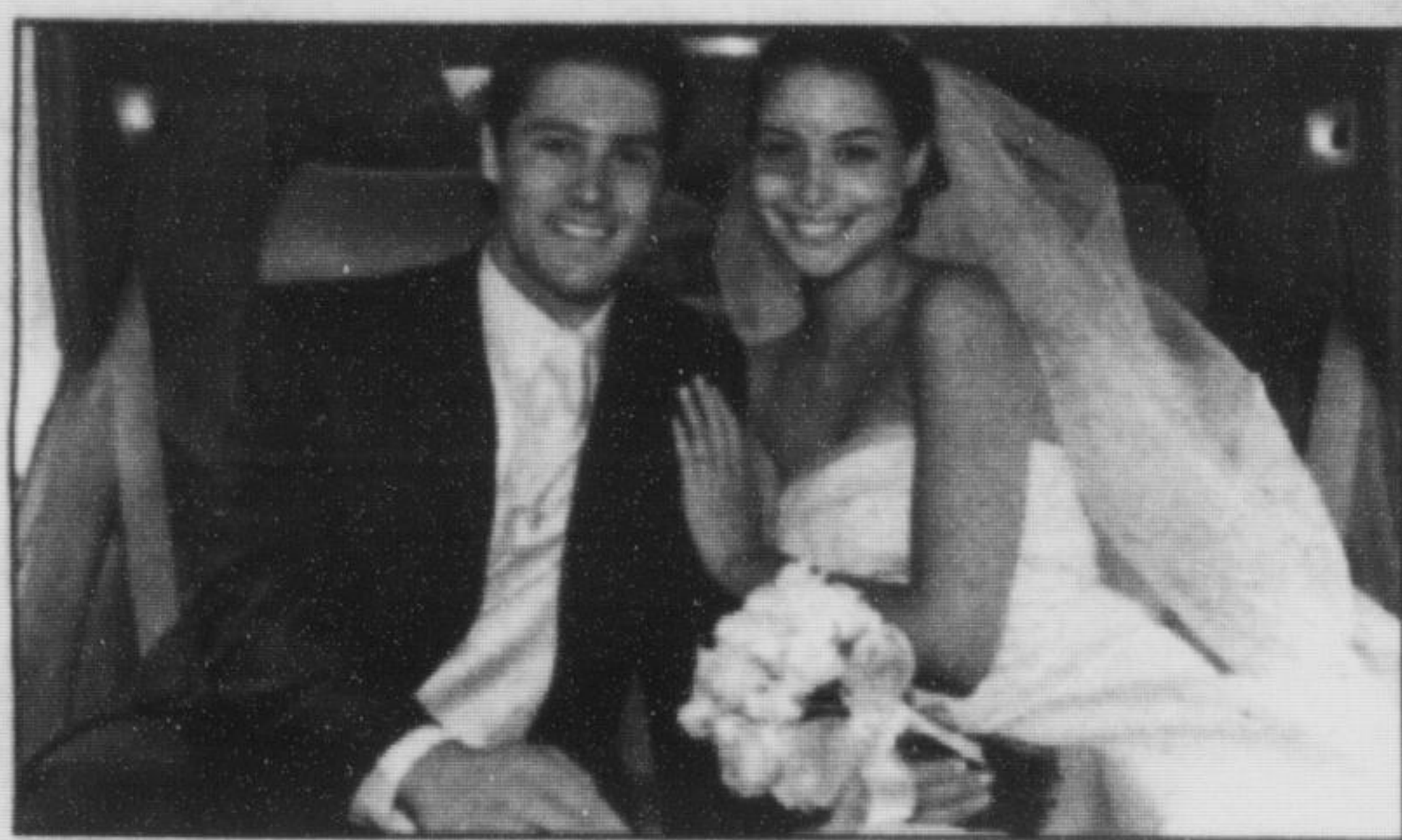


# Wedding Guide

Plan a picture perfect event with these bridal professionals

## Careful timing makes weddings go off without a hitch



(MC) - As any holiday host can attest, timing is crucial to getting a meal out hot and ensuring each course is ready for the table. Timing is equally important when planning a wedding. Various elements must come together in the right order to create a seamless day for couples and guests alike.

In addition to organizing floral deliveries, ensuring the wedding party arrives on time, and getting hair and makeup done promptly, couples who will be having their ceremony in a different location from the reception will need to spend more time factoring timing into their wedding day equations. Factors like traveling to and from the site, as well as hunger pangs and potential weather-related complications, will need to be considered.

Many couples choose to have their ceremonies and receptions at the same site, a decision that makes scheduling much easier. Once the ceremony is over, guests simply go inside or to another area of the grounds to begin the reception. Some traditionalists, though, prefer to have their ceremony in a place of worship and then travel to a separate reception location afterward. Both scenarios are acceptable, but the latter option

requires a little more planning.

Couples can try to remove as much time between the reception and ceremony as possible by coordinating with their catering managers. If finances allow, couples can request the wedding reception begin early. This way guests can arrive at the cocktail hour and comfortably mingle among themselves. These requests are common, and many catering managers will be happy to meet requests to keep a bride and groom's business.

If this is not possible, couples have a few alternatives. If the reception site is a good distance away, the travel there may take up the idle time. Otherwise, the bride and groom may need to come up with another plan. In some instances, a family member opens his or her home up to some of the guests, who may enjoy light refreshments. It may be possible to use a cafeteria or gathering space at the ceremony site for a little while as well. If the photographer plans to take outdoor photos between the ceremony and reception, the couple can invite some guests along to witness the shots or be a part of the photo shoot.

Thoughtful couples also can provide other accommodations, such as letting guests know about local restaurants where they can spend a little time and grab a small bite to eat before the reception begins. Hotels affiliated with the wedding party may be able to host guests during these in-between hours as well. The hotel bar or a conference room might be ideal spots for guests to kill some time.

Couples also can arrange something with the reception hall. While the party room or cocktail area may not be ready until the designated time, the site may have an attached restaurant, salon or gardens, where guests can relax as they wait for the start of the festivities. Timing all of the elements of a wedding day properly can be challenging. Guests' comfort and needs should always be a priority.

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