

RANCH WEDDING/EVENT TIPS

1. Plan it. Each type of reception comes with different capacities. Will you also be hosting your ceremony on the ranch or just the reception? Talk to a local rental company or a catering company before you make this decision. They will know how much space you will need to set up tables, booths and a dance floor to accommodate your guest count and will likely suggest different catering options that best meets your visions and space constraints.

2. Prep it. Talk to your wedding planner, rental company or caterer about the event layout *before* you do any work. Sometimes there are tables and prep areas that clients forget to take into consideration or new layout ideas planner/companies can suggest.

3. Theme it. Whether you're looking for a simple ranch/backyard wedding or an elaborate, elegant wedding design, your theme will drive most of the aesthetic decisions from here on out. Sophisticated country? Rustic? Every theme comes with different flowers, photo frames, centerpieces, chairs, linens, catering choices and more.

4. Tent it. It's a must on the ranch: you must rent a tent! Tents are great for backyard weddings, large and small.

5. Dance floor it. What's a ranch/backyard wedding reception without a dance floor? Lots of holes in the grass, that's what. Rent a dance floor for guests to use in lieu of just a grassy area. You'll want something flat and smooth. Hint: this is definitely a recommendation that's right up there with renting a tent on the must-do list.

6. Rent it. You must rent your tables and chairs from a rental company—or through your catering team, who will either rent the equipment themselves or know with whom you should speak for the best styles for your budget. The perk of this, you won't have to worry about the setup or take-down. You just show up, sign on the dotted line and the entire reception will be constructed for you.

7. Game it. With an outdoor wedding—and one at the ranch—you get to host games and entertainment *your way*. Set up a couple of lawn bag or cricket games. Guests can play while they wait for you to finish your photos or while they have a cocktail.

8. Remember it. Come up with creative ways to remember your wedding day. The obvious is to hire a photographer, which probably seems as though it's a must-do. The ranch agrees. Document as much of that day as you can. Also consider hiring a videographer, renting a photo booth, setting up a photo or video guest book and more.