

# wedding countdown checklist

## 12-18 Months

- Determine the style of wedding you want – formal, semi-formal or casual
- Decide how many guests you will be inviting before getting your heart set on a venue. The Estate at Independence can accommodate 300!**
- Start scheduling visits to wedding venues
- Interview & choose a wedding coordinator
- Figure out your budget & discuss who will be helping with which expenses
- Nail down your reception venue  
\*As soon as the venue is booked, get wedding insurance. If the venue was to burn down or be inaccessible, the couple would be covered.
- Choose your wedding party

## 10-12 Months

- Choose & book a ceremony venue if separate from your reception location
- Set up tastings with caterers unless you have a full service venue like The Estate at Independence with a highly experienced culinary staff.**
- Start working with your coordinator on the wedding day timeline
- Schedule appointments with bridal salons
- Choose wedding party attire
- Interview & choose a photographer
- Find the perfect florist
- Schedule your engagement photo session
- Peruse the portfolios of videographers & find the right person to document your day on video
- Find an officiant & meet with him or her to talk about ceremony details
- Talk with your officiant about pre-marital coaching
- Make sure your visas & passports are up to date
- Nail down your caterer
- Interview & choose DJ and/or Band
- Hire a hair and makeup artist or team
- Send out your Save the Date cards

## 6-9 Months

- Set up cake tastings
- Determine the order of the ceremony events. The Estate at Independence's in-house coordinator will help you through this.**
- Create a wedding website

## 4-6 Months

- Consult with a professional lighting company
- Select ceremony musicians
- Meet with your DJ about music for your wedding dinner & reception
- Consult your travel agent about honeymoon plans
- Schedule fittings for men's formalwear
- Talk with a stationer about invitations, programs & other paper goods
- Pick & reserve your perfect honeymoon destination
- Shop for your wedding bands
- Set up your wedding registry at your favorite stores or set up an online honeymoon fund
- Reserve wedding day transportation
- Carefully choose & reserve rental items  
Visit the Planning Tools page on RichmondWeddings.com to find our free downloadable Rental Return Checklist!
- Finalize floral design
- Order your wedding cake & if you're a traditional Southern bride, order the groom's cake
- Reserve hotel room blocks for guests
- Send local activity information to guests
- Make sure you have all of your travel immunizations
- Keep up with your gown fittings
- Consider dance lessons
- Set up an outing for your future spouse. The Estate at Independence offers golf, laser tag, zip lines and more!**
- If you are planning on coloring your hair, schedule the appointment now. This will give you time to color correct if you don't like it

## 2-4 Months

- Send a wedding announcement to your local newspaper with a photo
- Arrange professional addressing of invitations
- Select gifts for the bridal party and each other. This service is included with your package at The Estate at Independence.**
- Schedule hair & makeup trial
- Make sure your bridesmaids have chosen the right shoes
- Schedule final gown and men's formalwear fittings
- Make rehearsal dinner reservations
- Consider planning a welcome party if you are having a lot of out of town guests
- Schedule your bridal portrait session
- Order favors or forgo favors & make a charitable donation on your guests' behalf
- Provide planner with welcome baskets for out-of-town guests
- Think about adding late night snacks to your menu
- Mail out formal invitations

## 1-2 Months

- Make sure all written contracts with vendors are in place
- Go to your final gown fitting & be sure that your mom or Maid of Honor learns to bustle your dress. Or relax knowing the coordinator at The Estate at Independence will handle this!**
- Plan bridesmaid outing
- Confirm honeymoon reservations & be sure that your luggage meets current travel regulations.
- Record gifts as you receive them and write thank you notes
- Invite wedding party & out-of-town guests to rehearsal dinner
- Review your reception seating chart
- Get wedding license – it can be obtained from any courthouse in Virginia

## 2-4 Weeks

- Make it official – secure marriage license
- Confirm wedding rehearsal time and address with participating parties
- Confirm transportation and arrival times
- Confirm hotel room blocks
- Arrange to professionally clean & preserve your gown after the wedding
- Write or choose your wedding vows
- Finalize your wedding timeline and make sure a copy goes to all vendors. Another included service with The Estate at Independence!**

## 1-2 Weeks

- Pick up wedding bands. Be sure to check sizes & engravings
- Get your engagement ring cleaned so that it sparkles on your wedding day
- Have final consultations with vendors. The Estate at Independence's team will take care of confirmations and timing.**
- Send final guest count to caterer & venues
- Remind your future spouse and their wedding party members to pick up their attire
- Stock your bridal emergency kit
- Write vows/speeches
- Get excited! Your big day is almost here!

## After the Wedding

- Ensure formalwear is returned
- Review your vendors on [RichmondWeddings.com](http://RichmondWeddings.com)
- Preserve your dress
- Write thank you notes