

A romantic couple is shown in profile, kissing. The man is on the left, wearing a dark suit jacket and a white shirt with a dark tie. The woman is on the right, wearing a white dress. They are standing outdoors, with a body of water and a bright sunset in the background. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow and lens flare effects. The woman's hair is long and wavy. The overall mood is intimate and celebratory.

*how to:*

**PLAN YOUR  
*BEST DAY EVER*  
ON A BUDGET**

**THE SPRINGS**

WEDDING & EVENT VENUES



## a quick note

Is it possible to host the wedding of your dreams while working within a budget? *Yes, absolutely!*

To help you do this, we've put together 60 of our most helpful tips & tricks for planning your Best Day Ever on a budget! Scroll through the following pages and make note of the things you want to remember to do.

xoxo, **The Springs**



## 01. CONSIDER A DATE OTHER THAN SATURDAY

*Many venues offer deep discounts on Sunday-Friday events. More and more couples are choosing non-Saturdays as the #1 way to save BIG - not only on their venue but also on some other vendors, hotel accommodations, etc.*

## 02. GET MARRIED IN THE "OFF-SEASON"

*The Springs offers great discounts during our "off-season" months. Send the venue team a message today and ask which months fall under this category. But rest assured, we host beautiful weddings ALL. YEAR. LONG.*

## 03. FIND A VENUE THAT DOESN'T REQUIRE YOU TO USE THEIR VENDORS

*All-inclusive venues aren't always better, as their prices are often marked up. When you choose and hire your own vendors, you get to control the budget. For venues with preferred vendors (as opposed to recommended vendors), be mindful of potential kickbacks to the venue. The Springs welcomes outside vendors and does not participate in any kickbacks (a percentage or fee paid from the vendor to the venue for your booking).*

## 04. HAVE YOUR CEREMONY + RECEPTION AT THE SAME PLACE

*Why pay for two rental fees when you could host everything at the same location? Plus, you'll be able to skip on the transportation costs!*

## 05. AVOID A LONG GAP BETWEEN THE CEREMONY AND RECEPTION

*Longer cocktail hour = increased hors d'oeuvres + alcohol cost.*

## 06. CONSIDER YOUR GUEST COUNT

*Each guest you invite costs money. The easiest way to save on budget is figuring out how you can trim the final count.*

## 07. GET CREATIVE WITH YOUR FOOD OPTIONS

*One of the biggest wedding planning expenses is food. Ask your caterer for recommendations on how to save on costs. Consider whether you really need chargers, glassware, ceramic plates, a multi-course meal, etc.*

## 08. GET CERTAIN ITEMS SECONDHAND

*What do you do with all that decor after the wedding? You sell it! There are brides + grooms near you with tons of gently-used decor. The Springs hosts Wedding Garage Sales several times a year for in-person, bride-to-bride sales - you can find all of our upcoming events on our social media pages!*

## 09. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO OFFER ENDLESS ALCOHOL OPTIONS

*More options = more money. The more liquor selections, the more mixers required. Consider opting for 2-3 selections of beer & wine instead. Oh, and our favorite secret weapon? Trader Joe's Two Buck Chuck for wine!*





## 10. CHOOSE A VENUE THAT DOES NOT REQUIRE MUCH DECOR

*Is your venue gorgeous as is? Perfect! You won't have to put a huge portion of your budget toward dressing it up!*

## 11. HAVE YOUR GUESTS RSVP ELECTRONICALLY

*Save big on postage by not including a reply card. Instead, include your wedding website and have your guests RSVP here or via email. More guests will respond online than by mail anyway.*

## 12. CHOOSE A VENUE WITH TWO SEPARATE DRESSING SUITES

*Save time & money by getting ready onsite. Have your hair & makeup team come to the venue. The Springs offers a large bridal suite, lots of mirrors & counter space, as well as an ensuite restroom. All of our venues also have a large groom's suite with hooks to hang suits, plenty of seating, sinks for shaving, full-length mirrors, a television, and an ensuite restroom.*

## 13. FOR CENTERPIECES, SOMETIMES LESS REALLY IS MORE

*Vases, bottles, books, jars, candles, wood slices, frames, fabric... centerpieces do not have to cost a fortune and certainly do not have to be identical. Use a variety of heights, sizes, and colors to add interest!*

## 14. REHEARSE THE DAY OF THE WEDDING

*We see over 1,000 weddings done this way every year and trust us - it works! With a coordinator, rehearsals take less than 30 minutes. If the couple does not want to see each other prior to the ceremony, just run through it twice - once with the bride and once with the groom. Most rehearsals take so long because everyone is socializing and catching up. We recommend hosting a dinner the night before for mingling & celebrating - this way, on the day of the wedding, people will be focused and ready to go. You will save time and money by not going to the venue twice.*

## 15. CONSIDER OTHER SWEETS RATHER THAN A WEDDING CAKE

*Opt for a homemade dessert tables, a variety of smaller sweets, a donut bar, a candy bar, or select pies instead.*

## 16. CHOOSE A VENUE WITH A BUILT-IN DANCE FLOOR

*Dance floor rentals are expensive. Make sure your reception area has enough space for both tables & dancing within the same room so everyone can enjoy a smooth and cohesive event.*

## 17. WEAR A PREVIOUSLY OWNED WEDDING DRESS

*Save thousands and still get the gown of your dreams! You can also save by buying off the rack or at a sample sale.*





## 18. CHOOSE A VENUE WITH SPECIALTY LIGHTING INCLUDED

*During your venue tour, pay attention - is there adequate lighting, both indoors and out? Do the indoor lights dim? Will you need to hire a vendor for additional lighting?*

## 19. CHOOSE A VENUE THAT INCLUDES BREAKDOWN & CLEANUP

*Ask questions during your tour! Some venues will charge a fee for these services, while others require that you or your vendors take care of all table & chair breakdown at the end of the night.*

## 20. CHOOSE A VENUE WITH A FULL-DAY RENTAL - ONLY ONE EVENT PER DAY

*It is common for venues to offer 4, 6, or 8-hour rentals. Why? They make more money that way. They are able to book a morning wedding and an evening wedding on the same day. #Rushed. You will need at least 12 hours for setup, getting ready, hosting a ceremony, eating, celebrating at the reception, and breakdown. Choose a venue that will not charge for each additional hour - avoid this stress and book a full-day venue.*

## 21. MUSTS + MEHS LIST

*Decide what your priorities are at the beginning of your planning process so you know where to allocate your budget. Secure your must-haves first.*

## 22. AVOID ADDITIONAL EVENT STAFFING

*Save on food and beverage costs by keeping things simple. Buffet instead of plated dinner. Hor d'oeuvres stations instead of passed. Signature drinks instead of a full bar. More servers = more labor costs + tips.*

## 23. CHOOSE A VENUE THAT ALLOWS YOU TO BRING YOUR OWN ALCOHOL

*Some venues have liquor licenses and require you to purchase your alcohol directly through them. This often translates to a heavy markup, cost per guest, or bar minimums to meet. Instead, opt for a venue that allows you to supply your own alcohol as long as you have a licensed & insured bartender to serve it. At The Springs, you will choose from a list of approved bartending companies, but are given the options of bringing in your own alcohol.*

## 24. MILITARY DISCOUNT

*Some venues & vendors honor those who serve with a cost break. It may not be large, but every little bit helps and it never hurts to ask. Keep your Military ID handy throughout wedding planning. TIP: Active duty? Ask about wedding insurance to cover costs due to deployment.*

## 25. DIY SELFIE STATION

*Skip paying for a photo booth and organize a DIY selfie station or Polaroid camera station.*





## 26. BE FRUGAL WITH CHAIR DECORATIONS

*What does the venue furniture look like? You can probably skip chair covers for every seat. If you still want to dress it up for the ceremony, consider lining only the chairs on the aisle with a simple sash or small floral arrangement. TIP: Make sure to see the full set of chairs during your venue tour, not just the ones on display - you'll want to see that they're all in good shape!*

## 27. HYDRANGEAS & BABY'S BREATH

*A florist's super-secret weapon. A budget's best friend. Use these two timeless flowers to "fill" and more expensive blooms in between to make your colors pop!*

## 28. REPURPOSE YOUR CEREMONY FLORAL

*During photos & cocktail hour, assign someone to take the floral arrangements from your ceremony site to the reception area. Bridesmaids' bouquets can be used as reception centerpieces, head table decor, staircase decor, etc. Arch decor can be used on the head table, staircase, fireplace mantle, etc.*

## 29. AVOID HIDDEN FEES

*Be mindful of: needed permits, event insurance, cake cutting fees, processing fees, travel fees, equipment fees, furniture rental, fees to use your own vendors, etc.*

### 30. DAMAGE DEPOSIT

*Every venue has one. Understand how it works and how to get it back. Ask 4 questions: 1. Is the deposit amount charged and then refunded after the wedding, held by an authorization, or is it promissory with draft information on file? 2. When is it due? 3. How much is it? 4. How do I get the deposit back? At The Springs, the damage deposit is promissory - meaning your information is kept on file and you will only be charged IF there is damage.*

### 31. CONSIDER THE SIZE OF YOUR BRIDAL PARTY

*Less is more when it relates to budget and how many friends you'll have up at the altar with you.*

### 32. CHOOSE A VENUE WITH A BACK-UP WEATHER PLAN THAT YOU LIKE

*And one that's already included with your rental - no extra fees! The Springs has gorgeous indoor and outdoor ceremony options included.*

### 33. CHOOSE A VENUE THAT INCLUDES FURNITURE + SETUP

*Just because you see ceremony & reception furniture during your tour doesn't mean it's included. Always ask. Table & chair rental can get pricey quickly. Remember that you will need 2 sets of chairs - one for the ceremony and one for the reception.*





### 34. ATTEND YOUR VENUE'S OPEN HOUSES

*Not only is it the one-stop, hands-down best way to meet vendors that your venue trusts and recommends, but there are often promotions, special pricing, and incentives given that can save you money!*

### 35. THE BEST WAY TO SAVE MONEY IS TO SET A BUDGET

*Have a conversation at the very beginning with those who will be contributing financially to the wedding. Know the total. Use an online wedding budget tool to organize yourself and then STICK TO IT.*

### 36. BE SURE TO ASK WHAT "ISN'T" INCLUDED

*You don't know what you don't know until you ask. For example, just because you see furniture, specialty lighting, linens, etc. during your tour, this doesn't mean they are included.*

### 37. CLIMATE CONTROL

*Ask about cooling & heating at your venue. If you plan to rent a tent, air conditioning or water coolers are expensive. "Climate controlled" can be misleading - it doesn't always mean air conditioning and could just be fans so be sure to ask.*

### 38. HOST A STOCK THE BAR PARTY

*Instead of a Couples Shower, host a Stock the Bar party and gather needed alcohol for your reception!*

### 39. BE A FRIENDLY NEGOTIATOR

*Some costs are fixed. Others are flexible. Never be afraid to tell a vendor what your budget is. Even if they can't meet your bottom line, they are often able to recommend a solution.*

### 40. UNDERSTAND WHAT ISN'T REFUNDABLE

*Book when you're ready to commit. Sometimes called a retainer or a security deposit, the first payment books the vendor and takes the date off the market for other clients to reserve. And then you have payments afterward incrementally as you get closer to the wedding. Understand what is and what isn't refundable.*

### 41. BAR MINIMUMS AND GUEST MINIMUMS

*Before signing the contract, pay attention to any requirements for bar, food, or guest dollar amount minimums.*

### 42. PAYMENT PLAN VS. PAYMENT IN FULL

*Processing fees for payments are expensive for a business. Ask if there is a discount for paying in full or paying in cash. Also, ask if the business covers the processing fee or if this is an additional charge for you as the client.*

### 43. EVENT PARKING

*Is parking included or is there a fee? Do you have to pay for parking attendants or valet? Is there adequate parking at the venue or will you need to shuttle guests?*





#### **44. PHOTO SHOOT APPOINTMENTS**

*Is there an additional fee to use the venue for engagement photos or bridal portraits? If so, how much is the fee?*

#### **45. FOLLOW YOUR DREAM VENDORS ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

*Watch for promotions and flash sales.*

#### **46. SIGN UP FOR EMAILS**

*Sign up to receive emails from various invitation sites - they constantly run amazing deals & promotions! The same goes for wedding party attire sites, such as Azazie or The Black Tux.*

#### **47. HOST A DAY-OF REHEARSAL BRUNCH**

*Consider hosting a rehearsal brunch at the venue on the day of the wedding instead of a full, rehearsal dinner the night before.*

#### **48. CONSIDER SKIPPING THE WEDDING FAVORS**

*You are providing dinner, drinks, and a night full of dancing - favors are appreciated by guests, but not expected.*

#### **49. HOST A WEDDING PROJECT PARTY**

*Schedule a party with your bridesmaids or maybe even the entire wedding party, grab a few bottles of wine, and knock out as many DIY wedding projects as you can!*

## 50. DESIGN + PRINT YOUR OWN INVITATIONS

*Use Canva (a free online designer) to create your own invitations, Save the Dates, wedding day signs, etc. and then pay to have them printed wherever you find the best deal. If you don't feel confident in your design skills, purchase a customizable template from Etsy and just take care of the printing.*

## 51. GET CREATIVE WITH THE BACHELORETTE PARTY

*Rent an Airbnb and split the cost between all attendees (minus the bride, of course!) Float the river. Visit a winery. Hit up Pete's Dueling Piano Bar. Board & Brush followed by dinner & dancing is also a fun, but affordable option!*

## 52. LESS IS MORE WHEN IT COMES TO INVITES

*Skip including multiple details cards in your invitations and direct your guests to your wedding website for accommodations, registry links, and suggested attire details instead.*

## 53. CREATE ONE SINGLE PROGRAM SIGN OR CHALKBOARD

*Instead of printing ceremony programs for each guest, make a large program sign or chalkboard (ask us for photo inspiration!) and place it near your ceremony site.*





## 54. BE WISE WITH BRIDAL PARTY FLORAL

*Remember that it is okay for your bridesmaids to have small bouquets. You can also skip the boutonnieres for groomsmen and only order for the groom, officiant, and fathers.*

## 55. ORDER ATTIRE EARLY

*Order your wedding dress, bridesmaid dresses, and groomsmen attire early to avoid rush fees on shipping & alterations.*

## 56. SEAT 8+ AT TABLES

*60" round tables (most common table size for wedding receptions) can seat up to 10 guests. Seating 8+ at each table means less tables - less tables means less linens and less centerpieces.*

## 57. SKIP CHAMPAGNE

*When it comes to wedding toasts, you can skip the champagne - most people will cheers with whatever drink is already in their hand.*

## 58. AVOID DELIVERY FEES WHEN POSSIBLE

*If you can have someone pick things up day of (cake, flowers, etc.), you will save on delivery fees.*

## 59. HIRE STUDENTS FOR MUSICAL NEEDS

*If you are wanting a string quartet for your ceremony, look into hiring high school/college music students. You can ensure they will meet your needs with a quick interview.*

## 60. AFTER THE WEDDING - SELL, SELL, SELL!

*After all is said and done, sign up as a seller at a Wedding Garage Sale or list your dress & decor online and make some of that money back!*



HAPPY  
WEDDING

*See!* Planning your Best Day Ever on a budget is totally doable!

Find more planning tools from THE WEDDING VENUE EXPERTS  
at [www.springsvenue.com/tools](http://www.springsvenue.com/tools)

Happy Wedding!

xoxo, THE SPRINGS