

love stories

Five couples share the sweet stories that led them to “I do.”

BY RORY KRESS



samantha & stephen • Florissant, MO

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAIMIE NICOLE KRAUSE PHOTOGRAPHY

This pair found love on the dance floor at a mutual friend's wedding in St. Louis. After exchanging numbers, Stephen called Samantha that very night to see if she wanted to grab a late bite to eat. They hit it off, but Stephen returned home to Chicago the next day. Eventually, he moved to St. Louis, and after four and a half years together, he proposed on a rooftop overlooking the restaurant where they'd had their first date. "He started talking about our first date and how far we'd come," Samantha says.

"Before I knew it, he was down on one knee." *The ring: Jared the Galleria of Jewelry* >>



laura & irvin

Grandview, MO

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM HANLY

During a sunny Sunday morning picnic at the Liberty Memorial, Irvin shocked Laura by dropping to one knee and telling her he wanted to spend the rest of his life with her. With no ring in hand, he told her to turn around, where she found their best friends standing with signs reading, “Will you marry me?” Then, the pair’s puppy, Wasabi, made his grand entrance in a mini tux with a ring box around his neck. “Somewhere during all the hugging and crying, a sparkling ring ended up on my left hand and a dozen red roses in my right,” Laura says. *The ring: Karats Jewelers*

kaitlyn & travis

Leawood, KS

PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLETTE SESSIN
PHOTOGRAPHY

Kaitlyn fell for Travis when he showed up to their first date at a line-dancing bar in socks and sandals. Three and a half years later, Travis decided to take their love to new heights by proposing on a hiking trip in Colorado. At the summit of Copper Mountain, Travis popped the question to a tearful Kaitlyn, who went speechless. “I had been wearing an action camera on my shoulder all day, so I captured the moment of the proposal on video,” Travis says. “It didn’t capture everything perfectly though—I was too nervous!”

The ring: Shane Co. >>



rebecca & mike

Saint Charles, MO

PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE CASSIMATIS
PHOTOGRAPHY

Rebecca and Mike connected over a shared love of sports, so when it came time to team up forever, Mike wanted to do it at the ball game. When his Cubs were playing her Cardinals on her birthday, Mike knew it was the right day. At Ballpark Village, he surrounded her with their families and said, “You know we’ll always be a team right?” Though he doesn’t recall getting the question out, Rebecca understood. “I remember an overwhelming feeling of joy,” Mike says. “I had just locked up the most amazing woman I could ever have hoped for, and even managed to surprise her!”

The ring: Shane Co.



hannah & stephen

Shawnee, KS

PHOTOGRAPH BY SHARAYA MAUCK
PHOTOGRAPHY

After two and a half years of long-distance dating, Stephen surprised Hannah for her birthday with a flight to her favorite city: Chicago. Over dinner on the 95th floor of the Hancock Tower—the spot where Stephen first told Hannah “I love you”—she realized this was no ordinary birthday celebration. A plate of chocolate-covered strawberries arrived at the table—along with a custom-designed diamond ring. The whole restaurant cheered. “A fireworks show began right after he proposed,” Hannah says of the regular Saturday night light show. “It was by far the best night of my life.” *The ring: Jonathan’s Fine Jewelers*

