

20 Questions to Ask a Reception Site

1. How many wedding receptions have you hosted at this location?

This is a good conversation starter and gives you a good idea of their experience.

2. How many people can you accommodate?

This will let you know if you can have your reception at this site and it will also give you an idea of how to structure your guest list.

3. Do you provide the table setup, chairs, linens, etc.

If the location does not provide this service, you will have to, which means additional expenses and finding a rental company to provide the setup.

4. Do you require us to use your caterer?

This is important; some locations have a list of caterers and you are required to choose from their list. Ask if you can use your own caterer.

5. Do you allow alcohol on your premises?

Do they require that you purchase the spirits from them because of licensing? Can you purchase a license and provide your own beverages? Alcohol is pricey, so make sure they can accommodate your budget.

6. Do you contract with an entertainment company?

Some locations have a list of bands, soloists and DJs and you are required to choose from their list. Like with the caterer, ask if you can use your own vendors.

7. How long do you get to be on the premises?

The reception site may limit you, in order for them to host a number of events in one day. Be sure they can accommodate the time you plan to host your reception.

8. Can you provide your own decorations?

If you want to decorate the reception site yourself or have an outside vendor come in for you, be sure they allow this.

9. What type of staffing do you provide?

This is important if they require you to use their caterers, bartenders and setup staff.

10. Do you have to purchase any permits, insurance or outside security?

These can items will add more expense to your budget. If you are using your own outside vendors (caterer, soloists, DJ, etc), ask if the vendors are required to show proof of insurance to the location.



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11. When are you allowed to setup?

This affects your florist, entertainment, caterer, decorator, wedding party, etc. You need to know when you can set up so these people do not run behind.

12. Is there a place for the bridal party to store personal belongings and congregate before the reception starts?

This is important because you may need to get photos, change clothes, etc. before heading into the reception.

13. Does the reception location provide you with a day-of-the-event point person? Is there an extra charge for this?

This is important for a reception location that has multiple events going on and for locations that require you to use their services. Be sure they will let you meet this person beforehand. Keep this person advised of your plans.

14. Does the reception location provide you with signage, audiovisual equipment, a guest book table or a gift table?

If not, you will need to speak to your rental company about these items.

15. Do you have to pay a deposit to get on their schedule?

When do you have to pay the final bill?

16. What is your cancellation policy?

Always ask this question in the event you don't end up having a reception, or change your mind about the location. You can never be too careful.

17. Are gratuities included in the event fee?

The last thing you want to be dealing with on your wedding night is pulling together money for a large gratuity bill. Make sure the reception site gives this information on the front end.

18. Who does the cleanup?

Some reception sites require you to arrange for the cleanup. Be sure you know if this is the case so you can arrange for someone to take care of it.

19. What about parking?

If you are looking at a location in a residential or urban area, you may have to deal with limited parking. The reception site should have a plan for dealing with parking. Do they charge for this service or is it included in the rental fee?

20. What is the smoking policy?

Inevitably, you are going to have at least a few smokers. Be sure they have a designated area for this.

