

The Ultimate Barn Wedding Checklist



They're rustic, incredibly romantic, and offer endless ways to up your DIY game. Yes, barn weddings are all the rage these days...but, as beautiful as they may be, they come with their own set of unique challenges. Never fear! We've created a comprehensive checklist to help you navigate those uncharted waters and pull off a Pinterest-worthy, rustic-chic wedding your guests will be talking about for years to come.

Barn Logistics

Most barn venues don't offer the same amenities as a banquet hall or more traditional event facility, and they may even have a few extra restrictions. After you've worked out your budget, do yourself a favor and ask the following questions:

- Is the venue permitted to host events?**
- How many guests can the barn comfortably accommodate?**
- What does the venue rental cover?** Some venues provide the space only (not tables, chairs, linens, glassware, etc.). This could lead to extra expenses that may not have been included in your original plan.
- Will generators or lighting need to be brought in?** Barns may or may not be equipped with electricity.
- Are there restrooms on site?** If not portable ones will need to be rented.
- Is there space available for the wedding party to get ready on the day of?** If not, you'll have to find a hotel nearby.
- Does the venue have a curfew?** Noise restrictions?
- Is wedding liability insurance required?** Even if it isn't, you should consider getting some.
- Does the venue have a liquor license?**
- Are there any additional fees** (e.g. corkage, service charge, cake cutting)?

Weather Concerns

You can't control Mother Nature, so if inclement weather could effect any part of your event there needs to be a backup plan. Here are some questions to ask:

- Does the venue have a plan for weather contingencies?**
- Is the barn rain-proof?** If not, can an area of the property be tented?
- Is the barn climate-controlled?** If it isn't, are there any heating or AC units available?

***TIP:** Even if the barn you've fallen in love with isn't climate-controlled, you can still do things to make your guests more comfortable. If it's too hot, provide misters or fans as wedding favors. Too cold? Warm blankets will take the chill off—and they'll also be a perfect complement to the rustic vibe.*

The Great Outdoors

Outdoor venues (especially those in the country!) can sometimes come with terrain and critters you won't encounter in the city. And these extra considerations can have an impact on your guests. Be sure to find out:

- Is there on-site parking and for how many cars?** If there isn't, is valet or shuttle service an option or required? It's also worth asking if guests can leave their cars there overnight if necessary.
- Can guests easily walk to the event areas from the parking lot or shuttle drop-off?**
- Are the event venues and grounds wheelchair/handicap accessible?**

- ❑ **Will bugs be a factor?** Depending on the season, insects (and allergies) can be unwanted “guests” at your wedding.

***TIP:** If bugs are a potential problem, including a little bottle of bug spray and Benadryl in the bathroom, or a well-placed citronella candle, can save everyone a lot of discomfort.*

Hiring Vendors

Coordinators, caterers, florists, photographers...these are the people that will help you pull off your day, so make sure you know which ones you'll need to hire and what the requirements are for them:

- ❑ **Does the venue have a list of preferred vendors?** Are you required to use the vendors on that list or can you choose your own?
- ❑ **What time will your vendors be allowed to set up and tear down?**
- ❑ **Is a wedding coordinator required or is there an on-site coordinator?**
- ❑ **If you're bringing your own caterer, is there a full-service kitchen area or prep space available for them?**
- ❑ **Is there a space for the DJ to set up and plug in their equipment?**
- ❑ **Can décor and rentals be picked up the next day?** Or does everything have to be out of the barn as soon as the event has ended?

Keep Your Guests Informed

Find creative ways to convey the theme of your wedding to your guests so they know what to expect—and what to wear!

- ❑ **Create a wedding website to highlight additional details about the day.** Consider including a suggested dress code (e.g. “cocktail attire” or “barn elegance”), along with the weather anticipated for the time of year your event is being hosted. If part of your wedding is taking place outdoors, let guests know that as well and mention bringing sunglasses, sweaters, etc. You should also give your women attendees a heads-up about any lawns, gravel paths, etc., so that they can opt for wedges or flats instead of stilettos!

- ❑ **Pick the perfect wedding save-the-dates and invitations** to set the stage (and style) for your barn bash.
- ❑ **If your barn venue is off the beaten path, consider posting signs along the way** to point your guests in the right direction.

Play Up The Space

You've chosen a barn venue because it can be incredibly versatile. Don't be afraid to play it up to fit your style!

- ❑ **Hang a few strands of bistro lights or crystal chandeliers** to add instant glamour. Or go a less expensive route by stringing up Christmas lights!
- ❑ **Take advantage of overhead beams** by suspending paper globe lanterns or draping them with a beautiful burlap bunting that you've DIY'd. (You may need to get approval from the venue.)
- ❑ **Speaking of burlap, you can purchase it by the roll** and use it for everything from inexpensive table runners to bouquet wraps.
- ❑ **Use some hay bales for rustic outdoor seating** for your cocktail hour—or as benches for the ceremony. (You may need to get approval from the venue.)
- ❑ **Use the open outdoor spaces for fun lawn games** to entertain your guest between events. We're partial to giant Jenga and beer pong.

***TIP:** There are too many ideas to list, so remember that Google is your friend. Search for the venue name + wedding to see photos of how recently married couples have transformed the place. Also, Pinterest is your homie. Check out our own [Barn Weddings board](#) for even more ideas.*