

The Real Cost of “I Do”

The Cost of “I Do”: Tying the Knot — and Delaying Major Financial Goals

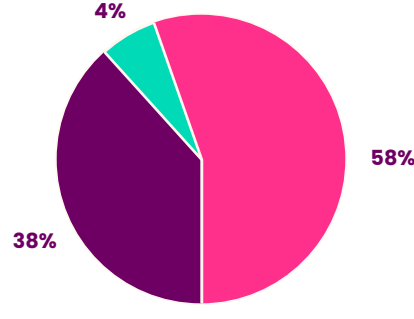
For Gen Z and millennial couples, today’s weddings often rival the cost of a home down payment, making budgeting a challenge and long-term financial goals harder to reach.

Yet, many married couples don’t regret how much they spent on their wedding, and some even wish they had spent more.

More than half (56%) of Gen Z and millennials say wedding costs are likely to impact their top financial priorities — causing them to defer goals, like saving and paying down debt.

- In fact, **nearly 2 in 3 respondents say wedding costs will likely impact their savings goals.**
- **61% say wedding costs will affect their ability to pay down existing debt**, while 54% say it will delay building an emergency fund.

Despite most couples reporting their wedding compromised financial momentum and delayed long-term money goals, most married respondents do not regret how much they spent on their wedding.



Attitude of married couples on how much they spent on their wedding

- Say they spent the right amount
- Say they wish they had spent more — suggesting emotional payoff sometimes outweighs financial planning
- Say they wish they spent less

Ally Money Roots: Unlocking financial intimacy starts with understanding your own money story to ultimately invest in your future together. Last year, Ally introduced Money Roots™, a free financial wellness program to help people uncover how their money mindset impacts their spending, saving and investing decisions — and vice versa. The program offers four free, one-hour workshops for Ally customers and non-customers alike, with specific workshops like “Money + Love” designed to help navigate major life moments and finances with your partner. For more information on how Ally is meeting people where they are to improve money habits and financial futures for all, visit ally.com/moneyroots.

Planning Pressure Before Forever

The path to the altar is paved with mixed emotions. While many feel excited, many couples also experience emotional tension — and money can often be a trigger.

Though many couples see wedding budgeting as one of the most crucial elements of planning, it often is the most stressful.

Money Roots Pro Tip

Aim to create a safe space to discuss emotions and finances with your partner. That vulnerability will help you discuss money as a team and decide on the best path forward for both of you.

More couples say they disagreed on the budget (25%) more than they did family involvement (22%) while wedding planning.

Nearly 1 in 2 (45%) said managing wedding spending is the most stressful aspect of planning — particularly for women (47% women versus 42% men). However, 28% of married couples say they agreed on everything while planning.

When asked about their feelings around wedding planning, most are likely to say they feel excited (51%) and happy (48%), **but nearly a third report feeling anxious (31%), overwhelmed (30%) and stressed (26%).**

Nearly one third (29%) of married Gen Z/millennials say wedding planning was the most stressful period within their relationship, and **47% of married respondents say managing the wedding budget was the most stressful aspect of planning.**

- More than half (55%) say the budget is most important element of wedding planning, followed by the guest list (51%) and the venue (51%).

Most important element of wedding planning



The Prenup Paradox

More couples are saying “I might” to prenups — but, for many, it’s one of the hardest conversations to bring to the table.

Even as prenups become more common, they remain one of the last financial planning taboos.

More than 1 in 4 (26%) Gen Z respondents signed a prenup, and Gen Z are generally the most likely cohort to say they considered one (30%) before the wedding.

However, most Gen Z and millennials (55%) are not likely to consider a prenup before getting married.

While most couples are comfortable discussing the wedding guest list (62%) and venue (64%), **55% of respondents say they are uncomfortable discussing a prenup** as part of planning.

When asked about the most important aspects of wedding planning, **Gen Z/millennial men are more likely to say having a prenup is important** — with 37% of men, versus 27% of women, saying so.

Gen Z/millennials considering a prenup before getting married



Likelihood of Gen Z/millennials to say having a prenup is important



Money Talks — and the Conversations Couples Avoid

Financial intimacy isn’t always instinctive, especially early in a relationship.

While most Gen Z and millennials say they’re generally comfortable discussing money, data reveals a clear gap between those who’ve already tied the knot and those still planning their future. For many, the hardest conversations happen before the vows — not after.

If there’s one persistent blind spot the data reveals — it’s debt. While 58% of respondents are comfortable discussing their financial goals, only 38% of unmarried Gen Z and millennials say they’re comfortable discussing the amount of debt they owe — a critical gap as couples prepare to merge finances.

- **71% of Gen Z and millennials in relationships say they’re comfortable discussing their finances with a partner** — but among unmarried couples, comfort drops dramatically when it comes to future-focused topics.
- **Only 39% of unmarried respondents feel comfortable discussing wedding plans with their partner**, and just 34% are comfortable talking about the wedding budget.
- For married Gen Z and millennials, there’s room to grow, with 28% saying they wish they had discussed wedding budget and financial planning more than they did.

They’re similarly uneasy with long-term life planning: **less than half of unmarried Gen Z and millennials are comfortable discussing plans for starting a family (42%), buying a home (46%), or career building (44%)** with their partner.

- As relationships evolve, these conversations seem to get easier: married Gen Z and millennials are significantly more comfortable, with **61% comfortable discussing a budget for spending, 66% comfortable talking about financial goals, and 62% comfortable discussing saving for retirement.**

Money Roots Pro Tip

Talk with your partner about their past money memories and experiences to better understand their money values. It may feel tricky or awkward at first, but these financial conversations are core to healthy relationships.

Gen Z/millennials openness to discussing long-term planning

71%

are comfortable discussing their finances

42%

are comfortable discussing starting a family

46%

are comfortable discussing buying a home

44%

are comfortable discussing career building