■ BACKYARD WEDDING

Rain-Plan Pack

Checklists, Guest Texts & Tent Math

The 72-hour contingency kit for DIY backyard weddings — so a forecast never becomes a panic. Decide on time, tell guests once, and keep everyone dry, fed, and dancing.

INSIDE THIS SAMPLE

1 The Full 72-Hour Rain Decision Checklist (p. 2)
2 Tent & Drainage Sizing Worksheet with Worked Example (p. 3)
3 Guest Notification Text Scripts — Copy & Send (p. 4)
4 Vendor Call Order & Day-Of Rain Timeline (p. 4)

Who this is for: Couples, parents, and day-of helpers hosting 30–200 guests at home or on private land — no venue coordinator, no built-in rain backup. If you have a yard, a forecast, and a group text, this pack is for you.

How to use it: Print pages 2–4. Put the checklist on the fridge at T-minus 72 hours. Keep the text scripts on the decision-maker's phone. Fill the worksheet *before* you call the rental company — it takes 10 minutes and saves the most expensive mistake in backyard weddings: a tent that is one size too small.

Price in full pack: $17/download • Full pack adds: editable Canva versions, drainage shopping list with quantities, flooring & lighting add-ons, cold/heat variants, and a fillable vendor contact sheet.

SAMPLE — Not the complete pack. Page numbers and content are final for the sections shown.

1 — The 72-Hour Rain Decision Checklist

Rule #1: **Make the call once, at a set time, by one named person.** No re-deciding every hour. Write the decision-maker's name here: _____ Decision deadline: _____ (suggested: 48 hours out, 10:00 a.m.)

Forecast thresholds — decide in advance

Check two sources (National Weather Service + one app). Act on the *worse* of the two. Use these triggers unless you set your own:

Trigger	What it means	Action
≥40% rain in ceremony window	Real risk, not a sprinkle	Reserve / confirm tent hold
≥60% OR ≥0.10" expected	Ground will be wet even if it stops	Add sidewalls, flooring, walkways
Lightning / severe watch	Safety overrides everything	Move ceremony indoors / delay 30 min per strike rule
Wind ≥20 mph gusts	Tent & décor hazard	Stake upgrade, drop drapery & tall florals

T-72 hours (3 days out) — Watch & hold

- ■ Screenshot forecasts at 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.; start a simple log (time, %, expected inches).
- ■ Call rental company: confirm tent is on **hold** (not just quoted). Ask hold fee, delivery window, and last-cancel time in writing.
- ■ Confirm tent size with worksheet (Section 2). If guest count grew, upsize now — not at T-24.
- ■ Inventory what you own: pop-up canopies, tarps, extension cords (outdoor-rated), power strips, towels, umbrellas.
- ■ Check yard drainage: where does water pool after a hose test (15 min)? Mark low spots with flags — no seating, dance floor, or cords there.
- ■ Text wedding party ONLY: 'Rain plan is possible, decision by [date/time]. Pack X.' No guest-wide alarm yet.

T-48 hours — DECIDE

- ■ **10:00 a.m. decision meeting (15 min max):** decision-maker + one helper + rental contact on speaker. Decide: Plan A (no tent), Plan B (tent, open sides), or Plan C (tent + sidewalls + flooring). Circle one: A / B / C
- ■ Call rental company FIRST (see call order, Section 4) and lock delivery time. Get crew lead's mobile number.
- ■ Order / buy missing items today while stores are open: walkway mats or plywood, sandbags, zip ties, clear umbrellas (bulk), paper towels, boot tray.
- ■ Send Guest Text #1 (Section 3) if Plan B or C. One text, one sender, link to map/parking update if changed.
- ■ Tell caterer / bartender the plan: tent changes kitchen, bar, and trash placement. Confirm they bring canopy for service area if not under main tent.
- ■ Move ceremony rehearsal under the tent footprint if possible — check sound, sightlines, and where puddles form.

T-24 hours — Build & protect

- ■ Tent goes up today if at all possible. Walk it: headroom at edges, stake lines flagged (trip hazard), sidewalls roll-tested.
- ■ Lay flooring / walkways before furniture. Dance floor on the highest, flattest ground — never in the flagged low spot.
- ■ Run power safely: GFCI outlets only, cords elevated or in cord covers where guests walk, no cords through standing water. Generator (if used) ≥20 ft from tent, downwind, dry cover that does NOT enclose it.
- ■ Set a 'dry station': towel basket, umbrella stand, shoe/boot tray, small fan or heater as season requires.
- ■ Photographer check-in: rain shot list, clear-umbrella photos, and a 10-minute dry-window plan if rain breaks.
- ■ Send Guest Text #2 only if parking, address entrance, footwear advice, or start time changed. Otherwise, silence is confidence.

Wedding morning — Execute, don't redesign

- ■ 6–8 a.m.: final forecast + radar check. Only a severe-weather change reopens the decision.
- ■ Squeegee / sweep standing water off hard surfaces; re-check walkways and add mats where slick.
- ■ Assign ONE rain captain (not the couple): owns umbrellas, towel restock, sidewall up/down calls, and guest questions.
- ■ Keep a dry box: printed timeline, vendor numbers, tape, zip ties, scissors, phone charger, spare socks for the wedding party.
- ■ If rain arrives: sidewalls on windward side first, protect DJ/band & cake first, keep one entrance matted at all times.
- ■ Rain breaks? Rain captain calls a 10-minute photo window — photographer + couple only, no full regroup.

After the last dance

- ■ Photograph tent condition before teardown if deposit matters. Note any damage honestly and early.

- ■ Return rentals rinsed, not mud-caked, if your contract requires it — check before you hose anything with electronics nearby.
- ■ Send Guest Text #4 (thank-you) next day. It closes the loop and is the text guests actually screenshot and keep.

2 — Tent & Drainage Sizing Worksheet

Tent rental math fails in one direction: too small. Tables, a dance floor, a buffet, and people in formalwear who do not want to touch damp tent walls all eat space. Use the allowances below — they include elbow room, not just chair footprints.

Use	Allow per person / item	Notes
Seated dinner (round tables)	12–15 sq ft / guest	Use 15 if sidewalls are on
Seated ceremony (rows)	8 sq ft / guest	Plus aisle + front space
Standing / cocktail	10 sq ft / guest	Plus bar & high-tables
Buffet line	100 sq ft per 8-ft line	Double-sided = 150 sq ft
Dance floor	3 sq ft × est. dancers	~40% of guests dance at once
DJ / band	DJ 60 sq ft · Band 100–150	Keep under cover, on flooring
Cake / gifts / bar (each)	40–60 sq ft each	Bar needs back-table room

Your worksheet — fill in pen

Line	Your numbers	= Sq ft
Guests seated for dinner: _____ × 15	_____ guests	_____
Dance floor: _____ dancers × 3	_____ dancers	_____
Buffet + bar + cake + DJ/band	add fixed areas	_____
Buffer for sidewalls / circulation (+15%)	subtotal × 0.15	_____
TOTAL NEEDED		_____

Match total to a standard size: 20×20 = 400 · 20×30 = 600 · 20×40 = 800 · 30×30 = 900 · 30×45 = 1,350 · 40×40 = 1,600 · 40×60 = 2,400 sq ft. **If you land within 100 sq ft of the next size up, go up.**

Worked example — 80 guests, backyard reception

Inputs: 80 guests for seated dinner, dancing expected, buffet (one double-sided line), one bar, cake table, DJ.

Item	Math	Sq ft
Seated dinner	80 × 15 sq ft	1,200
Dance floor	32 dancers (40% of 80) × 3	96 → round to 12×12 floor = 144*
Buffet (double-sided)	fixed	150
Bar + back table	fixed	60
Cake + gifts	fixed	50
DJ	fixed	60
Subtotal		1,664

Item	Math	Sq ft
Circulation / sidewall buffer (+15%)	1,664 × 0.15	250
TOTAL		1,914 sq ft

*Dance floor is bought in panels; you rent the 144 sq ft floor even though the formula gives 96. Count the rented size. **Result: 1,914 sq ft → rent a 40×60 tent (2,400 sq ft) — or a 30×45 (1,350) is too small, a 40×40 (1,600) is too small.** The 40×60 leaves a dry lounge / kids' corner and room if 10 late RSVPs appear. Quoting only the 40×40 would have saved a little money and cost the whole reception its breathing room. That is the mistake this worksheet exists to prevent.

Drainage & ground — the 10-minute checks

- **Slope:** Tent on the highest usable ground. Even a 1–2% slope moves water — place seating uphill, dance floor mid, nothing electrical downhill.
- **Gutters:** If two tents join, you MUST have a gutter strip between them, or the join becomes a waterfall over guests.
- **Downspouts:** Point house downspouts away from the tent with extensions (10 ft minimum) the day before, not morning-of.
- **Flooring priority order:** (1) dance floor, (2) food / DJ / cake ground, (3) main walkway house→tent, (4) full tent floor. Spend in that order if budget is tight.
- **Walkways:** One roll of outdoor carpet runner or 4 plywood sheets (4×8) solves most mud complaints. Mats at every tent entrance, no exceptions.

3 — Guest Notification Text Scripts (Copy & Send)

Principles: **one sender** (a named helper, not the couple on the day), **one text per update**, always include what's *unchanged* ('same time, same address') so guests don't assume everything moved. Keep each under ~60 words so it reads fully on a lock screen.

Text #1 — Rain plan ON (send at T-48, after decision)

"Hi everyone — [Names]' wedding update ■■→■ We're adding a tent and moving the celebration under cover in the same backyard — same address, same 4pm start! Wear shoes that can handle a lawn. Everything else is unchanged. Can't wait to celebrate with you! — [Sender]"

Text #2 — Parking / footwear change only (T-24, if needed)

"Quick update for Saturday: please park on [street / lot] and enter via the side gate — the front yard is soft after rain. Heels: block heels or wedges will be happiest. Ceremony still at 4pm at [address]. Thank you!"

Text #3 — Day-of delay (severe weather only)

"Weather delay, not a cancellation: we're pausing the start to [new time] to let a storm cell pass. Please stay dry where you are and head over for [new time] at [address]. We'll confirm again by [time]. — [Sender]"

Text #4 — Next-day thank-you

"Thank you for braving the weather and making yesterday unforgettable. Rain and all, it was perfect because you were there. Photos coming soon — we'd love to see yours too! With love, [Names]"

Do NOT send

"Looks like it might rain, we're not sure what we're doing yet, stay tuned??" — an undecided text creates 40 reply-all questions. Decide first, text once. Silence before the decision is kinder than a maybe.

4 — Vendor Call Order & Day-Of Rain Timeline

Call in this order at T-48 — each call changes what the next vendor needs to hear:

#	Call	Confirm
1	Tent / rental company	Size, sidewalls, flooring, delivery & pickup times, crew lead mobile
2	Caterer + bartender	Service under tent, water / ice, trash, their own canopy if needed
3	DJ / band	Covered + floored spot, GFCI power, rain start/stop plan
4	Photographer	Rain shot list, clear umbrellas, dry-window plan
5	Florist / cake	Delivery timing under tent, wind-safe placement
6	Officiant + wedding party	New layout, entrance order, where to wait dry

Day-of rain timeline (adjust times to your start)

8:00 a.m. radar check • 10:00 sidewalls decision (windward first) • 12:00 walkways & dry station set • 2:00 vendor sound / power check under tent • 30 min before: umbrellas & towels at entrance • Ceremony: rain captain at back with towel + umbrella for couple's exit.

Full $17 pack includes editable versions of every page, the drainage shopping list, flooring/lighting add-ons, heat & cold variants, and a fillable vendor contact sheet. • Print note: US Letter, print at 100%, pages 2–4 double-sided recommended.

© Ryan Wilson Projects — Sample for review. Do not redistribute as the paid product.