

HOW TO PLAN THE PERFECT MARRIAGE

PROPOSAL

BY THE YES GIRLS | THE WORLD'S FIRST PROPOSAL PLANNER



A TIMELESS MEMORY

*Over 40 Creative Proposal Ideas, Planning the Big Day, and
What to Avoid While Crafting the Ultimate Surprise!*



CREATING THE YES!

FROM HEATHER VAUGHN

At The Yes Girls, we believe every love story is one-of-a-kind so your marriage proposal should reflect your unique relationship.

I have yet to meet a fiancée who didn't gush over all the thoughtful and personal details incorporated into her engagement story. It'll be a story you'll share over and over, so why not make it one for the books? Planning a personalized proposal is not limited by budget but it does take intentionality and time to create. I hope these pages ignite your creativity so when you get down on one knee, she feels truly known! Cheers to love!



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Planning by The Yes Girls
Photos by Ashley Burns Photography
Flowers by Studio C Florals



GETTING READY

ENSURE YOUR PARTNER GETS DRESSED FOR THE OCCASION IN AN OUTFIT THAT WILL MAKE HER FEEL HER BEST.

THROW HER OFF WITH A BELIEVABLE RUSE (SOMETHING SHE WOULD ALREADY BE DOING OR WOULDN'T QUESTION) SO IT REMAINS A SURPRISE.

DISCUSS THE BEST PLACE TO STAND FOR LIGHTING WITH YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER AND/OR VIDEOGRAPHER TO CAPTURE THE MOMENT SEAMLESSLY.

CHOOSE 3 DECORATIONS OR ELEMENTS THAT ARE PERSONAL TO YOUR RELATIONSHIP AND INCORPORATE INTO THE DAY.

IF YOU'RE GOING OUT TO A MEAL, PROPOSE FIRST *THEN* ENJOY DINNER. YOU DON'T WANT TO BASE TIMING OFF WHEN YOU *THINK* YOU'LL FINISH.

CONSIDER THE SURROUNDINGS. IS SHE AN INTROVERT? EXTROVERT? WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED? DIG INTO WHAT SHE WOULD LOVE.

KEEP IN MIND

These are proposal tips we've gathered over the last decade of proposal planning and find extremely helpful when planning out a successful proposal day.

THE RUSE

Getting her to the proposal location without raising suspicion.

- Pretend you found a Groupon/deal for your planned activity for X date.
- Ask a friend to plan a double-date and “conveniently” cancel last minute.
- Create a fake work event.
- Plan it for another special occasion (ie. birthday)

SOCIAL MEDIA

Let's talk Pinterest. This social media platform can be your own secret weapon. Look through her “Wedding Pinterest Board” because while you might think her favorite flower is a pink rose, her Pinterest board might reflect that her favorite is actually a pink peony! Her board can also help you pick out personalized decor and even rings that she is admiring. If she does not use Pinterest you can check out what she's like on other social platforms and blogs she loves for inspiration, too.



IF TRAVELING

Although you are nervous and want to pop the question as soon as possible during your vacation, do not do it the first day you arrive. Seriously! Between delayed plane flights, luggage issues, and just wanting to shower after a day of travel, it is not ideal for her or you. To avoid any hiccups, plan it for the second or third day of vacation. Also make sure you have a safe place to hide the ring box while traveling. We highly recommend the Box Sock.



KEEP IN MIND

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DAY OF PLANNER

The last thing you want on the day of is the photographer, venue, florist, etc. texting and calling you all day while setting off alarm bells with your future fiancée. It is best to hire a proposal planner to handle those phone calls. If hiring a professional isn't within your budget, then ask a friend or future sister-in-law to be your point of contact.

TIMING

Has your partner been dropping hints that she wants to get married on Thanksgiving weekend? Then you probably do not want to propose on the first of November. The average engagement in the United States is nine months long, so think about when you are proposing and when she has mentioned she wants to get married. If she has told you repeatedly that she wants a year long engagement, and wants to get married during summer then keep that in mind.



WEEKENDS VS WEEKDAYS

Venues and vendors are less expensive and have more availability Monday through Thursday. To keep it more budget-friendly, consider proposing on a weeknight (after work) instead of Friday, Saturday or Sunday. Also, if you are unable to propose on a weekday consider an early afternoon (weekend) instead of an evening proposal.

How To Personalize

PLAYING OFF A MEANINGFUL LOCATION

PLACE YOU FIRST MET

Place you were when you knew you wanted to marry her

PLACE YOU FIRST SAID "I LOVE YOU"

Place she first introduced you to her family

PLACE YOU CELEBRATED YOUR FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Place you celebrated one of her accomplishments

PLACE SHE'S BEEN WANTING TO VISIT

Place where you'll be living (site of future home)

THINK ABOUT SOME OF THE SIGNIFICANT PLACES YOU HAVE BEEN AND INCORPORATE THEM CREATIVELY INTO YOUR SPECIAL DAY. FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU GRABBED DRINKS ON YOUR FIRST DATE BUT YOU DO NOT WANT TO PROPOSE THERE, YOU CAN HAVE THE MENU FROM THAT SPOT AND THE DRINKS YOU ORDERED PRESENT.





PERSONALIZE YOUR DECOR!

Our favorite hobbies together:

One thing s/he has wanted to do:

Song that reminds me of her/him:

Favorite memory or trip together?

Favorite Color? Flower? Movie? Book?

TAKE A FAVORITE THING AND INCORPORATE IT INTO A DECORATION OR DETAIL IN YOUR PROPOSAL SET UP.

in the details



Planning by The Yes Girls
Photos by Esmeralda Franco
Flowers by Laurel and Vine

SELECTING THE

WARDROBE

CURATING FOR YOUR PROPOSAL STYLE

COLOR

WEAR OUTFITS THAT COORDINATES WELL WITH YOUR DECOR. FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOUR SET UP IS COLORFUL THEN KEEP YOUR OUTFIRE MORE NEUTRAL: WHITE, BLACK, GRAY, BEIGE.



BE YOU

IF YOU ARE NOT THE TYPE OF PERSON TO WEAR A FULL SUIT OR HIGH HEELS, THEN DO NOT CHANGE THAT. YOU DO NOT WANT TO SET OFF ANY ALARMS. THINK COMFORTABLE AND CLASS.



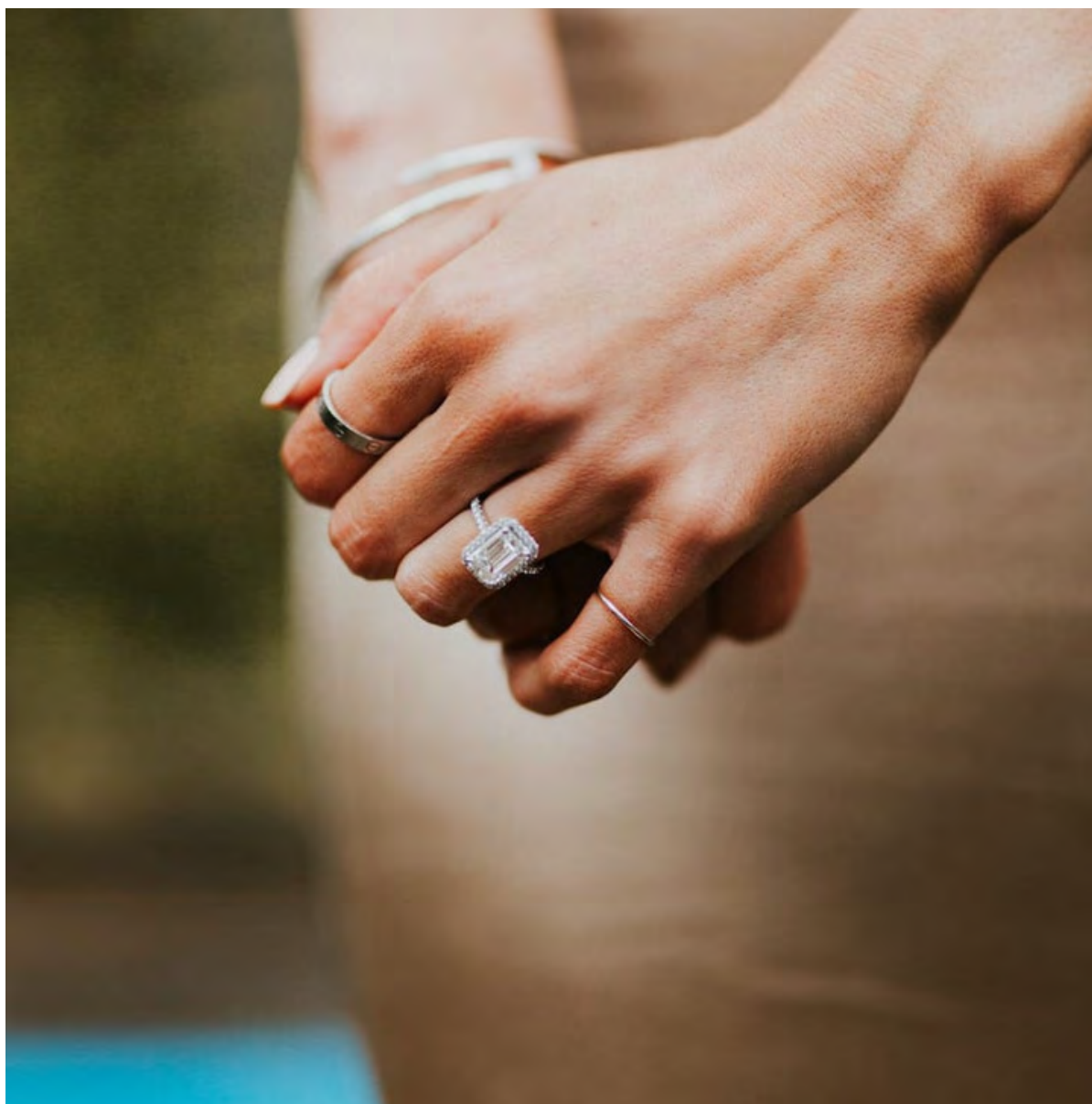
CAPTURING THE EMOTIONS THROUGH

PHOTOGRAPHY

CURATING FOR YOUR PROPOSAL STYLE

ONE KNEE

STAY DOWN ON ONE KNEE FOR AT LEAST 15 SECONDS WHEN YOU'RE ASKING THE QUESTION SO THAT THE PHOTOGRAPHER CAN CAPTURE THE ICONIC SHOT! THE BEST SHOTS ARE TAKEN DURING "GOLDEN HOUR" - THE HOUR BEFORE SUNSET. NOTE: PHOTOGRAPHERS ARE TYPICALLY MORE BUDGET- FRIENDLY THAN VIDEOGRAPHERS BUT IF YOU CAN BUDGET FOR BOTH THATS IDEAL.



THE RING

TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR FAVORITE UP CLOSE RING SHOTS AND SHARE WITH YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER. ALSO... GET THAT STUNNING RING INSURED BEFORE THE PROPOSAL. YOU DON'T WANT IT SLIPPING OFF IN THE MIDST OF EVERYDAY LIFE.

Q) Does my photographer need to fully hide? I'm afraid if she sees the photographer there, she'll know what's going on.

A) Typically, when a woman walks into a beautiful setting her nerves will kick in and she will be so zeroed in on you, she won't even notice the photographer snapping in the background.

Q) Is it better to have a pretty set up with decorations/flowers and chance her knowing what's going on before I propose, or should I skip the decor so she's totally thrown off when I get down on one knee for the photos?

A) We think every fiancée can agree that the proposal goes really quickly, so it's okay to draw it out for a few minutes. This will allow her to take in all of the details, and for the photographer to really capture all of the emotions. If you love the idea of decor, we always say- the more personalized and intentional the proposal, the better!

THE PERFECT PROPOSAL SPEECH

A GUIDE TO CRAFTING YOUR THOUGHTFUL SPEECH

1. BRAINSTORM MEMORIES

Do this before you write your marriage proposal speech. Think about how you met, the first time you laid eyes on her, the moment she was no longer a “friend” but someone you wanted to date, what you were doing when you realized you absolutely wanted to marry this girl, why you can’t imagine doing life without her, etc. Starting with a monumental memory from your relationship is a great way to begin your proposal speech, almost like you would a story.

3. DITCH LENGTHY

A one minute proposal speech is a good goal. Organize a meaningful but manageable proposal speech. That’s why it’s helpful to consolidate your thoughts (step 2) so you share what matters most and don’t have a million things to remember (even though you have a million good things to say, right? wink, wink.) If you feel like there is too much to say and you don’t want to cut it short, we recommend writing it in a letter that she can read after you propose.

5. SAY IT ALOUD

It may seem silly but practice saying your marriage proposal speech aloud. Chances are you may forget a few thoughts you wrote down, but by practicing, it will come out more natural (even though it probably won’t feel that way). Plus, you’ll be less likely to stumble over your words during your big moment.



2. WRITE IT DOWN

Spend time putting all your thoughts about your memory (from step 1) on paper. Now that you have a starting point to your speech, jot down all the traits and quirks you love about her. List all the reasons you want to marry her. After you have a full sheet of paper you can evaluate and organize the traits/reasons on your paper that mean the most to you (and her). Now you should have a beginning and middle to your proposal speech. You’re getting close!

4. FINAL WORDS ARE MOST IMPORTANT

Undoubtedly the question, “Will you marry me?” is your grand finale; but the final words leading up to the question are important. When you first drop down on one knee and she realizes what’s about to happen, she’ll most likely be so surprised, giddy, flustered, excited, emotional, etc. that you’ll want to give her a few seconds to grasp what you’re saying so she actually hears you. This is precisely why you should save your most special comments for the end of your “proposal speech.” She will be more likely to truly remember and take it in.



Planning: The Yes Girls
Photography: Cottonwood Road
Florals: Pearls and Poppies



beach

\$0-500



garden

\$0-\$500



balloon

\$250-\$500

VIEWS | STYLE | BUDGET

LOCATIONS

The perfect start to planning and envisioning your proposal is a beautiful location that fits your style as a couple and your budget. Below will give you some starting points for budgeting. Some locations can be free to public access while others require a permit or private rental. All costs are estimates and does not guarantee pricing in USD.



boat

\$100-\$500



helicopter

\$400-\$1000

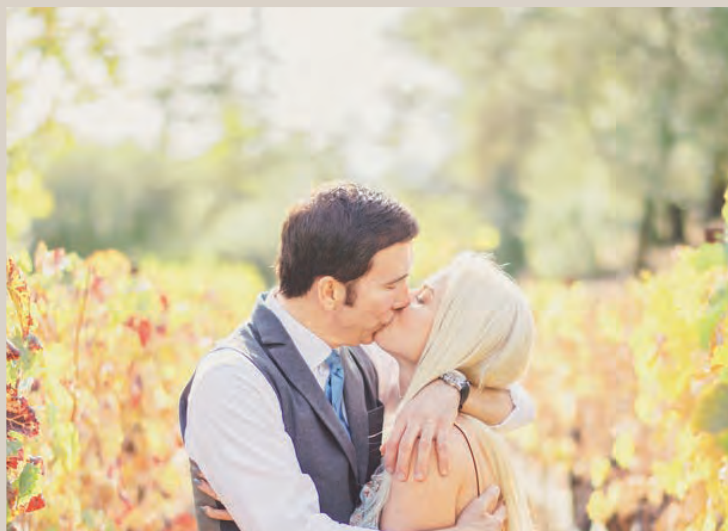


rooftop

\$1000-\$2000



SAN DIEGO, CA



NAPA, CA



CARMEL, CA



PARK CITY, UT



VAIL, CO



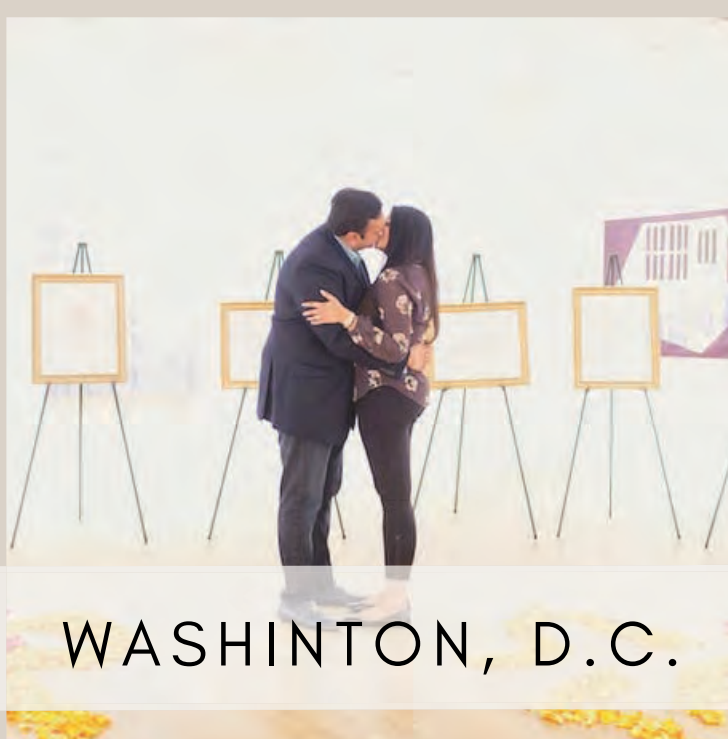
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

DESTINATIONS WITHIN THE USA

Are you one of those couples that zips away to someplace new and exciting for romantic weekends or exotic vacations? Embrace that adventurous quality and think about traveling somewhere unforgettable for your proposal. Here are a few tried and true romantic destinations that we love.



NEW YORK, NY



WASHINGTON, D.C.



CHICAGO, IL



SEATTLE, WA



MIAMI, FL



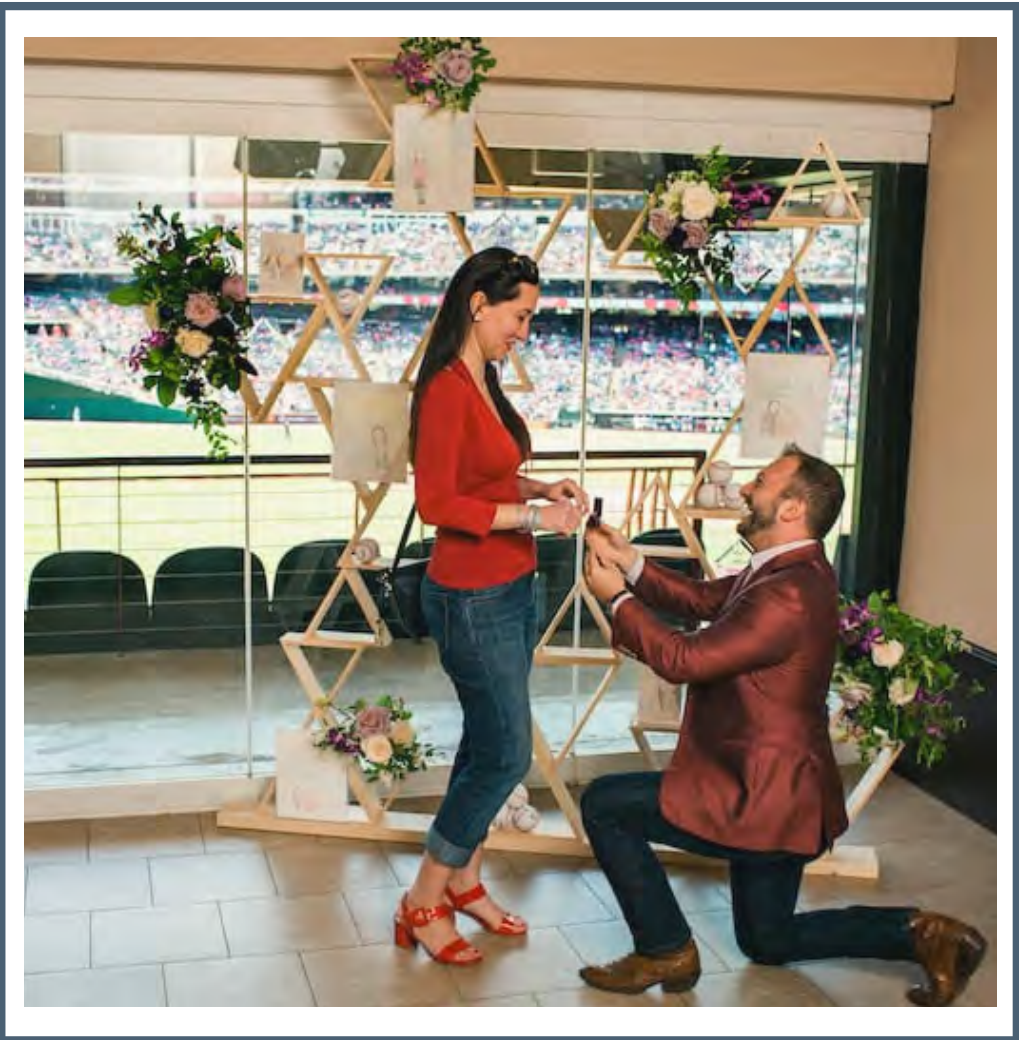
DALLAS, TX



PUBLIC PROPOSALS + FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

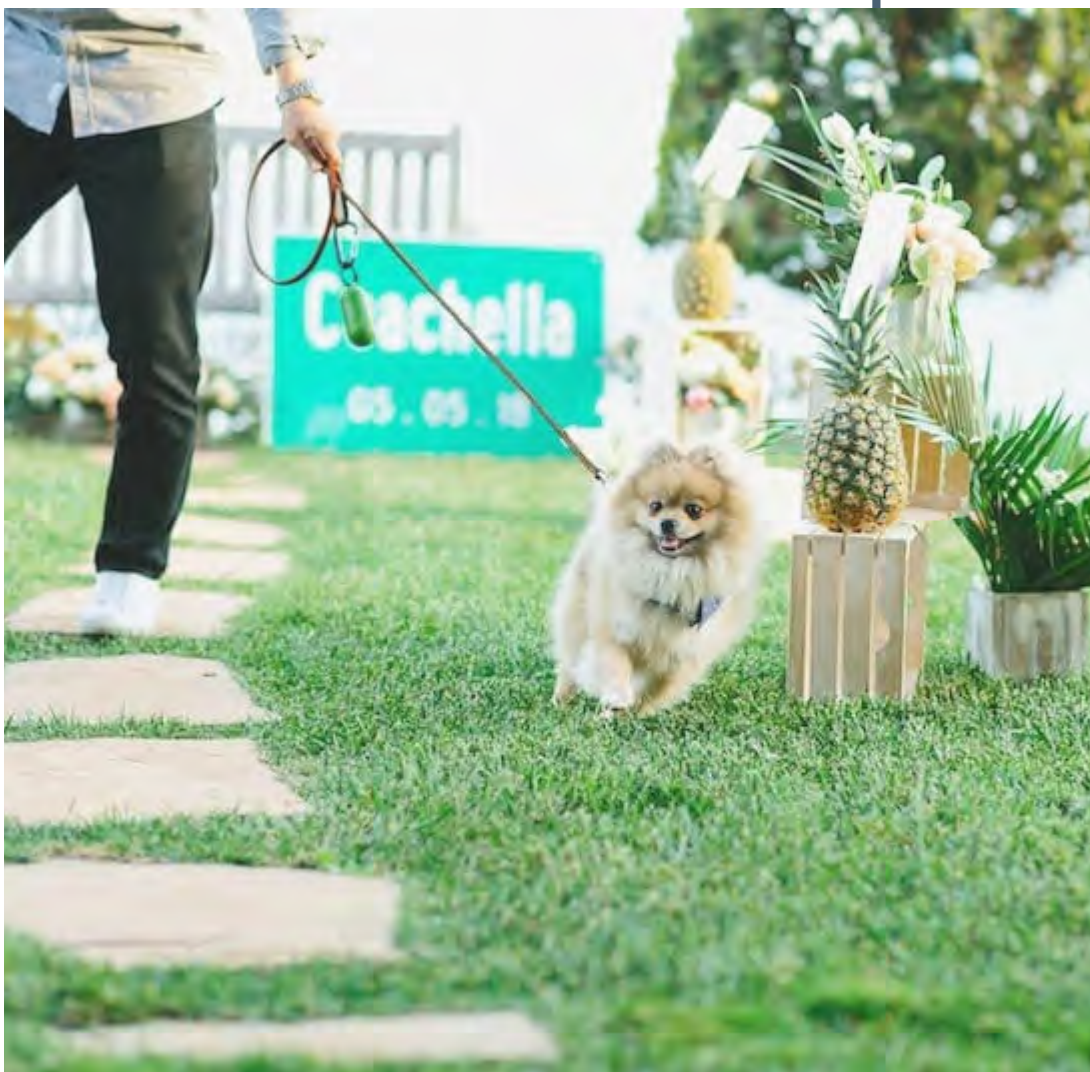
If your leading lady loves to be the center of attention, then public displays of affection can be a great option for your proposal idea.

Want to involve the family or your pets but don't want them there during the actual "down on one knee moment"? Set up Facetime on the iPad so they can watch virtually. Have a friend hide and bring out your dog to congratulate you two after. Book the venue for an hour longer so they can meet you for a post engagement party. Ask her family to write letters of congratulations to read once she says "yes!"



PUBLIC VENUES:

- **FLASH MOB:** \$2000+
- **ART MUSEUM-** \$500+
- **AERIAL/FLY OVER-** \$400+
- **STADIUM SUITE*-** \$200+
- **MOVIE THEATER** - \$100+



This proposal is about the two of you so make sure that you both would classify as “extroverts” before executing one of these ideas! We don’t want an introvert to feel really uncomfortable during the proposal. Also note, we HIGHLY discourage scoreboard proposals. There are too many elements that can go wrong (she misses it while she is grabbing a beer or not paying attention to the screen). Not worth the price in our opinion. Also, if you love a specific team, but your lady only loves them because she loves you, then a sporting event proposal probably is not the best way to go.

FUN AND PLAYFUL

ROMANCE

THOSE SEEKING SIMPLE, NOT OVER THE TOP IDEAS



1. FAVORITE ACTIVITY: IF SHE LOVES WINE TASTING, SET UP A CUSTOMIZED TASTING FOR THE TWO OF YOU.

3. FAVORITE HOBBY: IF YOU'RE A COUPLE THAT LOVES PLAYING POKER, LAY IT ALL OUT AND SHOW HER THAT SHE IS YOUR ROYAL FLUSH.

2. SCAVENGER HUNT: EACH CLUE HIGHLIGHTS A FAVORITE MEMORY LEADING TO YOUR FINAL DESTINATION

4. FAVORITE GAME: AS SHE COMPLETES A PUZZLE SHE'LL REALIZE THAT IT'S A PICTURE OF YOU ON ONE KNEE, BUT THE CENTER PUZZLE PIECE WHERE THE RING WOULD BE IN YOUR HAND IS MISSING. YOU WALK UP AND HAND HER THE LAST PIECE.

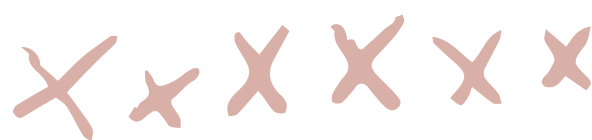


REAL COUPLES

UNIQUE
ENGAGEMENT
STORIES



OUR LOVE IS SWEET *proposal story*



If you and your loved one have a “saying” you share or if she appreciates words of affirmation, then take those words and run with them! For this gal, she LOVED cupcakes so he named flavors after traits he adored about her! After throwing in some of her favorite flowers, confetti balloons, and a handwritten love letter, it was pure sweetness.



BOHO BEACH *picnic proposal*



If you and your loved one have significant memories and milestones over the course of your relationship, think about “upping” the traditional walk down memory lane with creative mile markers. For this couple, they conquered long distance and traveled all over so we played off of Google Map markers in a Boho-chic style that she loves.



MOVIE SCENE *for two proposal*



Setting your proposal stage with her favorite movie scene can be incredibly romantic. This lovely lady's favorite love story is Carl & Ellie from Pixar's UP! Hundreds of oversized balloons, vintage furniture, and a custom Adventure Book brought on the happy tears. For an extra touch, he learned how to play guitar just to play for her.



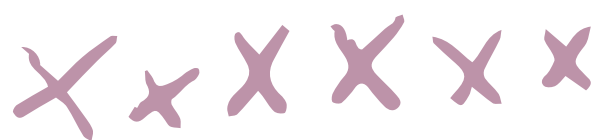
PICTURE PERFECT *rooftop proposal*

✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕

If classic, elegant, and champagne lover are a few ways you would describe your future fiancée then creating something timeless like this stunning rooftop proposal would be up your alley. For this couple, instead of the traditional rose petals and candles we arranged flowers in an ombre affect leading up to a beautiful altar. This simple detail created the wow factor while playing into her classic taste.



A WORK OF ART *fairytale story*



If your love story is worthy of a wonderful fairytale, then make it come to life! Write or display your love story through illustrations. For this couple, we hired a watercolor artist to paint her favorite characters and iconic quotes from romantic movies. The last painting was their very own fairytale portrait which was displayed in a private art exhibit.



ADVENTURE SEEKING *proposal*



Your partner has so many facets and characteristics, so elevate your favorites by displaying them in a unique way! For this proposal, his fiancée had a passion for scuba diving, sloths, and comic strips so we found a way to make all three unique interests work together on a romantic level. An illustrator designed comic strips (about the two of them) which were framed with seaglass to fit the setting.



A SPORT'S LOVER *dug out proposal*



Are you and your loved one mega-fans of a professional sports team? Plan a private tour of your favorite team's stadium and then have the final location of the tour be decorated just for your proposal! You can do bases that read "Will you marry me?" for baseball, or soccer balls made of roses, or even personalized football jerseys with your partner's new last name!



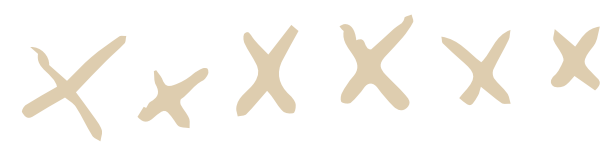
RECEIVING GIFTS *sailing proposal*

✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕

If your gal loves getting random and thoughtful gifts from you then play into that! Get her gifts that draw from your past together, favorite things, and your future dreams! For this couple, one of their favorite activities is being on or near the water. These cute nautical chests (filled with memorable gifts) were waiting on the yacht! They are on a mission to find the best pina coladas on earth so one gift was engraved pina colada glasses for their forever travels.



PRIVATE CONCERT *engagement*



Is your lady super into a specific singer or band? Has she been asking you to sing for her? Then have a private performance just for her! For this couple, their favorite song is, “All of Me” by John Legend, so we added in some of her favorite colored orange balloons and a band to sing back up to the love of her life. After years of asking, he finally serenaded her at the exact spot they met on their college campus which meant she was definitely on cloud nine.



BUCKET LIST *proposal*



Every couple has a dream. Bring your “couple bucket list” to life in a literal way! Paint buckets in her favorite color and write notes about all the things you want to do together. From skydiving, to buying a home, to getting married! Once she reads the last note you will have the perfect moment to drop to one knee!



BOX SOCK

HOW TO HIDE THE RING BOX

A bulky ring box in your pocket is a dead giveaway. We suggest using a more discreet ring box and hiding spot. The Box Sock is a pocket sock that hides your thin ring box for a smooth down-on-one-knee moment!

DINNER RESERVATIONS

When it comes to having dinner the night of your proposal, we highly recommend making reservations for after you pop the question. This way you will not seem absent minded or concerned with timing, and can enjoy the dinner celebrating worry-free!

CANDLES

Candles are a fan favorite used to enhance the romantic vibe and they can provide the perfect lighting. However, be mindful to use battery-operated candles versus open flames in outdoor places (beach, parks, fields, etc) where you can experience even a slight breeze or poor weather. This avoids wasting money on candles that don't stay lit.

COMMON PROPOSAL MISHAPS

top 6 suggestions on how to avoid the most common proposal issues

WEATHER | SEASONS

What is the weather like that time of year? Could it be cold or raining? Have an inclement weather back up plan. If you cannot find an indoor option, look for a covered location such as an outdoor gazebo.

Is your proposal taking place at the beach? Make sure high tide won't wash away your beautiful set up! Rose petals also tend to blow all over the sand. Are you proposing on a rooftop, be mindful of wind and any decor that might get blown over with one strong gust.

BUFFER TIME

Factor in extra time (20-30 minutes) to get your partner to your desired proposal location. The last thing you want on your special day is to be annoyed if she is running behind or you hit unforeseen traffic. Getting upset can make her suspicious especially if you normally are more "easy going" with timing. This is an easy way to avoid any proposal day arguments.

INCORPORATING VIDEO

If you're making a video of your family and friends for your significant other to watch before you propose, keep it short and sweet. Even better, have her watch the video AFTER you pop the question. We've heard from many women that they could barely focus on the video because after one minute she was anxiously awaiting what was coming!



CHEERS TO LOVE!

NEED ASSISTANCE PLANNING?

The Yes Girls have coordinated thousands of marriage proposals across the US and around the world. Our team of expert proposal and romantic event planners would love to help you create your upcoming special day.

WWW.THEYESGIRLS.COM

CLICK HERE
TO CHOOSE A
CUSTOM MARRIAGE
PROPOSAL PACKAGE
THAT'S RIGHT
FOR YOU!