

LAWPACK



Do-it-yourself Kit

Wedding Planner

Guidance Manual



This is an excerpt from Lawpack's *Wedding Planner Kit*.

To get everything you need to plan your own perfect wedding, [click here](#).

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How to use this Kit

Written and designed in a logical, easy-to-use style, this Kit covers every organisational detail, from the day of the engagement right through to after the wedding or civil formation.

Concentrating on the practical aspects of the preparations, this Kit contains a Manual, a Checklist Workbook and loose-leaf Countdown Calendar.

To obtain the maximum benefit from the Kit and to simplify your planning, it is recommended that you follow the suggested sequence:

- 1.** Refer to the Countdown Calendar, which lists all the vital steps at each stage of the preparations. The page numbers in brackets relate to pages in this Manual.
- 2.** Follow the step-by-step sequence detailed in each section of this Manual. In some instances this is supplemented by additional information.
- 3.** Finally, use the Checklist Workbook to record all relevant information, to enable you to track your progress at every vital step towards the wedding day or civil formation.

Best wishes for a successful day!



Wedding Expenses

Refer to **Checklist 2 | Wedding Expenses**

- Agree a provisional budget and decide how expenses will be allocated between the bride and groom and the respective parents. As actual costs become available, you may wish to enter these on the Checklist to provide a complete, up-to-date record
- Compile a list of all likely expenses associated with your wedding requirements
- Consider whether you will need a loan
Arrange this well in advance, preferably with approval in principle, so you only need draw on it if and when required
- Allow plenty of time to shop around and check websites to compare prices
- Contact suppliers to obtain an idea of prices and request brochures or literature on the goods and services you require
- Draw up detailed specifications for goods and services required and send to relevant suppliers. An identical specification should be sent to each particular group of suppliers to enable accurate comparisons
- Compare the estimates or quotations
Estimates provide only an approximate idea of the final cost, whereas quotations usually state fixed prices
- Check whether VAT is payable and that all amounts include delivery charges, staff costs, etc. Enquire whether there is a time limit on acceptance and that the figures will not be affected by any future price increases
- Modify your requirements or budget if estimates or quotations exceed available funds
- Request written detailed agreements for supplies and services
- Read and fully understand any contracts for goods and services before you add your signature. Carefully check any wording in small print and ensure commitments by any party are clearly set out
- Pay deposits as and when required
It is reasonable for a supplier to request a deposit, but it is important to check the procedure in the event of cancellation
- Settle outstanding balances at the appropriate time

Church Wedding

Refer to **Checklist 4 | Church Wedding**

- Make an appointment with the officiant to discuss the following details:
 - ❖ date and time of ceremony
 - ❖ content and order of service

SEE 'ORDER OF SERVICE' BELOW

 - ❖ bell-ringers, organist and choir and the relevant cost
 - ❖ suggest a meeting with the organist and obtain a contact telephone number
 - ❖ check whether there are any other weddings on the same day
 - ❖ flowers and who will provide them
Some churches provide flowers and you may need to specify the type and colour required. If so, ascertain whether you will be required to contribute towards the cost. You may also wish to liaise with any other couples getting married on the same day
 - ❖ permission for photography and video-recording
 - ❖ the policy regarding confetti
 - ❖ amount of church fees and details of payment
 - ❖ dates for wedding preparation classes or instruction
 - ❖ dates when the banns will be published (on three Sundays before the wedding)
 - ❖ date for the rehearsal with all attendants present
 - ❖ obtain signature on the necessary form if you wish to change the name in your passport before the wedding
- Make an appointment with the organist to discuss the music

SEE 'ORDER OF SERVICE' BELOW

- Arrange for the banns to be published in

groom's church if different to the bride's church

- Choose at least two witnesses (this is a legal requirement)
- Make a sketch of the inside of the church if required by photographer, videographer, etc.
- Ascertain location and quantity of parking space for guests' cars

Order of Service

Refer to **Checklist 5 | Order of Service**

- Discuss the content and order of service with the officiant. Seek their advice and, if possible, refer to order of service sheets from previous weddings
 - ❖ discuss inclusion of Holy Communion/Nuptial Mass
 - ❖ discuss version of service and vows
 - ❖ state any preferences
 - for the Reading(s)

SEE PAGE 10 'MUSIC AND BIBLE READINGS'

 - for the Prayers
 - for any specific points to be mentioned in the Address
 - ❖ seek approval to include any performances
 - by the choir
 - by singer(s)
 - by musician(s)
 - ❖ discuss the hymns, psalms and organ music you would like

SEE PAGE 10 'MUSIC AND BIBLE READINGS'

- Arrange to meet the organist
 - ❖ discuss the music you would like played. It may be helpful to purchase or borrow a CD or download relevant tracks

- as a medley before the service begins
 - for the entrance of the bride (Processional)
 - during the signing of the register
 - leaving the church (Recessional)
 - ❖ offer to obtain sheet music, if appropriate
 - ❖ discuss your choice of hymns/psalms
 - ❖ determine how many order of service sheets are required for the choir
- Book singer(s) and musician(s)
- Decide whether you will print the words or use hymn books

Music and Bible Readings

PROCESSIONAL MUSIC

As the bride walks up the aisle

- Bridal March from Lohengrin - Wagner
- Fugue in G Minor - Bach
- Grand March from Aida - Verdi
- Hornpipe in D from the Water Music - Handel
- Prelude from Te Deum - Charpentier
- Prince of Denmark's March - Clarke
- The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba - Handel
- Toccata in C - Zipoli
- Trumpet Minuet - Hollins
- Trumpet Tune and Air - Purcell
- Trumpet Tune in D - Stanley
- Trumpet Voluntary - Clarke
- Wedding Fanfare - Bliss
- Wedding March from The Marriage of Figaro - Mozart

TRADITIONAL HYMNS

It is advisable to choose hymns that the majority of your guests will recognise

- Alleluia, sing to Jesus
- All people that on earth do dwell
- All things bright and beautiful
- And did those feet in ancient time (Jerusalem)
- At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow
- Come down, O Love divine
- Dear Lord and Father of mankind
- Father, hear the prayer we offer
- Glorious things of thee are spoken
- Great is thy faithfulness
- Guide me, O thou great Redeemer
- I vow to thee, my country
- Immortal, invisible, God only wise
- Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
- Let all the world in every corner sing
- Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy
- Love divine, all loves excelling
- Now thank we all our God
- O for a thousand tongues to sing
- O Jesus I have promised
- O Lord my God when I in awesome wonder
- O perfect Love, all human thought transcending
- O praise ye the Lord
- Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven
- Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation
- Rejoice the Lord is King
- The King of love my Shepherd is
- The Lord is my Shepherd (Psalm 23) - to the tune of Crimond
- Thine be the glory

MODERN POPULAR HYMNS

- Amazing Grace
- Be still for the presence of the Lord
- Bind us together
- Come on and celebrate
- From heaven you came helpless babe (The Servant King)
- Give me joy in my heart
- Give thanks with a grateful heart
- I cannot tell why he whom angels worship
- Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it
- Jesus put this song into our hearts
- Jesus, stand among us at the meeting of our lives
- Let there be love shared among us
- Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us
- Lord for the years your love has kept and guided
- Lord the light of your love is shining (Shine, Jesus, shine)
- Make me a channel of your peace
- Morning has broken
- New every morning is the love
- Lord of the Dance
- One more step along the world I go
- Tell out my soul
- You shall go out with joy

FAVOURITE PSALMS

- 23: The Lord is my Shepherd
- 48: Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised
- 67: God be merciful unto us, and bless us
- 121: I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills
- 127: Except the Lord build the house
- 128: Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord

READINGS

Old Testament

- Genesis - Chapter 1, verses 26-28 and 31a
- Song of Solomon - Chapter 2, verses 10-13 and Chapter 8, verses 6 and 7
- Jeremiah - Chapter 31, verses 31-34
- Tobit - Chapter 8, verses 4-8

New Testament

- Matthew - Chapter 5, verses 1-10
- Matthew - Chapter 7, verses 21, 24-27
- Mark - Chapter 10, verses 6-9 and verses 13-16
- John - Chapter 2, verses 1-11
- John - Chapter 15, verses 1-8
- John - Chapter 15, verses 9-17
- Romans - Chapter 7, verses 1, 2, 9-18
- Romans - Chapter 8, verses 31-35, 37-39
- Romans - Chapter 12, verses 1, 2, 9-13
- Romans - Chapter 15, verses 1-3, 5-7, 13
- 1 Corinthians - Chapter 13
- Ephesians - Chapter 3, verses 14-end
- Ephesians - Chapter 4, verses 1-6
- Ephesians - Chapter 5, verses 21-end
- Philippians - Chapter 4, verses 4-9
- Colossians - Chapter 3, verses 12-17
- 1 John - Chapter 3, verses 18-end
- 1 John - Chapter 4, verses 7-12

Signing the Register

- Adagio from Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C - Bach
- Air and Gavotte - Wesley
- Air from the Water Music - Handel
- Canon in D major - Pachelbel
- Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - Bach
- Largo from the New World Symphony - Dvorak
- Pastoral Symphony from The Messiah - Handel
- Pastorale to a Wild Rose - Macdowell
- Prelude from Greensleeves - Vaughan-Williams
- Prelude from Prelude, Fugue and Variation Op 18 - Franck
- Sheep May Safely Graze - Bach

Recessional Music

As the bride and groom leave the church together

- Allegro from Symphony No. 6 - Widor
- Bridal March - Hollins
- Choral Song - Wesley
- Fanfare - Whitlock
- Music for the Royal Fireworks - Handel
- Pomp and Circumstance March No. 4 - Elgar
- The 'Great' G major Prelude - Bach
- Toccata from Symphony No. 5 - Widor
- Toccata in C - Pachelbel
- Trumpet Voluntary - Clarke
- Wedding March from A Midsummer Night's Dream - Mendelssohn



Civil Ceremony

The options available will enable you to have the type of ceremony you wish at the location of your choice. You can either have a simple ceremony with just two witnesses or a ceremony where the bride is given away and bridesmaids/pageboys attend. You may have music and readings, but any with slight religious overtones need to be agreed with the Registrar before the day of Marriage. It is unlikely that you will be allowed to have live music, although you will be allowed to have approved recorded music to be played on either your own (or hired) system or the register office's system.

The choice of venue is also yours. You can get married at any register office in England or Wales or in approved premises, which are licensed by local authorities.

You will appreciate the benefit of this flexibility

- ❖ if your local register office is not able to accommodate the number of guests you wish to invite
- ❖ if you have moved away from an area, but would like to return there to get married
- ❖ if you desire a more unusual and memorable venue

However, the wedding still has to take place indoors, between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., with two adult witnesses present. These may be relatives, friends or colleagues who must be able to speak and understand English. Refer to the General Register Office website (www.gro.gov.uk) for further information.

Scotland

Regulations on marriage are much less restrictive than in England and Wales. Couples are able to get married anywhere they like, even out of doors or at home, subject to approval by the local council. The legal age is 16 or over and the permission of parents or guardian is not required.

Both parties must inform the Registrar of their intention to marry and submit their completed marriage notice forms, relevant documents, declarations and fees to the Registrar of Marriages in the District where the marriage is to take place. There are no residency requirements and notice must be given in the three-month period prior to the date of the marriage and should be with the Registrar four weeks before the marriage. If either party has been married before, the notices should be with the Registrar six weeks before. The minimum period is fifteen days before the date of the proposed marriage.

Although both parties need not attend personally at the Registrar's Office to hand in their marriage notice, at least one of the couple must attend there personally before the date of the marriage to finalise the arrangements.

Whilst nothing of a religious nature may be included in the ceremony, it is possible to have music, poetry, exchange of rings, etc and this should be discussed with the Registrar, as should any flower arrangements. Refer to the General Register Office for Scotland website (www.gro-scotland.gov.uk) for further information.

Northern Ireland

The legal age is 16 or over and persons over 16 and under 18 require the consent of parents or guardian. There are no residency requirements and notice must be given in the twelve-month period prior to the date of the marriage and should be with the Registrar eight weeks before the marriage. If either party has been married before, the notices should be with the Registrar ten weeks before. The minimum period is fourteen days before the date of the proposed marriage.

Both parties must inform the Registrar of their intention to marry and submit their completed

marriage notice forms, relevant documents, declarations and fees to the Registrar of Marriages in the District where the marriage is to take place. The notice forms may be submitted in person or by post to the Registrar. The parties may be requested to attend at the Registrar's Office to finalise the arrangements, and/or collect the marriage schedule.

Whilst nothing of a religious nature may be included in the ceremony, it is possible to have music, poetry, exchange of rings, etc and this should be discussed with the Registrar, as should any flower arrangements. Refer to the General Register Office (Northern Ireland) website (www.groni.gov.uk) for further information.

Legal Preliminaries

It is a legal requirement for both to give notice of intention to marry. You cannot give more than one year's notice of your intention to marry. The notice is a legal document that must be given and signed by each of the people getting married.

Marriage by Certificate

- ❖ You must both have lived in any district in England and Wales for at least 7 days immediately before giving notice of intention to marry. It does not matter if either of you moves to a different address after the notice has been given.
- ❖ If you live in a different district from the person you are marrying, you can choose to marry in the register office in the district where either of you live or in any register office of your choice. Notice must be given to the Superintendent Registrar in each district.
If you both live in the same district, notice must be given by both of you.
However, it is important to first contact the district where you wish the marriage to take place.
- ❖ Once you have given notice you must wait 15 clear days before the marriage can take place.

You can collect your certificate for the marriage in the district (or districts) in which the notice was given as soon as this waiting period is over. The certificate is the legal document that allows your marriage to take place.

- ❖ The certificate should be presented to the Registrar of the district where the marriage is to take place.
- ❖ The marriage may then take place at any time within 12 months from the day on which you gave notice.

Designated Office System

This relates to a marriage involving someone who is subject to immigration control. Initially a letter must be obtained from the Home Office stating they can marry in the UK. They then need to give formal notice to a Designated Office. The details of such notices will change if one or both of the parties to a marriage are subject to immigration control and also the location of the persons and their Designated Office. The Home Office or the Superintendent Registrar can supply these details and a list of the Designated Offices in England and Wales.

The Necessary Documents

When giving notice of marriage, you will be asked to produce evidence of identity and nationality - preferably your passport or birth certificate - and proof of residence, e.g. an electricity or telephone bill. With a birth certificate, another form of identification is required - driving licence, medical card, ID card or nationality document stating date of birth.

It is important to note that certain documents will be required if any of the following circumstances apply:

- ❖ proof of your parent's or guardian's approval if you are under 18. The relevant form can be obtained from the register office
- ❖ evidence of how your most recent marriage ended if you have been married before:
 - ❖ in the case of divorce, your Decree Absolute

bearing an original stamp from the issuing court, with an English translation if appropriate

- ❖ if you have been widowed, the death certificate of your former spouse
- ❖ a passport, Home Office Document or other official identity document, with an English translation if appropriate, if born outside the UK
- ❖ Deed Poll, Change of Name Deed or Statutory Declaration if you have changed your name

Fees

Fees are set nationally by Parliament for register office ceremonies held in England and Wales and are regularly reviewed.

A fee will be payable for:

- ❖ giving the notices of a wedding; this is per person in each register office where notice is given
- ❖ conducting the marriage ceremony and one copy of the marriage certificate (this fee is payable on the wedding day, so be sure to have cash available)

Civil Marriage in Approved Premises

Each local register office holds a list of approved premises in its district. These include banqueting suites, hotels, stately homes and other buildings of historical interest. More unusual venues include London Zoo, Pinewood Film Studios, Coventry City Football Club, Sandown Park Racecourse and HMS Warrior, Portsmouth.

If you have a civil ceremony at approved premises, the Registrar will charge a higher fee to take into account the additional administration, time and costs involved in travelling to the venue. The fee will also vary depending on whether the ceremony is to be held on a weekday, Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holiday and is payable in advance. Although these charges are set locally, they tend not to vary

significantly from area to area.

The law does not allow for civil marriages to be held in the open air, in a tent or marquee, in any other movable structure such as a boat or a hot air balloon, nor in any building that has present or past connection with any religion.

Some venues can only hold the wedding ceremony and you will have to find another venue for the reception. At other venues it is negotiable and some will only allow the ceremony if you have a reception as well. In any case, you should contact the manager or owner of the premises to make provisional arrangements before contacting the register office.

- ❖ Notice of intended marriage must be given in the district(s) where you both live and the certificate presented to the register office in the district where the ceremony is to be held if they are not the same.
- ❖ The same residency rules of 7 clear days apply.
- ❖ The marriage may take place at any time within 12 months from the day on which notice was given.

Suggestions for Music

FRANK SINATRA CLASSICS

- Hello Young Lovers
- Let's Fall In Love.
- Somebody Loves Me

THE BEATLES NO. 1 SINGLES

- Love Me Do
- I Want to Hold Your Hand
- Can't Buy Me Love
- All You Need Is Love

VARIOUS ARTISTS

- Robbie Williams - Angels
- Wet Wet Wet - Love Is All Around
- Backstreet Boys - I'll Never Break Your Heart

- Donna Lewis - I Love You Always Forever
- Whitney Houston - One Moment In Time
- Simply Red - If You Don't Know Me By Now
- Rod Stewart - Have I Told You Lately
- Bee Gees - How Deep Is Your Love
- Madness - It Must Be Love
- Deacon Blue - I'll Never Fall In Love Again
- Maria McKee - Show Me Heaven
- Eric Clapton - Wonderful Tonight
- Dire Straits - Romeo and Juliet
- Jennifer Rush - Power Of Love
- Elvis Presley - Always On My Mind

Suggestions for Poetry and Readings

- I Wanna Be Yours by John Cooper Clarke
- Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? (Sonnet 18) by William Shakespeare
- How do I love thee? Let me count the ways (Sonnet From the Portuguese) by Elizabeth Barrett Browning
- Songs From the Princess by Alfred, Lord Tennyson
- Come live with me, and be my love (The Passionate Shepherd to His Love) by Christopher Marlowe
- He Wishes For Cloths of Heaven by W B Yeats
- The Good Morrow by John Donne

Marrying Abroad

Some countries require a Certificate of No Impediment. This is used for persons marrying in a foreign country where one of the parties is British and the other is a foreign national. Advice can be sought from a Superintendent Registrar or the Foreign Office.

A Superintendent Registrar may accept notice for a

marriage to take place in a foreign country between a British subject and either a foreign subject or another British subject. He/she will be able to issue a certificate that can be produced to help the procedure abroad. However, the rules vary and you should consult the Superintendent Registrar.

Where a marriage is solemnised in a foreign country under local law, it is sometimes possible for a record of the marriage to be made under the Foreign Marriage Order, 1970. This is not always the case and you should consult the Superintendent Registrar for more details.

CIVIL CEREMONY Register Office

Refer to **Checklist 6 | Civil Ceremony - Register Office**

- Identify the register office of your choice (obtain addresses from local authorities, telephone directories or the Internet)
- Telephone the register office to provisionally book the ceremony
This can be arranged up to 12 months in advance
- Call in person at the appropriate register office(s) to give notices of your intentions to marry and to pay the fees for giving notices

SEE PAGE 14 - 'MARRIAGE BY CERTIFICATE'

It will be necessary to produce evidence of identity for both parties`

SEE PAGE 14 - 'THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS'

- Make an appointment with the Superintendent Registrar to discuss the following details:
 - ❖ confirm the date and time of ceremony
 - ❖ how many guests can be accommodated
 - ❖ type of ceremony ~ standard or enhanced with the addition of extra slightly religious declarations or poetry readings of your choice
 - ❖ the policy on playing appropriate music of your choice providing it has only slight religious connotations

- ❖ the possibility of including the bride being 'given away'
 - ❖ the policy on confetti, photography and video-recording
 - ❖ the possibility of having the ceremony broadcast live on the Internet and the cost
 - ❖ provision of flowers
A silk flower arrangement will be provided or you can arrange to supply your own flowers
 - ❖ location and quantity of parking space for guests' cars
 - ❖ amount of fees and details of payment
 - ❖ obtain signature on the necessary form if you wish to change the name in your passport before the wedding
- Choose at least two adult witnesses (this is a legal requirement)
 - Decide whether you wish to have a church Service of Blessing, either directly after the marriage or on another day
-
- SEE PAGE 27 - 'SERVICE OF BLESSING'

CIVIL CEREMONY

Approved Premises

Refer to **Checklist 7 | Civil Ceremony - Approved Premises**

- Decide whether you prefer to have just the ceremony or both the ceremony and reception at the venue
 - Identify approved venues in the required area (obtain details from local register office or on the Internet)
 - Enquire whether they offer facilities for the wedding alone or both the wedding and reception
 - Establish compatibility of venue with proposed style of wedding
 - Request brochures and prices
 - Ascertain their hire charges for the room(s) and whether they offer exclusive use of the venue and the cost
- Establish availability
 - ❖ date
 - ❖ time
 - ❖ room(s) (depending on the number of guests)
 - Choose at least two adult witnesses (this is a legal requirement)
 - Decide whether you wish to have a church Service of Blessing, either directly after the marriage or on another day
-
- SEE PAGE 27 - 'SERVICE OF BLESSING'

Booking the Superintendent Registrar

- Telephone the register office to provisionally book the Superintendent Registrar
This can be arranged up to 12 months in advance
 - Call in person at the appropriate register office(s) to give notices of your intentions to marry and to pay the fees for giving notices
-
- SEE PAGE 14 - 'MARRIAGE BY CERTIFICATE'
- It will be necessary to produce evidence of identity for both parties
-
- SEE PAGE 14 - 'THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS'
- Make an appointment with the Superintendent Registrar to discuss the following details:
 - ❖ confirm the date and time of ceremony
 - ❖ proposed venue
 - ❖ number of guests attending
 - ❖ type of ceremony ~ standard or enhanced with the addition of extra slightly religious declarations or poetry readings of your choice
 - ❖ the policy on playing appropriate music of your choice providing it has only slight religious connotations
 - ❖ the possibility of including the bride being 'given away'
 - ❖ the policy on confetti, photography and video-recording

- ❖ amount of fees and details of payment
 - ❖ obtain signature on the necessary form if you wish to change the name in your passport before the wedding

- One week before the wedding
 - ❖ telephone or call round to check the final arrangements
 - ❖ confirm the final number of guests

Booking a venue for the Wedding Ceremony only

- Make an appointment with the Venue Manager to discuss your requirements:
 - ❖ confirm the date and time of ceremony
 - ❖ number of guests attending
 - ❖ ask whether there are any other weddings on the same day
 - ❖ check on easy access for any elderly or disabled guests
 - ❖ provision of flowers
Specify the type and colour if you wish the venue to provide them or you may prefer to ask your own florist
 - ❖ the policy on confetti
 - ❖ location and quantity of parking space for guests' cars
 - ❖ discuss the estimated cost and ascertain whether VAT is included
 - ❖ request a detailed estimate in writing
- Confirm acceptance in writing and enclose the required deposit

Booking a venue for the Wedding Ceremony and Reception

- See 'Booking Venue for the Wedding Ceremony Only' above
- Refer to 'Reception'

SEE PAGE 52 - 'RECEPTION'

Duties

Best Man

The best man is chosen by the bridegroom and is usually a brother or a good friend. This responsible role involves offering a certain amount of help with the preparations and considerable activity on the wedding day to ensure everything proceeds smoothly and is a complete success.

6 MONTHS

- Discuss plans with the bride, groom and chief bridesmaid
- Help to choose the ushers and explain their duties to them

4 MONTHS

- Arrange to purchase or hire own clothes and ascertain who will pay

SEE PAGE 49 - 'CLOTHES FOR THE BRIDEGROOM'
SEE PAGE 49 - 'CLOTHES FOR MALE ATTENDANTS'

- Help the groom and other male attendants to choose their clothes

4 WEEKS

- Organise the stag party
- Prepare speech for the reception

SEE PAGE 64 - 'SPEECHES'

- Visit the ceremony and reception venues with the bride and groom to check on timings, parking arrangements, etc.

1 WEEK

- Obtain a list of the family and any guests who are to be personally escorted to their seats and any special seating arrangements at the ceremony

- Check the groom has all the necessary documents for the ceremony
- Ensure the groom has the travel documents for the honeymoon. If the couple are going abroad, remind him about passports, visas, currency and insurance
- Attend the wedding rehearsal (church only)
- Attend any pre-wedding parties
- Liaise with the ushers on the final arrangements
- Check for roadworks, diversions and any special events taking place on the wedding day
- Arrange transport for the groom and self to the ceremony
- Arrange own transport from the reception
- Arrange going-away car for the bride and groom
- Note details and availability of emergency taxi companies
- Finalise speech
- Have hair cut

1 DAY

- Collect any hired clothing and accessories
- Organise decorations for the going-away car

ON THE DAY

- Check final arrangements
 - ❖ ushers
 - ❖ buttonholes
 - ❖ order of service sheets
 - ❖ ring(s)
 - ❖ any relevant documents for the ceremony

- ❖ travel documents
- Collect telemessages, emails and greetings cards to be read out at the reception
- Keep the wedding ring(s) safe until required in the ceremony
- Help the groom get ready and make sure he arrives at the venue on time (at least 20 minutes before the ceremony)

AT THE CHURCH OR CIVIL CEREMONY

- Check on ushers
- Ensure any fees are paid to the officiant, Registrar or Civil Partnership Officer, organist, bell-ringers, singers and musicians
- Sit in right-hand front row with groom
- Produce the ring(s) when requested
- Witness the signing of the register, if required
- Follow the bride and groom down the aisle, with the chief bridesmaid on your left arm
- Assist the photographer in organising guests for the group photographs
- Leave for the reception with bridesmaids, following after the bride and groom

AT THE RECEPTION

- Stand in the receiving line and greet guests
- Announce the speeches and the cutting of the cake, if there is no Master of Ceremonies or Toastmaster
- Read out any telemessages, emails and greetings cards
- Give the third and final speech, and reply on behalf of the bridesmaids
- Dance with the chief bridesmaid once the bride and groom have had the first dance together
- Decorate the going-away car
- Put luggage in the going-away car
- Hand travel documents to the groom
- Make sure the couple go and change on time and announce to the guests when they are about to leave

- Gather everyone outside to bid the couple farewell
- After the couple have departed, be on hand to help out in any way
- Take charge of the groom's wedding clothes

AFTER THE WEDDING

- Ensure the wedding gifts are safely stored
- Return any hired clothing and accessories
- Write to the bride and groom to thank them for their gift
- Write to the bride's parents to thank them for their hospitality
- Write to the groom's parents to thank them for any help and support they offered during the planning stage

Chief Bridesmaid or Matron of Honour

The chief bridesmaid is usually a sister or close friend of the bride. She liaises closely with the bride during the wedding preparations and helps with the clothing for any other bridesmaids, flower girl and pageboys. The Matron of Honour is usually the bride's older married sister and is normally the only female attendant.

6 MONTHS

- Discuss plans with the bride, groom and best man
- Discuss dress or outfit with the bride, especially if being made, and ascertain who will pay

SEE PAGE 46 - 'CLOTHES FOR THE MATRON OF HONOUR'
SEE PAGE 47 - 'CLOTHES FOR THE BRIDESMAIDS'

4 MONTHS

- Help the bride to choose her dress and the bridesmaids' dresses

4 WEEKS

- Arrange or assist with arrangements for the hen party

1 WEEK

- Attend the wedding rehearsal (church only)
- Attend any pre-wedding parties

1 DAY

- Collect any hired clothing and accessories

ON THE DAY

- Ensure bouquets are ready for the bride, bridesmaids and flower girl
- Help the bride with her hair, make-up and dress
- Help the other bridesmaids, flower girl and pageboys get dressed and give them any final instructions on their duties
- Leave for the ceremony with the bride's mother 10 minutes before the bride

AT THE CHURCH OR CIVIL CEREMONY

- Arrange the bride's dress and veil
- Follow behind the bride and her father or giver-away up the aisle
- Hold the bride's bouquet during the ceremony
- Witness the signing of the register, if required
- Leave the church or civil ceremony on the left-hand side of the best man, directly behind the bride and groom
- Depart for the reception with the pageboys and any other bridesmaids, after the bride and groom

AT THE RECEPTION

- Stand in the receiving line between the groom and the best man to greet guests
- Help to display and record gifts received
- Have the first dance with the best man

- Help the bride to change into her going-away outfit
- Hand bouquet to bride when she is about to leave

AFTER THE WEDDING

- Return any hired clothing and accessories
- Write to the bride and groom to thank them for their gift
- Write to the bride's parents to thank them for their hospitality

Bridesmaids

A bridesmaid is usually an unmarried sister or close friend of the bride. Older bridesmaids liaise closely with the bride and chief bridesmaid during the wedding preparations and help with the choice of dresses. Younger ones will not be expected to take an active part in the planning stage and their mothers will get involved instead.

6 MONTHS

- Discuss plans with the bride, groom, best man and chief bridesmaid
- Discuss the bridesmaids' dresses or outfits with the bride, especially if being made, and ascertain who will pay

SEE PAGE 47 - 'CLOTHES FOR THE BRIDESMAIDS'

4 MONTHS

- Help to choose the bridesmaids' dresses

1 WEEK

- Attend the wedding rehearsal (church only)
- Attend any pre-wedding parties, if appropriate

1 DAY

- Collect any hired clothing and accessories, if required

ON THE DAY

- Receive any final instructions from the chief bridesmaid
- Get dressed and help with any younger attendants
- Leave for the ceremony with the bride's mother 10 minutes before the bride

AT THE CHURCH OR CIVIL CEREMONY

- Follow behind the chief bridesmaid up the aisle
- Leave the church or civil ceremony after the chief bridesmaid
- Depart for the reception with the chief bridesmaid, any other bridesmaids and pageboys

AFTER THE WEDDING

- Return any hired clothing and accessories, if required
- Write to the bride and groom to thank them for their gift
- Write to the bride's parents to thank them for their hospitality

Flower Girl and Pageboys

6 MONTHS

- Bride and respective mothers to discuss clothes and accessories, especially if being made, and ascertain who will pay

SEE PAGE 48 - 'CLOTHES FOR THE FLOWER GIRL'
SEE PAGE 48 - 'CLOTHES FOR THE PAGEBOYS'

4 MONTHS

- Clothes and accessories to be purchased or hired, as appropriate

1 WEEK

- Attend the wedding rehearsal (church only)
- Attend any pre-wedding parties, if appropriate

ON THE DAY

- Receive any final instructions from the chief bridesmaid
- Leave for the ceremony with the bridesmaids 10 minutes before the bride

AT THE CHURCH OR CIVIL CEREMONY

- Follow behind the bridesmaids up the aisle
- Stand or sit during the ceremony, as instructed
- Leave the church or civil ceremony after the bridesmaids
- Pose for photographs
- Depart for the reception with the bridesmaids

AFTER THE WEDDING

- Return of any hired clothing and accessories to be arranged by the respective mothers, if appropriate
- Write to the bride and groom to thank them for their gift (if very young, their parents should write on their behalf)
- Write to the bride's parents to thank them for their hospitality (if very young, their parents should write on their behalf)

Ushers

A small wedding does not require ushers. As a general rule, you will need one usher per 50 guests. The ushers are chosen by the groom and his best man and are usually brothers, close relatives or friends of the bride and groom. It is advisable to appoint a chief usher who will direct the others and his specific responsibilities are shown as (CU). Traditionally, the ushers are the responsibility of the best man who ensures they know their duties.

4 MONTHS

- Arrange to purchase or hire clothes, based on guidance from the bridegroom and best man, and ascertain who will pay

SEE PAGE 49 - 'CLOTHES FOR THE BRIDEGROOM'
SEE PAGE 49 - 'CLOTHES FOR MALE ATTENDANTS'

1 WEEK

- Confirm final arrangements with the best man and any other ushers, including time of arrival at the church or civil ceremony
- Obtain from the best man a list of the family and any guests who are to be personally escorted to their seats and any special seating arrangements at the ceremony (CU)
- Attend the wedding rehearsal, if required (church only)
- Attend any pre-wedding parties
- Obtain a large umbrella
- Have hair cut

1 DAY

- Collect any hired clothing and accessories

ON THE DAY

- Collect buttonholes and order of service sheets from the bride's home (CU)
- Have a large umbrella available if it is likely to rain
- Arrive at the venue at least 20 minutes before the ceremony

AT THE CHURCH OR CIVIL CEREMONY

- Assist guests with parking if requested
- Greet guests as they arrive
- hand out order of service sheets, hymn and prayer books (church only)
- hand out buttonholes and a corsage to the groom's mother

- hand out maps showing the route to the reception or be able to give directions
- Ensure the officiant has order of service sheets for the bride and groom (CU) (church only)
- Escort the bride's mother and guests to their seats

It is usual for the bride's family and friends to sit on the left and the groom's family and friends on the right. If there is a great imbalance in numbers, the ushers may tactfully ask guests to fill the seating evenly

- Endeavour to seat couples with young babies and children near the exit
- Escort latecomers to seats at the back of the church or room
- In the event of rain, use an umbrella to protect the bride and groom, attendants and immediate family
- Assist the best man with organising guests for the group photographs
- Direct guests regarding the throwing of confetti
- Ensure the church or room is left tidy and collect any property left behind and unused order of service sheets
- Ensure guests have transport to the reception

AT THE RECEPTION

- Assist guests with parking
- Look after any elderly or infirm guests

AFTER THE WEDDING

- Return any hired clothes and accessories for self and other male attendants, if required
- Write to the bride and groom to thank them for their gift
- Write to the bride's parents to thank them for their hospitality

Bride's Father or Giver-away

He escorts the bride to the church and gives her away. By prior arrangement with the Superintendent Registrar, it is possible to include the bride being 'given away' in a civil ceremony also. Although this is usually undertaken by the bride's father, a brother, male guardian or uncle may perform this task.

4 MONTHS

- Arrange to purchase or hire clothes and ascertain who will pay

SEE PAGE 49 - 'CLOTHES FOR THE BRIDEGROOM'
SEE PAGE 49 - 'CLOTHES FOR MALE ATTENDANTS'

4 WEEKS

- Ask the officiant to say grace if he is attending the reception
- Prepare speech for the reception, and grace, if necessary

SEE PAGE 64 - 'SPEECHES'

1 WEEK

- Attend the wedding rehearsal (church only)
- Attend any pre-wedding parties
- Finalise speech
- Have hair cut

1 DAY

- Collect any hired clothing and accessories

ON THE DAY

- Escort the bride from home to the church or civil ceremony

AT THE CHURCH

- Arrive last with the bride
- Lead procession up the aisle, walking on the bride's right-hand side

- Offer the bride's right hand to the officiant at the appropriate time
- Give away the bride
- Stand until after the vows, and then join bride's mother in the front pew
- Accompany the bride's mother to the vestry for the signing of the register
- Sign the register and escort the bride's mother down the aisle
- Leave for the reception immediately after the bride and groom

AT THE CIVIL CEREMONY

- Arrive last with the bride
- Lead procession up the aisle, walking on the bride's right-hand side
- Give away the bride
- Stand until after the vows, and then join bride's mother in the front row of seats
- Accompany the bride's mother for the signing of the register
- Sign the register and escort the bride's mother out of the room
- Leave for the reception immediately after the bride and groom

AT THE RECEPTION

- Stand in second place in the receiving line, after the bride's mother, and greet the guests
- Say grace if the officiant is not present
- Propose a toast to the bride and groom and make the first speech
- Mix among guests and introduce them

AFTER THE WEDDING

- Return any hired clothing and accessories

Bride's Mother

The bride's mother may have a key role in helping with many of the arrangements, but these days more couples are opting to participate significantly in the preparations or may even wish to undertake all the tasks themselves. However, as a matter of courtesy, she can expect to be kept up-to-date with the progress of the preparations.

The wording in italics indicates tasks that may be performed by the bride's mother, if required.

6 MONTHS

- Discuss the plans with the bride, groom and the groom's parents
- Arrange the reception and entertainment
SEE PAGE 52 - 'RECEPTION'
- Assist the bride to plan her wedding dress and the outfits to be worn by the attendants
SEE PAGE 45 - 'CLOTHES FOR THE BRIDE'
SEE PAGES 47-48 - 'CLOTHES FOR THE BRIDESMAIDS, FLOWER GIRL AND PAGE BOYS'
- Arrange flowers
SEE PAGE 28 - 'FLOWERS'
- Book a photographer
SEE PAGE 29 - 'PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO'
- Book a videographer
SEE PAGE 29 - 'PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO'
- Arrange transport
SEE PAGE 31 - 'TRANSPORT'
- Compile the guest list
SEE PAGE 32 - 'INVITATIONS AND GUEST LIST'
- Keep the groom's parents informed of progress

5 MONTHS

- Organise stationery
SEE PAGE 33 - 'STATIONERY'

4 MONTHS

- Arrange outfit and accessories, conferring with the groom's mother regarding colour and style

3 MONTHS

- Arrange the wedding cake and delivery to the reception venue
SEE PAGE 63 - 'WEDDING CAKE'
- Help with the wedding gift list and receive the presents as they arrive
SEE PAGE 35 - 'WEDDING GIFTS'

2 MONTHS

- Send out invitations and keep a record of the replies

4 WEEKS

- Arrange press announcements
- Co-ordinate overnight accommodation for guests, if required
SEE PAGE 67 - 'ACCOMMODATION AND HOSPITALITY'

1 WEEK

- Attend the wedding rehearsal (church only)
- Attend any pre-wedding parties

1 DAY

- Display wedding gifts if the reception is at home

ON THE DAY

- Help the bride with her dress and veil
- Carry a comb, mirror, handkerchief, etc. for use by the bride and attendants
SEE PAGE 50 - 'HAIR AND BEAUTY'
- Travel to the ceremony with the bridesmaids and pageboys, 10 minutes before the bride
- Escorted by an usher, take a seat in the front left row
- Accompany the bride's father for the signing of the register
- Sign the register and walk down the aisle on the left arm of the bride's father, following the bridesmaids and pageboys

- Leave for the reception with the other parents

AT THE RECEPTION

- Stand in first place in the receiving line and greet guests with the bride's father
- Act as hostess, mixing with the guests and introducing them
- Help the bride to change into her going-away outfit and take care of her dress and accessories, if required

AFTER THE WEDDING

- Direct the clearing-up operation if the reception is at home
- Take care of the bride's dress and accessories
- Send pieces of cake and/or an order of service sheet to people who could not attend the wedding

SEE PAGE 71 - 'AFTER THE WEDDING'

- Organise photograph proofs and collect orders

SEE PAGE 71 - 'AFTER THE WEDDING'

- Pass photograph orders to the photographer

SEE PAGE 71 - 'AFTER THE WEDDING'

- Collect and distribute photographs

SEE PAGE 71 - 'AFTER THE WEDDING'

