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Bridal Jewelry: Time to Shine

Something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue. All of your bases can be covered by bridal baubles.

Jewelry is an integral part of your bridal ensemble, and not just your ring, either. Here's how to make sure you shine on your big day.

START AT THE TOP

Every little girl dreams of being a princess on their big day and some of that dream can come true with a tiara. Tiaras can range into the hundreds of dollars and more, just like other kinds of jewelry.

They can be luxe or minimalist, and are always a great way to dress up even the most simple dress. When choosing a tiara, keep your hairstyle and veil in mind. You may want to let your stylist know you're planning on a tiara and have it on hand when they try out your hairstyle.

EARRINGS

If you're going with a tiara, you'll want your earrings to coordinate. This may be a great place to get your something old (maybe a family set of simple diamond studs or pearls) in.

And, just like with the tiara, you want to coordinate your earrings with your hairdresser. They'll want to show off particularly dangly styles.

BASE YOUR LOOK ON YOUR BORROWED PIECES

Don't let your aunt's pearls down. Instead, make them the centerpiece of your jewelry.

And, experts at Brides say, it's perfectly acceptable to mix your metals and gemstones, so don't be afraid to make your look your own. If a piece is being given to you, not just loaned for the big day, Brides suggests working with a jeweler into remaking it into a piece you really love.

NECKLACES

Match your necklace to your neckline, Brides says. That means pendants with a V-neck, chokers and statement necklaces with strapless or sweetheart necklines, and so forth. The necklace should sit on your skin if any skin is showing.

Remember, though, don't feel pressured to do anything. Make your look your own, whether it was old, new, borrowed or blue. And don't be afraid to stand up to friends or family members to make your wedding day your own. You can also switch things up at any time, even the day of. If you find a jewelry piece or a look you love, find a place to wear it at the reception or a party or shower before or after your wedding.



Protect Your Wedding with Wedding Insurance

Getting hitched? Congratulations! Planning a wedding is incredibly exciting (if not somewhat overwhelming). From selecting the right invitations to configuring seating arrangements to booking the honeymoon, it's no wonder couples tend to get stressed while getting ready for the big day.

Disasters can strike even the most well-planned weddings. How do you protect yourself in case things go wrong? Consider wedding insurance – the greatest wedding gift you can give yourself. Wedding and event insurance isn't only affordable; it's also the best way to make sure you're protected if a vendor no-shows, gifts get stolen or an unexpected health problem forces you to postpone.

What does wedding insurance cover?

Typically special event policies protect you against financial loss that may come from the cost of damages and additional expenses caused by circumstances out of your control. Depending on your policy, your coverage could include:

- Postponements
- Vendor cancellations
- Venue catastrophe
- Lost deposits
- Lost wedding photographs or video
- Damage to wedding jewelry
- Wedding dress or tuxedo loss or damage
- Stolen wedding gifts
- Injuries to a wedding guest
- Alcohol-related accidents

Remember your something borrowed and something blue, and don't forget to learn more about the wedding insurance policies available to you and your partner. The agents at Gallaher Insurance Group are here to help you evaluate your options. Contact us today, and cross one more thing off that long wedding planning checklist!



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Show Your Favor

Wedding favors let your guests know you care and provide them with a tangible memory of your big day.

Wedding website The Knot says the average cost of favors is about \$400, so it's not a small part of your budget, either. Here are some great ideas for showing your guests that they're your favorite on your wedding day.

**TINY TOTS
(NO, NOT THAT KIND)**

Find miniature bottles of liquor, wine or beer to give out to your guests. Look for a brand that comes from near the site of your wedding. You may even be able to order customized tags for your big day. Don't forget to offer a non-alcoholic option, too, for those who don't imbibe.

DRINKWARE

This category runs the gamut, but think along the lines of koozies if you live in a warmer area and have a list full of outdoorsy guests. For more upscale venues and budgets, look for customizable shot glasses, mugs or julep cups. These are great ways to give a reusable gift that can remind your guests of your big day.

CUSTOMIZED PLAYING CARDS

If your friends and family never met a game they didn't like, customized playing cards may be an ace in the hole. You can get cards with pictures of you and your love through customization sites such as Shutterfly.

LIVE PLANTS

Setting an outdoor scene? Let your guests take some of the gorgeousness home with them in the form of live plants. That way, your love can grow in everyone's home. Look for succulents (trendy and easy to care for), seedling trees and more. Visit a local nursery for ideas on native plants that will do especially well in your climate.

DESTINATION FAVORS

Hitting the road for your I-do's is a lot of fun and gives you a great opportunity to select some amazing wedding favors.

You can choose to go the travel route and pick items like luggage tags, hand sanitizers or some travel snacks. Or you can choose items specific to your destination, such as giving personalized jars of sunscreen out at a beach wedding.



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Hot Registry Items

Marshall Field’s in Chicago started the first bridal registry in 1924 as a way for the happy couple to indicate chosen crystal, china and silver patterns to their friends and family. Since then, the registry has come a long way. Couples can register online for any number of things for their new household or even for their honeymoon. Here are some of the hottest gifts to register for according to The Knot.

SMART APPLIANCES

Coffee pots, vacuums and even the lowly toaster all have high-tech brains nowadays that connect them to the internet of things. The Revolution 2-slice high-speed smart toaster (\$299) has 63 settings with technology that uses intelligent heating algorithms to sear rather than bake your baked goods for a crisp out- side and a soft, chewy inside.

LUGGAGE

As more places open up post-pandemic, more couples are hitting the road. A set of luggage is a great, traditional gift for the adventurous couple. Make sure you choose a set that fits your

lifestyle. If you spend a lot of time camping, you should choose duffel bags instead of those hard-sided bags with a built-in charger.

LINENS

Towels, sheets and other goods are also standbys on the wedding registry. What’s new is the popularity of high-tech fabrics that are more sustainable and last longer than traditional choices. Make sure to make color and pattern choices that are classic and will last you for years.

ELECTRONICS

Today’s houses are high-tech, as we’ve seen before with the toaster, so it’s not unusual to add some electronics to your wedding registry. Think of things such as soundbars, robotic vacuums and air purifiers. Consider the Cuisinart convection toaster oven (\$179), which puts the power of a convection oven right on your countertop. It’s a budget-friendly way to get the versatility of the convection oven without having to replace a major appliance.



KITCHEN APPLIANCES

Beyond the smart appliances, many couples are also registering for some appliances that may not have been on your mom’s wedding registries. These include things like air fryers, espresso machines, electronic pressure cookers and immersion blenders. Another popular option is the Nomad six-quart traveling slow cooker (\$74). It looks like a lunch cooler, but it cooks on the go. It features a nonstick surface for easy clean-up and has a cool-touch surface for safe handling.

Five Great Reception Ideas

Vows, gowns and flowers take center stage at the wedding, but the reception can really be your time to shine as a couple. The party should represent who you both are as a couple and celebrate your unique love for one another and for your friends and family. Here are some eye-catching ways to do that, courtesy of The Knot.

GET CREATIVE WITH THE GUESTBOOK

Sure, you can have a regular guestbook and pen. Or you can get out of the boring box. Think about a way guests can leave their best wishes for you in a way that reflects your hobbies, loves or values. Are the bride and groom sports fans? Signed baseballs, footballs or basketballs are great ways to reflect that.

CHECK YOUR PHONES

If you want your guests to be present and in the moment (and you don’t have a hashtag for your wedding), consider setting up a phone check station similar to a coat check at your favorite restaurant. Recruit a couple of friends to man the desk and guests can check their devices in and out.

RECHARGING STATIONS

On the other end of that spectrum, you can set up recharging stations around your reception to make sure everyone keeps their Instagram feeds updated with the hottest pictures from your big day. Take a cue from event planning and make sure the stations are convenient but out of the way of the dance floor and that there are plenty of comfortable places to sit around it.

COOL COCKTAIL IDEAS

Bespoke cocktails are so last year. Jazz up the bar at your reception with hot ideas like ice cubes with your monogram and drink pouches — adult and otherwise. Talk to your caterer about more ideas to personalize your food and drink options in creative ways.

SCENTSCAPING

Long winter nights are perfect for candlelight decor, and with candles comes the opportunity for planning the perfect scents for your wedding and reception. Plus, scent is tied to memory, so the smell of your favorite candles will bring back happy memories for years to come. Just make sure that the scent is light enough not to aggravate guests with allergies and sensitivities.



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Set Up a Fun Photo Booth

You want to provide ways for your guests to remember your special night. What better way than to give them a fun keepsake they can hang on to for years to come? A photo booth makes this a possibility. With fun props and hilarious photos, you'll have high-end mementos for every guest who participates.

HIRE A COMPANY

Many photographers have integrated the photo booth into their professional services. If it's in your budget to do so, you can hire a photography company to set up and manage the booth during your entire reception. Be sure to get a full quote for the project so you're not surprised on your wedding day. Any professional photographer should be able to tell you how much a booth setup will

be, as well as how long it will take them to prepare and tear down the booth. Let them take care of the heavy lifting, including selecting the spot, providing the equipment, bringing the props and handling the dissemination of photographs to each guest while you sit back and enjoy your special day.

GO DIY

If you're on a tighter budget, you may find yourself putting together a DIY booth. Fortunately, with a little planning, this is a totally doable project. First, consider your location. Your DIY photo booth should be located where guests can easily find it. Be sure to never interrupt the flow of your event, which means placing it in dance floor corners or unused coat

closets. If your reception is outside, you'll probably have more space to find a suitable location. Just make sure guests can easily access it for some memorable photo fun.

THINK VIDEO

Video and virtual reality booths have also caught fire in recent years. You may need to enlist the help of professional videographers to pull off this type of booth. Guests can act silly or deliver a special message via video, and then download the file with a special link from the company. This is a great way of producing a tangible parting gift for each guest. You may also be able to immediately upload some of the videos to your wedding website or social media platforms, as well.

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A DIY Wedding Checklist



As a bride or groom, planning a wedding can be a beautiful experience. Some of the benefits are being able to control all of the creative decisions along the way. It can also be a lot to handle if done incorrectly. Fortunately, there are some tried and true things to remember when putting together a plan for your wedding. Follow along with the checklist below to make sure you're not forgetting anything as your special day nears.

CREATE A BUDGET

Paying for your wedding doesn't have to break the bank. With proper planning, you can pull off the event of your dreams if you stay within a predetermined budget. How much you're willing to spend will be determined by what is available to you, either through your own savings or financial help from family members. Either way, creating a realistic budget will help you stay focused as you secure things like the venue, band, food and photographers.

RESERVE THE VENUES

Once you've landed on a wedding date, choose the venue or venues where your event will be taking place. Many couples are following the recent trend of holding the wedding ceremony and reception in the same building. This can cut down on logistics and travel for guests, making it a one-stop-shop for all of your wedding festivities. No matter what you decide, it's important to lock down your venues early, especially with the boomerang effect many planners are anticipating as once pandemic-delayed weddings are starting to happen again.

GET INVITES OUT EARLY

There are certain components of any wedding that take more time than others to execute. Invites are one of them. Unless you're creating each one by hand, you'll be depending on a printer and any related shipping delays before they can go out to your guests. Consider using a local printing company to handle your job. They can work with you on printing and shipping your invites at a good cost. Make sure the invite process is collaborative with your spouse. Forgetting to invite someone from your family or friend network is something you definitely want to avoid.

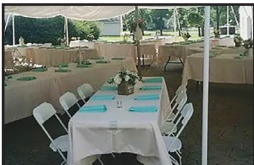
History and Beauty in the Heart of Mexico Audrain County Historical Society's Campus is the Perfect Wedding Venue



Rental of Graceland Mansion:

The mansion can accommodate up to 140 people. Includes use of the meeting room and kitchen. Alcoholic beverages are permitted. Live music is allowed at the discretion of the Museum Director.

Cost: \$300 • Refundable Security Deposit: \$300



Country Church Rental: This fully restored 1889 structure makes for a



beautiful backdrop for any wedding ceremony, conveniently located directly behind the courtyard. The church seats 140 guests. Includes use of church for rehearsal, use of meeting room for dressing on day of wedding & restrooms.

Cost: \$150 • Security Deposit: \$100

Courtyard, Gazebo & Grounds:

The beautifully landscaped courtyard makes the perfect setting for outdoor weddings, family reunions and business gatherings. Rental includes use of meeting room and restrooms. Museum can provide information for tent and chair rental. The Gazebo on the northeast side of the mansion can accommodate a small wedding or gathering. Gazebo & grounds includes use of meeting room and restrooms.

Cost: \$100 • Refundable Security Deposit: \$100

Audrain County Historical Society

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