

Ten Ways to Save on Your Wedding:

1. Hire a deejay instead of a band. The cost will be one-half to one-third as much as live musicians, and you get the advantage of having the original artists—such as Nat King Cole singing “Unforgettable.”
2. Consider silk flowers. You can save a bundle if having fresh blooms is not important to you.
3. If there is a cake included in your wedding package, take it. If not, ask your baker to put out a smaller wedding cake and to cut sheet cakes in the kitchen to serve guests. You can save up to half the cost this way.
4. Try not to fall in love with a wedding gown that is way beyond your budget. Brides get into a “this is my only chance to wear a big gown” mentality. Bridal shops can show you gowns in a variety of price ranges or you can keep an eye out for sales. Keep in mind that hand-beading and fine lace add to the cost, but you can find beautiful designs with beading around the neckline or waist that still give you that sparkle.
5. Create your own headpiece. Ready-made veils of tulle and netting are available in retail stores, as are tiaras which cost \$50 or less, while those in a specialty shop may cost you hundreds of dollars. Remember that you will probably only wear the tiara once. Consider, also, less expensive headbands, or even fresh or silk flowers to hold your veil.
6. Brides don’t want to hear this--but consider having a brunch or luncheon instead of a sit-down evening meal. You will easily save half the cost of an evening affair by having an elegant brunch, or a simpler luncheon menu.
7. Aim for a Friday or Sunday date, or even Thursday, which is becoming more fashionable. Typically, a couple can save 15 percent of the cost by avoiding the more in-demand Saturday dates.
8. Print your own invitations. Packets of invitations and reply cards are available at business supply and craft stores.
9. Create your own centerpieces. Come up with a theme and put together your own table decorations, using candles, floating blossoms, or something special to the two of you.
10. If a photo album is not important to you, have friends take digital pictures. But remember, no matter how good your friends are--there is no substitute for professional quality photographs.
11. An extra hint: Avoid holidays when vendors charge extra. The cost of roses is exorbitant around Valentine’s Day; the fee for a band or deejay is higher on New Year’s Eve, and caterers who are already busy with Christmas parties will not give you a price break for your wedding.