

Booking the Reception Site Checklist.

- Visit favored sites during an event to investigate acoustics, true capacity, decorated look, and so forth.
Location: _____ Date/time: _____
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- Ask favored sites to fax you a list of two or three wedding-couple references.
- Call references and the Better Business Bureau to check sites' record.
- Finalize your decision and reserve the site by phone. Send a fax to confirm.
- Request a contract and review for critical points:
 - Name and contact information for you and the vendor
 - Date and time frame of your reception (the average dinner-and-dance reception is about four hours long, longer if this includes the ceremony)
 - Exact names of specific room(s) to be used
 - What time other vendors (florist, DJ, and others) will be able to set up
 - Approximate number of guests and number of tables to be set up (include a floor plan if possible)
 - The name of the manager on duty during your reception
 - Itemized list of what the site will provide (from wait staff to linens, plus services such as coatroom and valet parking)
 - Proof of insurance and liquor license
 - Setup, cleanup, overtime, and any other fees
 - Total cost (itemized)
 - Deposit amount due
 - Balance and date due
 - Cancellation and refund policy
 - Site manager's signature
- Sign final contract.
- If your reception will be outdoors in a public place, file for a permit.
- Make a list of anything you'll need to rent (tent, tables, chairs, and so on) and look into rental companies; visit your site with your rental agent so he or she sees firsthand what you need (do all this about six to eight months before).
- Take pictures of the site to show to other wedding vendors.
- Ask for directions coming from various routes (you'll need this to include in invitations or post on your wedding Web page). Drive them yourself.
- Meet with or call the site manager to discuss decorations and final menu decisions if you're working with in-house people, or to coordinate plans with outside caterers, florists, and other vendors (do this at least four months before).