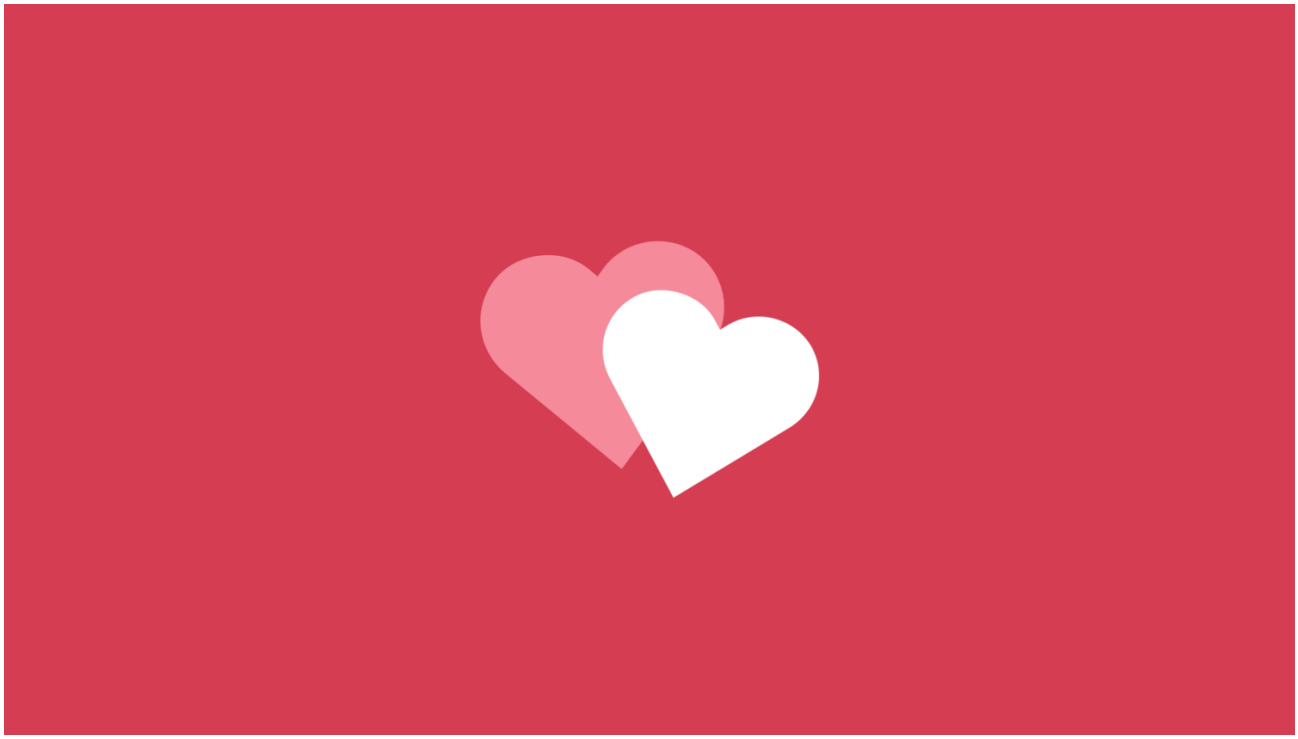
Must-Read Steps to Planning an Amazing Bridal Shower

The bridal shower (or couple's shower) is the maid of honor's prewedding piece de resistance. Even if someone else is hosting the bridal shower, like the bride's relatives, or you're holding it at a restaurant or spa, it's up to you to take the reigns. So here's a handy bridal shower checklist to help you plan an amazing party for the bride-to-be.



Three (or More) Months Before

- [ ] Talk to the bride. Does she want all women or coed? Afternoon tea or a Saturday night soiree? Does she want a particular bridal shower theme, style or color? Does she want to gather at a fun restaurant, quaint tea salon, her parents' patio, a spa or your apartment? While most of the bridal shower details and decisions will be up to you, make sure you plan according to her input.
- [ ] Set the date—shoot for a month or two before the wedding. If certain bridesmaids and important family and friends can't convene until a few days before, hold off until then.
- [ ] If the bridal shower will take place at a tea salon, private dining room, restaurant or nightclub, make the reservations as soon as possible.
- [ ] Create the guest list for the bridal shower. And take note: Anyone you invite to the shower must also be invited to the wedding.

Two Months Before

- [ ] Send a save-the-date email or call important guests to see if there might be any scheduling conflicts.
- [ ] As a courtesy, call any guests who'll have to travel some distance to attend—they'll appreciate the advance notice.
- [ ] Confer with the bridesmaids to establish a budget.
- [ ] Purchase bridal shower invitations or materials to make them.

- [ ] Hold a brainstorming session to finalize decisions about table linens, flowers, menu, decorations, favors, music and activities.
- [ ] Order special menu items through the bakery or caterer, and rent linens and other equipment from a rental company, if necessary.
- [ ] Compile addresses for the guest list.
- [ ] Make a detailed to-do list and assign tasks.

One Month Before

- [ ] Assemble and address invitations. Don't forget to include information about the couple's registries. And, if it's a theme party, make sure to provide proper gift-giving instructions.
- [ ] Mail invitations.
- [ ] Shop for decorations, paper goods and other party props.
- [ ] Purchase favors.
- [ ] If guests have offered to bring desserts and other treats, email or call to confirm what they plan to bring.

Two (or More) Weeks Before

- [ ] Place flower order.
- [ ] Buy your shower gift for the bride.
- [ ] Make a shopping list for the food and drinks. Buy any hard-to-find ingredients.
- [ ] Purchase spirits, if you're having cocktails.
- [ ] Pick up any baskets, CDs, cake stands, audio equipment or serving ware that friends or neighbors have offered to lend.

One Week Before

- [ ] Confirm reservations.
- [ ] Confirm orders and delivery times.
- [ ] Confirm RSVPs.
- [ ] Assemble and gift wrap favors.
- [ ] Buy groceries.
- [ ] Create a mental floor plan to facilitate decorating and setting up.
- [ ] Organize shower games and activities.

One Day Before

- [ ] Prepare any menu items that can be made in advance (or just do prep work).

- [ ] Receive and set up equipment, assemble decorations and favors, and set table(s).
- [ ] Touch base with the bridesmaids—confirm who's bringing what and ask them to arrive early to help.
- [ ] Run any last-minute errands.

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