelt touch.	\$25.00	

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Table Number Cards	N/A	Ask the hotel to provide you with their table numbers instead of designing your own. Or print numbers out on your computer and mount them onto cardstock.	0	
Seating Cards Or Escort Cards	1%	Order simple cards with envelopes and use machine calligraphy.	\$200.00	
Stationery Paper Sub-Total	5%		\$902.50	
Wedding Favors	.25%	We recommend skipping the party favors. Write a heartfelt note to your guests on your computer and print it onto beautiful paper stock. Place it at each guest's place setting. Tell the story of how you fell in love or how happy you both are to have each person there to share your special day.	\$50.00	
Wedding Party Gifts	1%	Give each wedding party member a Tiffany & Co. silver luggage tag engraved with their own monogram (\$20.00 each); a monogrammed travel razor set for the guys (\$22.00 each); or a mint julep cup for the girls, monogrammed with their initials (for flowers or even makeup brushes). And for the kids in your wedding party, try a personalized satin purse with a necklace and ring for the flower girl (\$18.00) and a silver plate train for the ring bearer (\$20.00). All available at our Wedding Shop.	\$240.00	
Guest Book And Pen	.3%	Purchase a mother-of-pearl pen for \$25.00 along with a gilded lattice guest book for \$40.00 from our Wedding Shop.	\$65.00	

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Cake Knife And Lifter	.2%	Purchase a beautiful embossed cake knife and server for \$36.00 from our Wedding Shop. Have your florist decorate it with pretty ribbon, flowers and greenery.	\$36.00	
Toasting Glasses	N/A	Use two hotel champagne glasses and ask your florist to decorate them with ribbon, matching greenery and fresh flowers.	0	
Gifts & Accessories Sub-Total	2%		\$391.00	
Ceremony Flowers	2%	Getting married in a church or temple? For a Jewish wedding, we recommend two large arrangements on either side of the altar or Chuppah. If you have a hand-held Chuppah, decorate it with a fragrant, flowering vine. Try renting fruit trees, or 2-4 garden urns filled with beautiful ferns. Consider ferns with pillar candles in hurricane lamps set in the center, or potted flowers alternating down each side of the aisle. Consider sprinkling a mixture of bright red, pink and orange rose petals down either side of the aisle for a stark and dramatic look. For a nighttime ceremony, try four wrought iron torchieres with pillar candles and twine a fragrant vine, such as star jasmine, and greenery throughout. Or tie bunches of dried lavender or wild flowers with satin bows on every third aisle pew or chair.	\$420.00	

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Reception Flowers	5%	We've figured \$37.50 for each centerpiece, which will allow you to scatter 5-7 votive candles throughout your table and buy moderate floral arrangements. You can fill pedestal bowls with seasonal fruits and garnish them with several fresh flowers; try simple glass containers with pillar candles inside and floating gardenias, gerber daisies or colorful rose petals. Nestle other flower petals or flower heads around the containers. Simple glass vases filled with elegant calla lilies and surrounded with votive candles will make a sophisticated arrangement. Try several small terra cotta pots filled with violets or pansies on each table. Add moss, French ribbon or paint them apple green for an added touch. For a beach wedding, fill a glass container with sand, water and beautiful seashells and scatter votives around for a romantic, natural table. You can afford two buffet arrangements, a guest book table arrangement, powder room flowers, tray and cake flowers and greenery. We also recommend moving your ceremony flowers to decorate the stage for the reception band.	\$1,000.00	
Flowers Sub-Total	7%		\$1,420.00	
Napkin Treatments	.5%	Grab that stylish friend of yours and tie your napkins in a beautiful, double-faced satin or grosgrain ribbon in a similar hue to your flowers. You can also add rosemary or flowering thyme to your napkin treatment or a small flower bud. (Order one yard of ribbon per napkin and you'll still have some leftover ribbon for your cake knife, lifter and champagne glasses.) If simplicity is your style, you can also roll your napkin and band it with a piece of 2" ribbon. Design a special message or quote on your computer, cut it into strips 1" wide and wrap it around the ribbon. Or fold the napkins and tuck rustic breadsticks into them.	\$100.00	

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Specialty Lighting Company	N/A	Ask the hotel to dim the lights and order lots of candles (if permitted), which have already been figured into your flower budget.	0	
Specialty Linens	N/A	Use the linens provided by the hotel/restaurant or country club. Select a simple tablecloth, like white or blush, and bring in color with your flower arrangements.	0	
Décor Sub-Total	.5%		\$100.00	
Rental Equipment (including plates, chairs, tables and glassware)	N/A	This expense is not necessary since you are at a hotel. They should even provide your band's stage and a dance floor.	0	
Rentals Sub-Total	N/A		0	
Ceremony Music	2%	Hire a soloist, like a harpist, pianist or Bossa Nova guitarist. Depending on your city, you may even be able to hire two pieces. A bass player and flautist is an excellent choice.	\$400.00	
Cocktail Music	1%	Spend a little extra money and keep the bass player and flautist for an extra hour for the cocktail reception. Most flautists can also play the saxophone and the bass player usually plays the electric guitar, so you get two different sounds for the price of one. You can also save money by designing your own cocktail hour CD.	\$100.00	
Reception Band	7%	You can afford a 4-piece live band for 4 hours or you can hire a DJ for 4 hours with some extras like special lighting and a mirrored ball for the dancing portion of your wedding (with some possible money to spare).	\$1,300.00	
Music Total	10%		\$1,800.00	

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Videographer	N/A	Your budget really doesn't allow for a videographer. Instead, we suggest asking a talented friend to shoot the ceremony for you. Or you may want to contact your local university film department for students interested in filming.	0	
Photographer	8%	Hire a professional, independent wedding photographer rather than a "wedding studio" (they won't have the same overhead expenses). If possible, interview someone who is fairly new to the wedding business. Either order the least expensive wedding package or create your own wedding album (remember to use acid-free paper). You will be able to afford a photographer for approximately six hours, so make their time worthwhile by organizing the shots you want. Have the photographer arrive one hour prior to the ceremony for pre-wedding shots and leave right after the cake cutting. Have friends take pictures of the bouquet toss, garter toss, last dance and getaway.	\$1,675.00	
Photography/Video Sub-Total	8%		\$1,500.00	
Limousines	1%	Depending on your city, you can afford a limousine to take you to the ceremony and one to pick you up at the end. Or rent a great car for the day and have a trusted friend chauffeur you. If you have a great car in the family, use it for your getaway. Have the rest of the wedding party drive themselves.	\$200.00	
Out-of-Town Guest Transportation	N/A	Everyone is on their own for the weekend. Remind your guests to rent their own cars.	0	

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Valet Parking Services	N/A	Guests will need to self-park or pay for valet on their own.	0	
Transportation Sub-Total	1%		\$200.00	
Grand Total			\$19,913.50	

Additional costs to consider:

We recommend that you figure an additional 8-10% of your budget for gratuities, sales tax (when applicable) and unanticipated expenses.

Below the line items:

- Marriage License
- Wedding Coordinator
- Bridesmaids' Luncheon
- Hostess Gifts
- Out-of-Town Hotel Gifts And Schedules
- Rehearsal Dinner
- Rehearsal Dinner Invitations
- Rehearsal Dinner Place Cards
- Rehearsal Dinner Music
- Staff Meals And Parking Charges
- Babysitter For Child Attendants
- Post-Wedding Brunch
- Wedding Night Suite
- Honeymoon