

# The Small Wedding & Elopement Checklist

One page. Six months to "I do." Built for weddings and elopements under 75 guests.

## 6+ MONTHS OUT

- Set total budget & decide who's contributing
- Pick your date (check off-peak days/season to save)
- Choose venue style: courthouse, backyard, small venue, or elopement
- Book venue or confirm location access/permits
- Start guest list (cap it — every name changes the catering number)
- Research marriage license requirements for your state/county
- Book photographer (often booked first for small weddings)

## 6-8 WEEKS OUT

- Send invitations / finalize headcount
- Confirm final guest count with caterer
- Order flowers or DIY décor materials
- Apply for marriage license (check your state's waiting period)
- Break in shoes / finalize hair & makeup trial
- Draft day-of timeline and share with vendors

## 3-5 MONTHS OUT

- Book caterer or plan menu (ask about F&B minimums)
- Order or buy attire
- Book officiant
- Reserve rentals if backyard/DIY (tent, tables, chairs)
- Apply for any required event/noise permits
- Get one-day liability insurance if required
- Book musician/DJ or build a playlist

## 1-2 WEEKS OUT

- Confirm final payments & due dates with every vendor
- Pick up marriage license (check expiration window!)
- Pack an emergency kit (safety pins, stain remover, snacks)
- Assign someone to handle vendor questions day-of
- Confirm weather backup plan if outdoors
- Get certified copies of your marriage certificate ordered

### Quick Budget Snapshot (fill in your own numbers)

Total budget: \$ _____	Attire: \$ _____ (10%)
Venue: \$ _____ (25%)	Flowers: \$ _____ (8%)
Catering: \$ _____ (20%)	Everything else: \$ _____ (22%)
Photography: \$ _____ (15%)	Contingency: \$ _____ (4%)

Want this to calculate itself? Get the full spreadsheet:

[Small Wedding & Elopement Budget Planner — archienovember.gumroad.com/l/grbzld](https://archienovember.gumroad.com/l/grbzld)

Percentages shown are this calculator's own small-wedding planning model (see the Wedding Budget Percentages page on this site for full sourcing). Not affiliated with any government office. Always confirm license/permit requirements with your local county clerk.