

# Plan Your Perfect Outdoor Wedding Ceremony

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## Consider your guests:

Be sure to let your guests know they're attending an outdoor wedding so they can dress appropriately. It's also a good idea to send weather information to out-of-town guests who may not be familiar with the climate.

Think about what the **weather** will likely be at the time of day and month of the year of your outdoor wedding. If it is a warm day, have bottles of water available at their seats. You may even want to offer sunscreen if you do not have a tent or cover over the seating area. If it is a particularly cold or damp day, you might want to have lap blankets on hand or rent portable heaters.

Since alcohol is dehydrating, consider plenty of **water, lemonade or tea.**

If the chairs are sitting on a grassy area, be sure the venue has sprayed for **bugs** so that your guests don't get attacked by chiggers or others biting creatures.

**Be prepared** to handle potential outdoor issues by having the following items on hand:

· Bug spray    · Water bottles    · Umbrellas    · Paper fans    · Sunscreen    · Tissues

## Have a backup plan

You'll need a plan in case of inclement weather. What will you do if it rains? The ideal outdoor wedding location has an indoor location waiting just in case. A tent is another option, but only for light to moderate rain storms. A heavy rain will soak the ground underneath, leaving guests with soggy and muddy shoes.

## Plan for wind

Since many outdoor weddings suffer from windy conditions, avoid light fabrics like chiffons and china silks in your dress and the bridesmaid dresses. Be sure to tell your hairstylist that you'll be having an outdoor wedding or add extra pomade or styling product to hold both the bride and groom's hair in place. Don't forget the extra bobby pins to secure your veil.

If you are using a **tent or canopy**, be sure it is securely tethered to avoid any chance of it falling over.

## Find out where the sun sets?

First you want to consider when and where the sun sets to orient the ceremony so that the sun will be on guests' backs rather than in their eyes. If you want to take your vows or photos at sunset, you'll need to be aware of when the sun sets. You also need to think about lighting as the sun sets. Will you use candles, lights, or lanterns to illuminate the grounds when the sun sets? Will the lighting attract bugs? If so, be sure to put out citronella candles or a bug zapper so that your guests won't spend the whole ceremony swatting at the air.

## Rent a sound system

There can be plenty of outside noises that can make it difficult to hear your voice so consider renting a sound system with clip mikes for the bride, groom and officiate. Your DJ or band can arrange this for you.

## Attire

You don't have to sacrifice elegance for an outside wedding. Just be sure to consider what's best suited for sun, sand, or grass.

## For the girls:

Lace and organza are good outdoor fabric options. You can go for shorter hemlines - knee- or tea-length- to keep them clean from the grass or dirt. Or raise a floor-length gown to the ankles or at least a half inch higher than you would for an indoor wedding.

## For the guys:

You can consider losing the tux and dressing the guys in khakis and sport jackets or crisp oxfords. If you opt for a tux, get a vest with a full back – which will look better when their coats are off.



Picture taken at Lydia's Weddings  
by LC Creative Productions