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Note: *It is a value to me to make the wedding industry a more inclusive, accessible, diverse, and equitable place. As such, I want to acknowledge that the word “walkthrough” is ableist. This is because it assumes everyone has the ability to walk.*

I have retained the word in the beginning of this resource because it is the term most likely to help people get the information they need. I have also added in an alternative word — “tour — that I highly recommend you use and that I am challenging myself to use in my own work as a wedding planner.

*When you’re researching venues for a wedding, you’ll often be asked to go on a tour or **first** walkthrough or tour. Then, about 60 days before the wedding, you’ll be asked back for what’s known as a **final** walkthrough or tour. Below are the questions I ask as a professional wedding planner at both meetings.*

Like this? [You’ll love my newsletter](#). You might also get value from [my book](#).

Who will be at a wedding venue walkthrough or tour?

- **At a *first* walkthrough or tour:** Typically it’s just you, your partner, and the venue contact (a.k.a. whomever you’ve been corresponding with at the venue). You are also welcome to invite any friends or family but I recommend keeping the party small. You know what they say about too many cooks...
- **At a *final* walkthrough or tour:** Same group but perhaps with a caterer and/or wedding planner, if those types of vendors are on your team.

What questions should I ask at a wedding venue walkthrough or tour?

- **When can we get in on the day? When do we need to be out?**
 - You likely already know this information but it’s good to double-check what the venue has on file.

It’s particularly helpful as you determine how much time you’ll have for

set-up (I recommend a minimum of two hours and usually, more like three to four) and clean-up (one hour at the end of the wedding).

Also keep in mind that in nearly all situations, anything you rent from vendors outside of the venue has to be out of the venue by the end of the venue rental window. This can lead to expensive late-night pick-up fees so talk through options and budget accordingly.

- **Where's all the stuff going to go?**

- Ask your venue where they recommend various parts of the wedding be set up. Depending on your wedding this might include any of the following:
 - DJ's booth and speakers
 - Cake and/or dessert table
 - Welcome and/or gift table
 - Dance floor
 - Decorations
 - Typically, a venue only needs to know this if you have to remove anything from their walls to decorate and/or you're bringing something in like, say, an arbor or chuppah
 - Head table or sweetheart table (a.k.a. where you and your partner are sitting, potentially with others or potentially just the two of you)
 - Photo booth

- **Are there any noise ordinances or other rules we need to be aware of?**

- This particularly matters if you imagine a wedding where you're dancing late into the night.

- **Can we bring in our own alcohol?**

- This is typically [a question for catering](#) but may be applicable with the venue, too.

- **Who's the venue's contact for the wedding day?**

- This is often different from the person who booked your reservation. Ask who will be the contact at the venue on the wedding day and log it in your phone, tell your vendors, etc.

If the venue says they offer a "coordinator," use [this list of interview questions](#) and [this article](#) about scope of work and price point to determine

what they mean with this term.

- **How are the different available spaces used?**

- This question is helpful to get a read on if you will be responsible for what's known as a "room flip," i.e. when we change the layout of the same space during the event such as changing the layout from ceremony to reception.

Room flips take time and labor so if one is required, it's useful to know that so you can have discussions with the venue, caterer, florist, and/or coordinator about who's doing what and where your guests will be during the flip.

- **When can we have our rehearsal?**

- If you plan to have a rehearsal and you want it at the venue, ask when you can have it. Many venues charge for you to use the space for a rehearsal (unfortunate, I know) so be aware that there's no requirement to have your rehearsal in the space where you're getting married. It obviously helps but you can just as easily run through the processional — a.k.a. who enters the ceremony when — at somebody's house, at a restaurant, in a park, etc. [Use this guide to help.](#)

- **Who provides what?**

- This question is most timely at a *first* walkthrough or tour. What does the venue provide? What will you need to order through a caterer and/or rental company? The most popular rental-related items to consider:
 - Plates (main meal and dessert, as applicable)
 - Utensils
 - Cups and glasses (including any special glasses you need for drinks)
 - Linens (specifically, tablecloths and napkins)

- **Where does the trash go?**

- Venues often have very specific requirements on where trash, recycling and compost goes. Ask and then make sure that information is shared with whomever will be helping clean up at the end of the night.

- **Anything we need to keep in mind for the end of the night?**

- The answer is likely "no" but it doesn't hurt to ask. The venue might need certain items put back in certain spots, someone to check in with the

on-site contact before all guests leave at the end of the reception, etc.

- **Who's doing the floor plan?**

- Often, the answer is someone at the venue but sometimes, the venue expects you or a caterer to make the floor plan. It doesn't hurt to double-check so you can plan accordingly.

- **Do you have a required vendor list?**

- Venues can have good reasons for having these lists. A common one is a unique kitchen that requires familiarity to use or a historical space that requires certain training to access.

However, the folks on those lists are often some of the most established (and thus, most expensive) vendors in the area. [Required or other vendor referral lists can also be racist](#) so please read them thoroughly before signing a contract with a venue.

- **Do you require any or all vendors we hire to carry business insurance?**

- Historically, the answer here has been “only catering and/or bartending.” However, I've noticed a small uptick in the number of venues requiring that certain or all vendors hired carry insurance. That's irksome for the client but obviously best to know before you sign contracts.

- ***If your venue is also doing the catering...***

- At a *final* walkthrough or tour, confirm any timings related to food including when the caterer is arriving, when the caterer is starting appetizer/cocktail hour/main meal/tea and coffee/dessert service, and when the caterer is departing. This isn't as pressing at a *first* walkthrough or tour.

- ***If you want mics at the ceremony and the venue is providing them...***

- Often, venues have lapel mics and/or handheld or standing mics and will provide these if asked. If they don't have mics and you want them, ask whomever is providing the music for your wedding, as applicable.
- I recommend mics for most weddings but they're not required. I usually recommend mics if 1) your ceremony is outside, 2) you have more than 50 guests and expect them to be seated or standing more than six feet away from the front of the ceremony, and/or 3) your venue is in a noisy place.

What will the wedding venue want to know at a *final* walkthrough or tour?

- **Your final headcount**

- If you don't know yet, that's completely, totally, 100 percent fine. Your venue is asking because they want to know how many tables and chairs to include on the final floor plan that they're making for you.
- *What you can tell them instead:*
 - A rough estimate of how many guests will attend
 - How many people per table you're thinking (example: eight to ten per 60-inch round table)

- **Which vendors are arriving when**

- Again, this can just be a rough estimate and, if you don't know at all, just say you'll follow-up with a timeline of the wedding day. (If you hire a coordinator, this is something they will likely handle.)

Want even more resources about venue tours? [Read this](#).

Got more questions? I rent my Virgo wedding planner brain [by the hour](#). If you like what I wrote, an easy way to show me is to [subscribe to my newsletter](#). Thanks for reading.

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