

Wedding

ideas

Downloadable Wedding Planner



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12 MONTHS

The secret to a great day is to start planning early!

Congratulations – you're engaged! After taking a few weeks to show off your sparkly new ring, it's now time to start planning the biggest, and most glamorous, party of your life. It may seem like an almost impossible task right now, but with our handy downloadable planner, you'll have things organised in no time!

One of the first things to do is to set up a wedding bank account and try to save as much money as you can. Perhaps set up a direct debit? Set a budget early on, and with our great money-saving tips and fabulous products every month, we'll help you stick to it. We've got some great budget tips on page nine of this planner and a downloadable spreadsheet online at weddingideasmagazine.co.uk to help you keep track of your big day spending. Discuss your budget with your parents if they are willing to contribute and make a note of who is paying for what to avoid any arguments later.

Book the big elements

After you've discussed the budget, you need to work out what type of wedding you want. Are you dreaming of gliding down the aisle in a traditional church ceremony, with all the trimmings, or perhaps saying your vows in a beautiful hotel overlooking the rolling countryside? Maybe you would prefer a small ceremony on a paradise island, or a quick celebration in Las Vegas?

Now is also the time to start thinking about the big elements of the day because these need to be booked well in advance. Things like the venue and the entertainment may have forward bookings one or even two years in advance, so if you've got a location in mind, set up a visit as soon as possible.

Try to pick somewhere with a dedicated wedding co-ordinator who can help you plan the day, or hire a wedding planner yourself. This may seem like a luxury but all planners have different levels of service, so you can choose the one that suits you. But this is just the start. Follow the checklist opposite to make sure you've got everything under control.



SHARE YOUR IDEAS ONLINE AT WEDDINGIDEAS.MAGAZINE.CO.UK



SUBSCRIBE TO WEDDING IDEAS TODAY BY CALLING 0870 403 0336

TOP TIPS

Wedding Ideas' stylist
Kate Anya Barbour says...



- Research dress styles that suit your body shape. Ask your local bridal shop for advice.
- Don't choose your accessories until you've found your dress. Your dress is the most important thing you'll ever buy.

12-MONTH CHECKLIST

- Sit down, perhaps with both sets of parents, and decide on a budget. Remember to set some money aside for a contingency plan.
- Start looking at venues and make appointments to see your favourites.
- Make an appointment with your vicar or minister.
- Buy some wedding insurance before you start buying all the expensive elements.
- Choose who you're having as the main members of the wedding party, like the best man, bridesmaids and flowergirls.
- Start compiling a scrapbook of ideas, including flowers, colours, themes and more.
- Consider hiring a wedding co-ordinator and find out about different packages available, from on-the-day help to all-out planning.
- Book cars, meet and book a photographer, florist and videographer.
- Order your stationery.
- Book your band or DJ.
- Send out save the date cards.
- Start a beauty regime.
- Think about your dress and research shapes that'll suit you.

6 MONTHS

The big elements are booked, now it's all about you

The big day is getting ever closer now, so it's time to start looking at the finer details. First up, give your groom a job to do – let him organise the suits for himself, the best man, the ushers and, in some cases, the father of the bride.

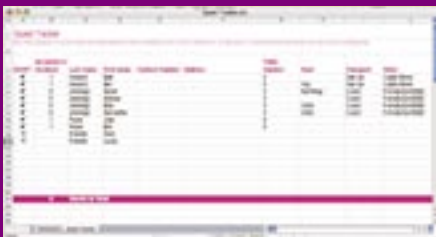
This is a great time for you too because you can start organising those dress fittings. Start looking for your underwear for the day too, because you'll want to have these with you at your dress fittings, to see if they're giving you the right shape and make sure there are no unsightly lines.

Now is also the time to talk about who you're going to invite in relation to your budget. If you want to invite lots of people, consider having a later ceremony so that there is only one meal during the day. Why not have close family and friends to the ceremony and have a hog roast or BBQ later for everyone else?

Another way to save money is to make your own favours for the day – remember the more personal they are, the more likely people are not to leave them behind at the end of the night.

GUEST TRACKER SPREADSHEET

Download our amazing guest tracker now from www.weddingideasmagazine.co.uk. This enables you to add and update guests' names attending the day and evening celebrations, the name that needs to be written on the placards (if they are bringing a plus one) the table number they will be sitting at and the present you have received from them (handy for when you're writing your thank you cards). Print it out and keep an up-to-date version of it in your wedding organiser. We also have these too! Check out www.weddingideasmagazine.co.uk or fill in the form in the magazine to order yours today.



Wedding *ideas*
SUBSCRIBE TO WEDDING IDEAS TODAY BY CALLING 0870 403 0336

TOP TIPS

Tamryn Kirby from TKWeddings.com says...



- Think of entertainment that will please all your guests, no matter what their age, and go with that.
- Themes are essential. Stick to it and everything will look co-ordinated, no matter what the budget.
- Hire a planner! Let someone else take the strain while you enjoy yourself, especially on the day.



READ MORE PLANNING TIPS AT WEDDINGIDEAS MAGAZINE.CO.UK

6-MONTH CHECKLIST

- Organise your dress fittings and buy your lingerie.
- Find your bridesmaids' dresses.
- Source or make your favours.
- Confirm all arrangements with your minister.
- If you're having a Coff ceremony, you need to give notice of the marriage to the superintendent registrar.
- Buy your wedding rings.
- Let the groom organise the suits.
- Order the wedding cake.
- Choose your gift list.
- Make a draft invitation list.
- Reserve items to be hired.
- Organise accommodation for out-of-town guests.
- Step up your beauty regime. Take time out for yourself and try out different tans, waxing treatments and so on, to make sure you don't get a bad reaction to them.



3 MONTHS

It's time to make the first contact with your guests

The three-month point is when you send out your invitations. This is the first contact you will have with your guests, and the first time you can give them a hint of what to expect from your day. Making invites yourself or buying some plain designs and customising them is a great way of saving money. Send out your invitations at least six weeks before the wedding – generally 20% will refuse. Your invitations should be from whoever is hosting the wedding.

INVITE WORDING

• BRIDE AND GROOM HOST

Miss Lucy Davis and Mr Mark Turner request the pleasure of the company of... at their marriage

• BRIDE'S PARENTS AS HOSTS

Mr and Mrs Paul Davis request the pleasure of the company of... at the marriage of their daughter Lucy to Mr Mark Turner

• DIVORCED PARENTS AS HOSTS

Mr Paul Davis and Mrs Sheila Davis request the pleasure of the company of... at the marriage of their daughter Lucy to Mr Mark Turner

• REMARRIED MOTHER/FATHER AS HOSTS

Mr and Mrs Simon Baker/Mr and Mrs Paul Davis request the pleasure of the company of... at the marriage of her/his daughter Lucy to Mr Mark Turner

• WIDOWED MOTHER AS HOST

Mrs Paul Davis requests the pleasure of the company of... at the marriage of her daughter Lucy to Mr Mark Turner

• INVITE TO EVENING RECEPTION

Mr and Mrs Paul Davis request the pleasure of the company of... at an evening reception following the marriage of their daughter Lucy to Mr Mark Turner



TOP TIPS

Wedding Ideas' writer Sarah Rodrigues says...



"The best weddings are always the ones where the couple have included things that really express their personalities. And that doesn't have to cost the earth. Ask friends and relatives to get involved in the day to make it even more memorable. Perhaps your mum could make the cake, or a friend could jump onto the decks and DJ! The readings and music you choose will also go a long way to personalising the day. You'll find opportunities to make a statement with your dress, the flowers, the pew decorations and even the stationery."

3-MONTH CHECKLIST

- Send out invitations, including gift list information.
- Buy your bridesmaids' dresses if you haven't already and get any alterations done.
- Confirm the booking if you're marrying in a register office.
- Talk about possible hairstyles and make-up options with your hairdresser.
- Discuss your wedding breakfast menu with the caterer.
- Have your order of service sheets printed. Make sure they're proof-read beforehand.
- Buy a guest book.
- Choose and book your first night hotel.
- Double-check your honeymoon plans, check passports and travel insurance.
- Schedule a rehearsal.
- Keep a note of gifts and who sent them as they arrive.
- Buy your shoes if you haven't already got them and wear them in a little with socks on.

1 MONTH

Confirm all the little details and pamper yourself!

The big day is just around the corner but you still need to do some final checking and double-checking to make sure everything happens as planned on the day. Now is the time to be contacting suppliers, and confirming arrangements, or if you have a planner they can do this for you.

Spend time thinking about the type of pictures you want to capture on the day and write out a short list of shots that must be taken by your photographer. Having a pre-wedding shoot is a great idea. Not only does it give you the chance to feel relaxed in his presence before the big day, but it will also give you an opportunity to see what types of shots you like – traditional and formal or modern and candid. Most couples nowadays go for a mixture of both, with pictures being taken in black and white and colour on the day.

You may start to feel overwhelmed with the amount of things to do now, but don't panic. Just delegate some jobs to a trusted friend or relative – your mum, chief bridesmaid or even your h2b!



DAME-WALKER.CO.UK

FIND HEN AND STAG IDEAS AT
WEDDINGIDEAS
MAGAZINE.
CO.UK

ONE-MONTH CHECKLIST

- Chase up all unanswered invites and fill in your guest tracker to see who will be attending.
- Confirm final numbers with your venue or caterers and write up your seating plan.
- Check that your dress will be completed on time with all alterations made. Have a final fitting with your underwear, accessories and shoes.
- Book final hair appointment.
- Finalise transport for the day.
- Buy the marriage license from the registrar.
- Write placecards or send them to the calligrapher.
- Type up a shot list for the photographer of pictures you definitely want.
- Choose your gifts for the wedding party.
- Remind your dad, your husband-to-be and the best man to write their speeches.
- Organise hen and stag nights.
- If you're changing your name see weddingideasmagazine.co.uk for information on how to do this and a full list of people who you need to tell.

TOP TIPS

Beauty editor Elizabeth Richards' stress-beating tips...



- Take time out with your h2b.
- Eat well to avoid low sugar levels.
- Delegate jobs to friends and family.
- Buy a bottle of Rescue Remedy.
- Write notes and don't try to remember everything in your head.

ONE WEEK BEFORE

- Make final confirmation phone calls to your photographer, florist, cake maker, band, DJ, transport and so on.
- Reconfirm the final numbers with your caterers.
- Arrange for the cake to be delivered safely to the reception venue.
- Double-check your outfit.
- Pack for the honeymoon.
- Ask your best man to make sure the hired suits are returned on time.
- Book a final hair and make-up practice with your tiara and your veil, taking care not to get them dirty.

THE DAY BEFORE

- Send your h2b a little gift for tomorrow, cufflinks perhaps. Give it to the best man to present to the groom in the morning.
- Have a manicure, pedicure and massage to relax yourself.
- Have your honeymoon luggage sent to the first night hotel and include a going away outfit, underwear and make-up.
- Have an early night so that you look your best for tomorrow.



On the day!

You've planned it to perfection, so enjoy your big day

The big day has finally arrived! This is the day when all your hard work and planning is going to pay off – it's going to be the best day of your life! Delegation is something you definitely need to do today. Ask your mum, best man, chief bridesmaid, trusted friends and your planner if you have one, to sort out any last-minute problems that arise. All you need to do today is relax and be a beautiful bride. Remember today will whizz by, so take time out alone with your new husband to take everything in.

Real-life weddings

After the big day it doesn't mean that the fun is over! Send us your real wedding pictures – 40 or so high resolution JPEGs or TIFFs on CD – and if they're suitable we'll send you a questionnaire to complete about the details of your big day. That way

your big day could be featured in a future issue of *Wedding Ideas*. It's a wonderful keepsake of the day, and something to complement your traditional wedding album. Send your CDs to Real Weddings, Wedding Ideas, 8 Hammet Street, Taunton TA1 1RZ. Please note that due to the high volume of weddings we receive, CDs cannot be returned.



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Wedding
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TOP TIP

Rachel Moschke, Editor of *Wedding Ideas* says...



- "Don't forget to sneak off with your new husband at intervals through the day to take everything in. Relax and smile, you're the bride!"

CHECKLIST ON THE DAY

Let your co-ordinator or your friends and family organise the following...

- Check best man has the rings.
- Check someone has picked up your buttonholes and corsages.
- Pack and take home presents.
- Return hired items to the shop.
- Send out cake for absent guests.

Choosing your ceremony

Religious, civil or humanist – which ceremony is right for you?

- You and your fiancé need to be at least 16 years old (if you're under 18 you'll need permission from your parents or guardian), and you must be free to marry.
 - The marriage must take place in legally recognised premises.
 - You cannot be closely related.
 - The marriage must take place in front of a registrar or authorised person.
 - The ceremony must take place between 8am and 6pm.
 - There must be two witnesses present.
- If you want to get married in a church based in the parish where you already live, you need to see the minister and book the date. He or she will then tell you about the banns, which have to be read three consecutive Sundays before the wedding. If you want to get married in a church not of your parish, you may still be allowed if you're a regular worshipper there and can join the parish electoral register. You need to get this approved by your vicar and the vicar where you want to get married. This licence costs about £25. A typical church



TOP TIP

Wedding Ideas' writer
Sabrina Atherton says...



- "Make your ceremony as personal as possible and include your friends and family. For instance if your dad walks you down the aisle, perhaps your mum would like to give a reading? Or how about your new mother or father-in-law?"

ADDRESS BOOK

General Register Office
www.gro.gov.uk

Church of England
www.cofe.anglican.org

Church of Scotland
www.churchofscotland.co.uk

General Register Office of Scotland
www.gro-scotland.gov.uk

Jewish Marriage Council
www.jmc-uk.org

Marriage Care – Catholic
www.marriagecare.org.uk

British Humanist Association
www.humanist.org.uk

WHIRLWIND WEDDINGS

If you're trying to find a venue at the last minute, for whatever reason, don't panic. Take a look at whirlwindweddings.com. They have four properties – St Audries Park in Somerset, Leez Priory in Essex, Gosfield Hall in Essex and Clearwell Castle in the Forest of Dean – all of which are willing to take late bookings at discounted rates, subject to availability.



wedding costs about £500. If you're planning a civil ceremony you can get married in a register office, where you'll have to give notice in person to the superintendent registrar at the town hall or local council office. This costs around £30 each to give notice and up to £40 for registrar's fees. Alternatively there are many approved buildings where you can marry now – see the General Register Office's website opposite for a full list of premises. The Church of Scotland's rules are more relaxed and you can get married anywhere at any time, providing your minister agrees, but you must give 15 days' notice. In the Roman Catholic church, one of you must have been baptised Catholic. The priest may ask you to take 'lessons' and you'll have to obtain your marriage licence from the local superintendent registrar.

Wedding budgets

Top tips for saving money for your dream day...

Here at *Wedding Ideas* we believe everyone can have the day of their dreams regardless of their budget. Taking out loans and maxing out credit cards is not a great way to start married life. You'll find expert advice on saving money in every issue of *Wedding Ideas*, but for now here are our top tips to get you started...

Hire a wedding planner

This may seem like a luxury but more and more brides are realising that having a wedding planner, even if it's just to co-ordinate things on the day, is a massive help. They can search for the best suppliers and deals, as well as making sure that everything you have spent your hard-earned money on gets used on the day. There are varying degrees of service available, so you can choose the one that's best for you.

DIY

The best weddings are often the ones that are most personal, so why not get creative and turn your hand to making things. Take stationery, for example. There are many DIY kits available now, or alternatively pre-made kits with pretty stamps to suit your colour scheme. Or how about making your bridesmaid's bouquet? Many florists have workshops where you can learn how to arrange posies, buttonholes and the smaller arrangements for the day. It's a great day out for you and your mum or bridesmaid. Leave your bouquet to the professionals though!

Choose a must-have

If you've always dreamed of arriving by helicopter, having a chocolate fountain or a massive firework display at your wedding, have it! Choose one must-have item and do everything you can to have it, even if you have to cut back in other areas.

Sell, sell, sell

One girl's trash is another girl's treasure, so hunt through your basement, attic and garage and box up any unwanted junk you can sell at car boot sales or on auction sites. You may be surprised how much you make, and remember every penny helps towards those much-wanted Choos!

Use your friends

Whether it's your mum making the cake, your best friend DJing or your neighbour lending you his brand new Mercedes, ask your friends and family to help you on the day. They'll be happy to be involved.

Cut back on food

The reception is normally one of the most expensive parts of the wedding, but it's also the place where you can cut back on your spending, with a bit of clever planning. Why not have a later ceremony so there is only one meal during the day; serve your cake as the dessert course or choose a theme that doesn't involve a huge sit-down meal, like an English Tea Party? Tea, scones, cream and jam and you're sorted – you could even ask some guests to bring homemade cakes!



TOP TIPS

Jason Wyer-Smith from Virgin Money says...



"Think about how you are going to pay for your wedding as soon as you get engaged.

Start by opening a cash ISA each and depositing money regularly. You'll each be able to put away up to £3,000 a year without paying tax on the interest and with most providers, you can still get the money out quickly when you have to start paying for things."

AVERAGE PRICE GUIDE

• Bride's outfit, accessories, hair and make-up	£1,372
• Groom's outfit	£230
• Wedding rings	£607
• Flowers	£477
• Stationery	£175
• Photographer	£840
• Wedding video	£516
• Bridesmaids' outfits	£392
• Lingerie	£70
• Transport	£200
• Ceremony fees	£450
• Reception venue	£5,500
• Cake	£250
• Entertainment	£500
• First night hotel	£250
• Honeymoon	£2,000



Our planner includes pages for tracking guests as well as how much you're spending...

BUDGET SPREADSHEET

Click [here](#) to download our amazing wedding planner from weddingideasmagazine.co.uk today and start taking control of your finances. There is space to note down everything you'll be spending money on, from stationery to the cake, and it will automatically calculate how much you've spent so far at the bottom, so you can see at a glance how your budget is going.

Questions for suppliers

Ask the right questions and get the best deals...

The earlier you start sourcing suppliers, the more likely you are to get your first choice and the more organised, and therefore more relaxed, you will be.

One of the best ways to find suppliers is to ask for recommendations from your friends and relatives. And when you do find suppliers make sure you ask to see some testimonials, ask them if they've ever worked at your venue before and if so, what problems did they encounter last time and how can you stop them happening again.

You also need to get written quotes from each of your short-listed suppliers and visit each one so you know that you get on and can work together. This is a stressful time and you need people around you that you can trust. Outline your budget to them at the start so they know exactly how much you've got to spend. And once you've chosen a venue or caterer, make sure you sample all food and wine before the day to make sure there are no surprises.

IN BLOOM

Flowers can take up a large part of the budget, but there are a few ways you can save in this area too. Use flowers that are in season; use one small arrangement on tables and add a mirror underneath to double the impact; use easily transportable arrangements at your ceremony and then place them in certain positions around your reception venue to highlight its best features (or hide the bad ones!).

• SPRING

Lilac, Sweet Pea, Tulip, Hyacinth

• SUMMER

Delphinium, Peony, Roses, Hydrangea, Sweet William, Daisies

• AUTUMN

Heelbore, Hypericum, Nerine, Zinnia, Sedum, Dahlia, late Sunflowers

• WINTER

Snowdrop, Ranunculus, Mimosa, Anemone, Amaryllis

10 REASONS TO HIRE A PLANNER

1. They can negotiate discounts
2. They'll stop you buying things on impulse
3. They'll help you stick to the budget
4. They'll make sure everything you've bought gets used on the day
5. They can check contracts for you
6. They'll save you time by finding relevant suppliers so you only have to meet with the best ones
7. They can chase any deposits that need to be returned to you while you're on honeymoon
8. It'll save you petrol!
9. You'll save on the little costs like phone bills, postage, transfer fees
10. They can take the stress away from you so you can enjoy the day



DAVE WALKER.CO.UK

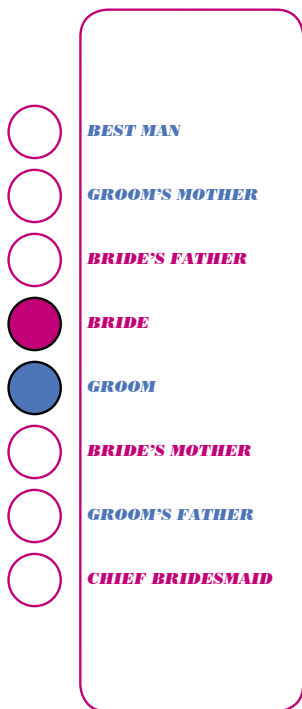
WHAT TO ASK...

- "Is this quote fully inclusive or are there hidden charges somewhere?"
- "What will you do and is there anything you won't do?"
- "What happens if you can't 'do' my wedding?"
- "What time will you arrive and when will you leave?"
- "How often will I speak to you and meet up before the day?"
- "What do you need from me in terms of shot list/first dance song/music choices?"
- "When is your payment due?"
- "Have you ever worked at my venue before?"
- "Can I see some testimonials from brides you've worked with in the past?"
- "Have you got any questions for me?"

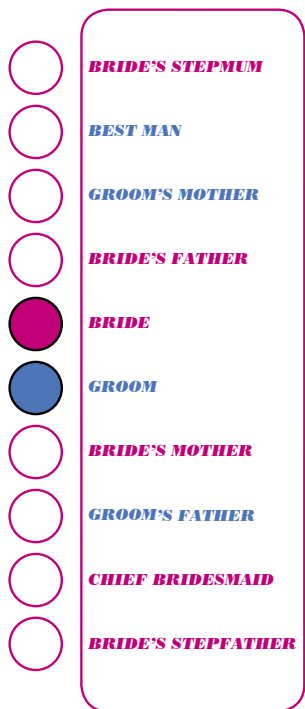
These must-ask questions were written by Tamryn Kirby from TKWeddings (www.tkweddings.com) who provide wedding planning and on-the-day co-ordination services.



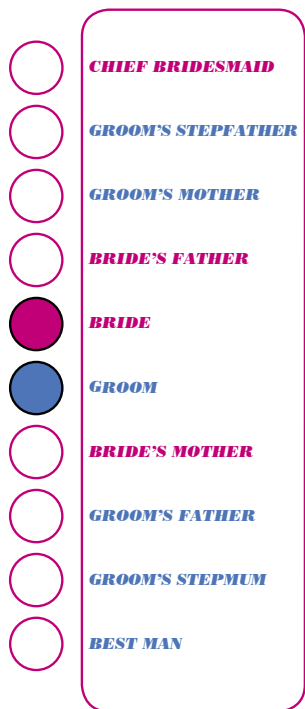
TRADITIONAL TOP TABLE



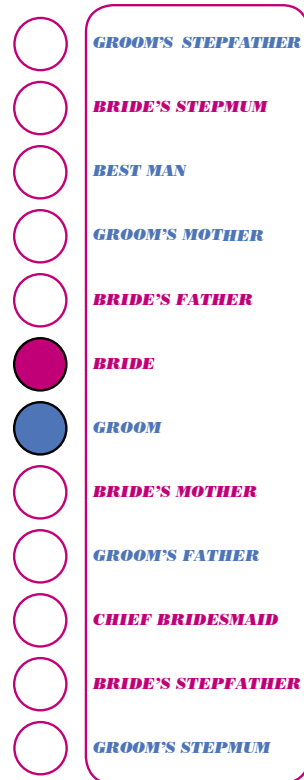
BRIDE'S PARENTS ARE DIVORCED AND BOTH PARENTS HAVE REMARRIED



GROOM'S PARENTS ARE DIVORCED AND BOTH PARENTS HAVE REMARRIED



BOTH SETS OF PARENTS HAVE DIVORCED AND HAVE REMARRIED



Planning the reception

Make your reception unforgettable and unique...

Your reception will probably take up the biggest chunk of the budget because it includes the venue, the food, the drink and the evening entertainment. Think about who's attending and hire entertainment accordingly! Don't forget children either, and provide simple activity books, crayons, and party games to keep them entertained, especially through the speeches. If you're trying to save money, why not get creative and double up your favours as placecards? You could also serve your cake as the dessert course, and think about transferring the flower arrangements from the ceremony to the reception venue to save on decorations.



MORE RECEPTION IDEAS AT WEDDINGIDEAS.MAGAZINE.CO.UK

SPEECH, SPEECH!

The traditional running order for speeches during the reception is as follows:

- Father of the bride – praises the bride; tells anecdotes of her past; thanks everyone involved in the day; proposes a toast to the bride and groom.
- Groom – Thanks the father-in-law and bride's parents; thanks anyone who's made a contribution; thanks the ushers, best man, compliments the bridesmaids; gives out gifts for bridesmaids and mums
- Best man – Thanks the groom on behalf of the bridesmaids and himself; tells a few anecdotes about the groom and reads out any cards and messages

TOP TIP

Helen Littlechild from lovesmelovesmeknot.co.uk...



"Simplicity often works best, so try not to let your styling get too busy. You can create an ultra-sleek look at your reception with modern vases holding a single flower stem – these look fabulous and guests can take them home as favours too."

MARQUEES

If you're having a marquee, think about the following:

- Position and power supply
- Lighting
- Toilet facilities and car parking
- Furniture
- Litter collection
- Health and safety regulations
- Noise levels
- Caterers, tableware and linen

Marry abroad & Honeymoons

Marrying abroad has just got even easier...

The dream of having a wedding abroad is fast becoming a reality for many couples. Not only are you practically guaranteed glorious weather, the growing number of planners and tour operators organising weddings means that the legal side of things can be taken care of, leaving you to concentrate on the fun bits.

Hire a wedding planner

Find out who organises weddings in your chosen destination and ask them about the different types of service they offer, and talk about how much you have to spend. Find out if they will handle all the legal elements for you. They should be able to liaise with local suppliers and get you the best deals. Ask for references and photos of their work. Many of the bigger hotels will have an events co-ordinator or wedding manager who will be able to help you too.

Visit your destination

If your budget allows, make a preliminary visit to the place where you're hoping to marry. Meet up with your planner and visit the suggested ceremony and reception venues. Meet suppliers too where possible.

Take your documents

Don't forget any important documents when you travel. In most cases you will need to present the following, original documents on arrival:

- birth certificates
- valid 10-year passports
- affidavit/statutory declarations

confirming single status

- Decree Absolute (if you are divorced)
- previous spouse's death certificate (if you are widowed)
- parental consent if you are under 18 (21 in some countries).

You also need to check the period of time you have to be present in the country before you can get married. Some countries require you to have visas, and it is your responsibility to get these. For the most up-to-date information contact the relevant embassy. In some countries you'll also have to wait for the documents to be translated. Check with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office for more information.

Arrive early

Try to avoid arriving a day before the wedding. Allow at least four days to visit the local Public Registry Office if needed, and have your hair and make-up trials. This will also give you time to sort out any last-minute changes.

Pack carefully

Consider buying a protective box or covering for your dress so it doesn't get damaged in transit. The same goes for your jewellery and shoes.



SHOP FOR YOUR HONEYMOON AT WEDDING-IDEAS-SHOP.CO.UK

ADDRESS BOOK

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
www.fco.org.uk

Trip Advisor
www.tripadvisor.co.uk

E&L Insurance
www.eandl.org.uk

Wedding Ideas
www.weddingideasmagazine.co.uk

Confetti
www.confetti.co.uk

TOP TIPS

Wedding Ideas' travel writer, Rowena Carr-Allinson says...

- "Even if you're a sporty couple, don't overdo it on honeymoon. The stress and excitement of the big day will catch up with you, so build in time to relax. And remember there's no better time to upgrade – you are on honeymoon after all!"



HONEYMOONS

Your honeymoon should be as personal as your wedding, so really spend time thinking about which destinations would be best for you and your interests. Remember to ask your travel agent what the destination is like at that time of year – you don't want two weeks in the middle of the rainy season!



Three months before the wedding you should check if your passport is valid and talk to the passport office if you want to change it to your married name. You should also have your flights, hotel, transfers and some activities booked. Also get any vaccinations done and get some travel insurance if that's not included in the package.

A few weeks before, you should finalise your itinerary and have your hotels confirmed in writing. You should also order your currency, and make sure you have all the relevant travel documents. Also ask a friend or relative to look after your wedding presents when you leave on the wedding night, and organise someone to take your dress home and return the groom's suit, if hired. You'll find a wealth of honeymoon destinations in *Wedding Ideas* every month and online at weddingideasmagazine.co.uk

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE!

Join the forum at weddingideasmagazine.co.uk to see where other brides are honeymooning.

Now you're married...

The wedding may be over, but there's still lots to do

Phew! You've had the big day, and a wonderful honeymoon so now's the time to settle into married life. But just before you do, there's some housekeeping to be done. First, your dress. Make sure it's stored away safely, see the tips below on how to do this. Secondly, if you're changing your name, inform all the important people, like the bank manager, credit card companies and so on – there's a list opposite to help you. And thirdly there will be many pictures from the day that need sorting out, mainly candid shots taken by your friends at the reception.

Make sure you get a copy of them and keep them in an album, or perhaps make a wedding montage of your favourite shots and hang it above your bed. Don't forget to check out the newlywed forum on www.weddingideasmagazine.co.uk – come and share what you've learnt and help other brides-to-be have a great day too!

PRESERVING YOUR WEDDING DRESS

1. Don't store your dress in standard plastic or PVC bags. They won't protect your gown
2. Don't leave your box in direct sunlight or bright light
3. Store your box at around 13-18 degrees centigrade. Put simply, don't store it near a tumble dryer, in the garage or loft
4. Ensure your dress is cleaned professionally before storing it away
5. Avoid unnecessary handling of the dress and try to avoid showing your friends before the big day
6. Wear protective gloves when handling your dress
7. Use acid-free tissue paper between the folds and around the dress
8. Don't forget little children – make sure your box is out of reach
9. Occasionally unpack your dress to check it's ok and reduce the risk of permanent damage
10. Choose a strong, durable box if you're taking your dress abroad

For more dress storage ideas take a look at memories-nostalgia.com



TOP TIP

Wedding Ideas' writer
Kate Graham says...



Planning a wedding is an exhilarating ride. But when the honeymoon tan has faded, how do brides adjust to the reality of married life? Carole Ann Rice is a life coach who has helped many women make the transition. First, it is perfectly normal to feel the post-wedding blues. "Many women get a flat feeling once the big day is over," Carole explains. "These feelings are perfectly normal, it doesn't make you a bad or selfish person that you feel a little deflated. Everyone gets swept up in their big day and it is natural after such a good time to want it to carry on." Next, get practical. "Why not organise a low-key event with friends and family? Nothing fancy, just a chance to relive all the good memories and look at the photos. That will give you something to look forward to." To read more see www.realcoachingco.com

THINGS TO DO NOW

- Write your thank you cards and make them personal, thanking the guest for their particular gift.
- Update your passport, bank accounts, credit cards and driver's license with your married name.
- If you had a savings account for the wedding, try to keep this going and save to go somewhere special on your first anniversary.
- Submit your wedding pictures to *Wedding Ideas*. Get your photographer to send us a CD with 40 or so high resolution images of your day in TIFF or JPEG format and if they're suitable, we'll contact you with a questionnaire to get all the details about the day.



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