

Helpful hints from an expert

Remembrance Anniversary Celebration. All the mystique of a wedding, honeymoon and a new lifestyle can suddenly become clouded by a flurry of arrangements and unprecedented demands on your time.

"Careful planning and coordination are key to calmly managing the multiple roles of a bride-to-be," says Jackie Martinson, liaison coordinator for Sarah Coventry, a company well known for a variety of consumer products.

Calendars or lists?

"While checklists are helpful, a planning calendar will help you establish realistic deadlines," she suggests. "Preferably schedule tasks no longer than two hours on a weekday, or one half-day task per weekend."

"Use the handy, free often found in bridal publications to pick you in planning your ideal timetable."

"Remember, it generally takes six months to a year to plan a formal wedding, especially near cities where convention bookings can make owner reservations a challenge."

Start yourself!

Before you undertake the time-consuming tasks of deciding on attire for the wedding party, your honeymoon or furnishings for your new home, treat your

"Enjoy a leisurely afternoon with a friend who can help you plan the style and one or two theme colors," suggests Martinson.

"If you've never participated in a personal color analysis session, devote your first planning session to this," she advises. "Knowing which colors look best on you or in your surroundings can save you many hours of ineffective planning, ineffective shopping and exchanging items that don't match."

Stunning choices made easy

Once you have narrowed your range to a few dozen choices, you can confidently select among these colors.

At least six months before the wedding, select the style and one or two key colors for your wedding, reception, honeymoon and home furnishings.

With colors analyzed, you'll find that even selecting your shade of traditional wedding gown white will be easier. Pure white will make some brides look radiantly, others washed out. Antique white may have the opposite effect on others.

Your new home

"One of your earliest tasks will be to select a new home," she says. The furniture you buy and the china, tableware, linen and accessories you choose as bridal registry items should be thoroughly coordinated.

Avoid scratches.

Avoid last minute shopping scrambles

by choosing gifts for the groom and the wedding party more than a month in advance.

Long lasting gifts such as a silver or gold pin bracelet, earrings or a strand of pearls for the bridesmaids, and a tie rack, money clip or pen for the brides are memorable choices.

"You can't go wrong if you choose gifts with a recognized brand name," Martinson says.

"Wrap them in paper coordinated with the decorations and flowers you plan for the setting where you will present the gifts. Either at the bride's luncheon or rehearsal dinner that you have already planned."

Final month

That leaves the final month for writing thank you notes, keeping gown fittings, hairdresser, photographer and doctor appointments, and packing up the rings and marriage license.

Of course, you'll be excited to see the grand finale of your early color coordination plans as you move your furnishings into your new home.

That will leave the last week or so to send your announcements to newspapers, give a final guest count to the caterer and reaffirm all reservations.

With arrangements well in hand months before the wedding, you can now relax, radiant in your surroundings, and enjoy your special day.

Coping with the career-marriage crunch: A spirit of compromise eases tensions

Is it possible to build a strong marriage while building a career, too? With "juggling," "stress" and "burnout" the catchwords for the '80s, many married couples ask this question today.

"The Career-Marriage Crunch," an article in a recent issue of *Bride's* magazine, offers two career couples this advice for keeping love alive:

• Leave job stress behind. Never take your marriage for granted and assume that it will just take care of itself. Instead, make it a habit to guard and structure your private time carefully.

• Make time for each other. "Three evenings a week are for work, weekends are just for us." Or, you could set up an actual appointment calendar, setting aside time to discuss household business, to enjoy a social life, to let romance happen.

• Share household chores. The last thing you want to do is waste what precious time you have together squabbling over whose turn it is to do the dishes. To avoid this, you need the determination to have a fair, equal marriage, and a plan for carrying it through.

A "His 'n' Hers" list of chores works for some couples: "I do the shopping,

you do the cooking, we do the laundry together." Others find that sheet-curling, like hiring outside help, works wonders for their marriage.

A spirit of compromise goes a long way toward easing tensions. You may have to accept the fact that your house won't always be as neat as you'd like, that on some nights your "proper dinner" will be take-out food instead.

• Plan the right leisure activities. For true relaxation, choose pastimes that contrast with the job you do all week. For example, if you operate computers at work, you may really need a weekend that involves socializing with friends. If, on the other hand, you're a lawyer who talks to clients daily, you might crave the solitude of a Saturday night movie.

What happens if your needs conflict with those of your spouse? It might be important to agree to socialize separately sometimes, saving the time you spend together for activities you both enjoy.

Of course, sharing the details of your workday with your spouse is important, and now and then there will be pressures and deadlines that simply can't be put aside. But, in general, you should make a clear transition between work and home.

• How do you do this? You might work out tennis at a health club before coming home. Or, you could set aside "winding down" time right at the office—a period in which you return phone calls, organize your desk, chat with co-workers.

• Share household chores. The last thing you want to do is waste what precious time you have together squabbling over whose turn it is to do the dishes. To avoid this, you need the determination to have a fair, equal marriage, and a plan for carrying it through.

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