

The ultimate

# WEDDING GUIDE



# Contents

## Contents

### Introduction

- Purpose of the guide
- How to use the guide

### Getting Started

- Announcing the engagement
- Setting a wedding date
- Determining your wedding budget
- Creating a wedding planning timeline

### Building Your Wedding Team

- Hiring a wedding planner
- Choosing your wedding party
- Selecting wedding vendors
- Photographer
- Videographer
- Caterer
- Florist
- DJ or band
- Officiant

### Wedding Venues and Ceremony

- Choosing your wedding venue
- Planning your ceremony
- Writing your vows

### Wedding Attire

- Selecting your wedding dress
- Finding the perfect suit or tuxedo
- Bridesmaid and groomsmen attire
- Dressing the parents of the bride and groom
- Choosing your wedding accessories
- Dress fittings and alterations

Continue

### Wedding Invitations and Stationery

- Designing your invitations
- Selecting your wedding stationery
- Managing your guest list
- Sending save-the-dates and invitations
- Creating a wedding website

### Wedding Decor and Styling

- Choosing a wedding theme
- Picking your wedding colours
- Floral design
- Table settings and centrepieces
- Ceremony and reception décor

### Wedding Catering and Drinks

- Selecting a menu
- Choosing a wedding cake
- Deciding on drinks and cocktails
- Planning a rehearsal dinner

### Wedding Entertainment

- Selecting your first dance song
- Hiring live music or a DJ
- Planning additional entertainment (e.g., photo booth, games)
- Creating a wedding day timeline
- 

### Wedding Day Logistics

- Coordinating transportation
- Arranging accommodations for out-of-town guests
- Creating a seating chart
- Planning the flow of the day
- Designating a day-of coordinator

### Pre-Wedding Events

- Planning an engagement party
- Organizing a bridal shower
- Scheduling bachelor and bachelorette parties
- Coordinating a rehearsal dinner

### Post-Wedding Activities

- Writing thank-you notes
- Preserving wedding memories (e.g., photos, videos)
- Changing your name (if applicable)
- Returning or exchanging wedding gifts

### Honeymoon Planning

- Choosing a destination
- Budgeting for your honeymoon
- Booking accommodations and activities
- Packing and travel tips

### Wedding Planning Tools and Resources

- Recommended wedding planning apps
- Tips for staying organized
- Budgeting and tracking expenses
- Helpful websites and blogs

### Conclusion

- Final thoughts and advice
- Wishing the couple a happy marriage

# Introduction

## Purpose of the Guide

Welcome to our comprehensive wedding planning guide! The purpose of this guide is to provide engaged couples with the essential information, tips, and tools to organise a memorable wedding. We understand that planning a wedding can be an overwhelming experience, but with our step-by-step guide, you'll be able to navigate through the process with ease and confidence.

## How to Use the Guide

This guide is designed to be a flexible and easy-to-use resource, allowing you to pick and choose the sections most relevant to your needs. We recommend reading through the guide in its entirety to get a sense of the entire planning process, and then revisiting specific sections as needed. Feel free to take notes, create checklists, and adapt our suggestions to suit your unique preferences and circumstances.



## Getting Started

### Announcing the Engagement

Sharing the happy news with friends and family is one of the first steps in your wedding planning journey. You can announce your engagement through various means, such as social media, phone calls, or even a more formal engagement party. Consider your personal style and preferences when deciding how to share your exciting news.

### Setting a Wedding Date

Choosing a wedding date is an important decision that will impact many aspects of your planning. Consider factors like the availability of your preferred venue, season, and the schedules of your closest friends and family when selecting a date. Remember that flexibility can be key in securing the best deals and ensuring the participation of your loved ones.

### Determining Your Wedding Budget

Establishing a realistic wedding budget is crucial for keeping your spending in check and avoiding financial stress. Sit down with your partner and discuss your priorities, making sure to allocate funds accordingly. Consider factors like guest numbers, venue, catering, attire, and entertainment when setting your budget. Don't forget to include a contingency fund for any unexpected expenses.

## Creating a Wedding Planning Timeline

A wedding planning timeline will help you stay organised and ensure that you don't miss any important tasks. Start by listing all the major aspects of your wedding and assigning deadlines for each. Break down larger tasks into smaller, manageable steps, and make a note of any dependencies between tasks. You can use wedding planning apps, calendars, or spreadsheets to keep track of your progress and make adjustments as needed.

## Building Your Wedding Team

### Hiring a Wedding Planner

A wedding planner can provide invaluable support, guidance, and expertise throughout your wedding planning journey. If you decide to hire a planner, research potential candidates, read reviews, and conduct interviews to find the perfect fit. Consider factors like experience, style, and communication when making your decision.



## Choosing Your Wedding Party

Selecting your wedding party is an opportunity to involve your closest friends and family in your special day. Consider the size of your wedding and the personalities of your potential wedding party members when making your choices. Keep in mind that being part of the wedding party can involve a significant time and financial commitment, so it's important to communicate your expectations clearly and ensure that your chosen friends and family are willing and able to participate.

## Selecting Wedding Vendors

Your wedding vendors play a crucial role in bringing your wedding vision to life. Take the time to research and compare different vendors in each category, considering factors like experience, style, and pricing. Don't be afraid to ask for recommendations from friends, family, or your wedding planner.

## Photographer

A skilled photographer will capture the most memorable moments of your big day. When selecting a photographer, review their portfolio, read testimonials, and schedule an in-person or video consultation to discuss your vision and expectations.

## Videographer

A videographer will create a lasting record of your wedding day, allowing you to relive your special moments for years to come. As with your photographer, consider factors like style, experience, and pricing when making your decision.

## Caterer

The quality of your wedding catering can leave a lasting impression on your guests. Research potential caterers, attend tastings, and discuss menu options to ensure that you select a caterer who can deliver delicious food that aligns with your tastes and dietary requirements.

## Florist

Your florist will help to create the perfect ambience for your wedding with stunning floral arrangements. Meet with potential florists to discuss your vision, preferences, and budget. Be sure to ask for a detailed proposal and review examples of their previous work to ensure that their style aligns with your vision.





## DJ or Band

The right music can set the tone for your wedding and keep your guests entertained. Consider your personal preferences, as well as the atmosphere you want to create, when deciding between a DJ or a live band. Attend performances or listen to samples to help make your choice, and discuss your music preferences, special song requests, and any restrictions with your chosen entertainer.

## Officiant

Your officiant will preside over your wedding ceremony, so it's essential to choose someone who can create a meaningful and memorable experience. Research various officiants in your area, considering factors like experience, style, and any religious or cultural preferences you may have. Schedule a meeting with your chosen officiant to discuss your ceremony and any specific requests or requirements.

With this foundation laid out, you're now ready to dive deeper into the wedding planning process. Be sure to revisit the guide as needed and adapt the suggestions to suit your unique wedding vision. Remember that communication, organisation, and flexibility are key to a successful and stress-free planning experience.



# Wedding Venues and Ceremony

## Choosing Your Wedding Venue

Selecting the perfect wedding venue is one of the most important decisions you'll make during the planning process. Consider the style, size, location, and budget when researching potential venues. Schedule site visits to tour the venues in person, and don't hesitate to ask questions about their facilities, availability, and any restrictions that may apply. It's also wise to inquire about their preferred vendor list, as some venues may require you to work with specific caterers, decorators, or other professionals.



## Planning Your Ceremony

The wedding ceremony is the heart of your special day, so it's essential to plan a meaningful and personalised experience. Begin by deciding on the type of ceremony you want, whether it's religious, civil, or a non-traditional alternative. Consider any cultural or family traditions you'd like to incorporate and discuss these with your officiant. Choose readings, music, and any symbolic elements (e.g., unity candle, handfasting) to further personalise your ceremony. Finally, discuss the logistics of your ceremony, such as the processional order, seating arrangements, and any special instructions for your wedding party and guests.



## Writing Your Vows

Writing your own wedding vows can make your ceremony even more personal and heartfelt. To get started, reflect on your relationship, your feelings for your partner, and the promises you'd like to make to one another. Jot down your thoughts and then organise them into a cohesive structure. Keep your vows concise, genuine, and focused on your love and commitment to each other. If you're struggling for inspiration, consider reading examples of vows from other weddings, poetry, or even song lyrics. Be sure to practise your vows aloud to ensure a smooth delivery on the big day. You may also wish to share your vows with your officiant or a trusted friend to get feedback and suggestions for improvement.

As you plan your wedding ceremony, remember that this is an opportunity to express your love and commitment to one another in a way that feels true to your relationship. Stay focused on what matters most to both of you and don't be afraid to think outside the box or incorporate unique elements that reflect your personalities and journey together.

# Wedding Attire

## Selecting Your Wedding Dress

Choosing your wedding dress is an exciting and significant part of your wedding planning journey. Begin by researching different styles, fabrics, and designers to get a sense of your preferences. Schedule appointments at bridal boutiques and try on a variety of dresses to find the perfect fit for your body shape, wedding theme, and personal style. Remember to keep an open mind, as you may be surprised by which styles suit you best.

## Finding the Perfect Suit or Tuxedo

The groom's attire is equally important, and finding the right suit or tuxedo should be a priority. Consider factors like the formality of your wedding, the season, and your personal style when selecting your attire. Visit reputable menswear shops and try on various styles and fits to find the perfect look. Don't forget to factor in accessories, such as ties, pocket squares, and cufflinks.



## Bridesmaid and Groomsmen Attire

Selecting attire for your bridesmaids and groomsmen should complement your wedding theme and style. When choosing bridesmaid dresses, consider factors like colour, fabric, and silhouette. For groomsmen, coordinate their suits or tuxedos with the groom's attire, while incorporating accessories to tie in with the overall wedding aesthetic.

## Dressing the Parents of the Bride and Groom

The attire for the parents of the bride and groom should also complement the overall wedding style. Traditionally, mothers of the bride and groom wear outfits that coordinate with the wedding colours but don't overshadow the bride or bridesmaids. Fathers of the bride and groom should wear suits or tuxedos that match or complement the groomsmen's attire. It's a good idea to communicate the wedding theme and colour scheme to the parents so they can make informed choices.

## Choosing Your Wedding Accessories

Accessories are essential for completing your wedding look. For the bride, consider items such as shoes, jewellery, a veil or hairpiece, and a garter. For the groom, think about cufflinks, a tie or bowtie, a pocket square, and socks. Bridesmaids and groomsmen may also require accessories such as shoes, jewellery, and ties. Remember to keep your wedding theme and style in mind when selecting accessories, ensuring that all elements work together harmoniously.

## Dress Fittings and Alterations

Most wedding attire will require alterations to ensure a perfect fit. Schedule fittings well in advance of the wedding to allow ample time for any necessary adjustments. Bring your wedding shoes and undergarments to your fittings, as these can affect the fit of your dress or suit. For brides, consider scheduling a final fitting close to the wedding date to account for any last-minute changes in body shape.



# Wedding Invitations and Stationery

## Designing Your Invitations

Your wedding invitations set the tone for your big day and provide guests with essential information. Work with a graphic designer or use an online platform to create a custom design that reflects your wedding theme and style. Consider elements like typography, colours, and any artwork or motifs that will tie in with your overall aesthetic. Don't forget to include details such as the date, time, venue, RSVP instructions, and any accommodation or transportation information.

## Selecting Your Wedding Stationery

In addition to your invitations, there are various other stationery items you may need for your wedding, such as save-the-date cards, ceremony programmes, menus, place cards, and thank-you notes. Choose stationery that complements your invitations and overall wedding theme, ensuring a cohesive look throughout all your printed materials.



## Managing Your Guest List

Creating and managing your guest list is a crucial aspect of wedding planning. Start by discussing the desired size of your wedding with your partner and consider any venue or budget constraints. Use a spreadsheet or online tool to keep track of guest names, addresses, RSVP responses, and any special requirements (e.g., dietary restrictions, plus ones). Remember to update your guest list regularly as RSVPs come in, and don't be afraid to make adjustments as needed.

See my guide for wedding guests [here](#)

## Sending Save-the-Dates and Invitations

Save-the-date cards should be sent out approximately six to eight months before your wedding, giving guests ample time to make travel arrangements and secure accommodation if necessary. Wedding invitations should be sent approximately two to three months before the big day, with an RSVP deadline set around four weeks before the wedding. This will allow you enough time to finalise seating arrangements and provide accurate headcounts to your vendors.



## Creating a Wedding Website

A wedding website is a convenient way to share important information with your guests, such as venue details, accommodation options, gift registries, and any additional events or activities surrounding the wedding. Many online platforms offer user-friendly templates that can be customised to match your wedding theme and style. Be sure to include the URL of your wedding website on your save-the-date cards or invitations to ensure guests have easy access to all the information they need.

As you continue your wedding planning journey, remember that organisation and communication are key to a successful and stress-free experience. Use this guide as a starting point and tailor it to your unique preferences and circumstances. Above all, keep in mind that your wedding is a celebration of your love and commitment, so focus on what truly matters to both of you and enjoy the process.



# Wedding Decor and Styling

## Choosing a Wedding Theme

Selecting a wedding theme can help guide your décor decisions and create a cohesive look and feel for your wedding day. Consider your personal style and interests, and think about elements that are meaningful to you and your partner. Common wedding themes include rustic, bohemian, vintage, and modern, but don't be afraid to get creative and personalize your theme.

## Picking Your Wedding Colors

Choosing your wedding colours is an essential part of creating a cohesive and beautiful wedding aesthetic. Consider colours that align with your wedding theme, venue, and personal preferences. Use colour swatches and online resources to visualize your colour scheme, and incorporate your chosen colours into all aspects of your wedding, from the invitations to the flowers to the table settings.

## Floral Design

Floral design is an integral part of wedding décor and can add a touch of romance and elegance to your special day. Work with a professional florist to select flowers that align with your wedding theme and colour scheme, and consider incorporating personal touches like heirloom blooms or sentimental elements. Don't forget to factor in floral arrangements for the ceremony and reception spaces.

## Table Settings and Centerpieces

Table settings and centrepieces are essential elements of wedding décor that can help create a stunning and memorable ambience. Consider elements like linens, dinnerware, and glassware, and choose centrepieces that align with your floral design and overall theme. Incorporate personal touches like photos or meaningful items to add a unique and personalized touch.

## Ceremony and Reception Décor

Ceremony and reception décor are key elements in creating a cohesive and beautiful wedding aesthetic. Consider the venue's existing décor and work with a wedding planner or stylist to create a look that complements the space. Incorporate elements like lighting, drapery, and signage to create a unique and personalised atmosphere that reflects your wedding theme and style. Don't forget to incorporate elements like seating and aisle runners into your ceremony décor.

# Wedding Catering and Drinks

## Selecting a Menu

When choosing your wedding menu, consider your personal tastes, dietary requirements, and any cultural or family traditions you'd like to incorporate. Work with your caterer to create a menu that reflects your preferences and accommodates any special dietary needs of your guests. Be mindful of the season when selecting ingredients, as this can influence the quality and availability of certain foods.

## Choosing a Wedding Cake

Your wedding cake is a centrepiece of your reception, so take the time to find a skilled baker who can create a cake that aligns with your vision and tastes. Schedule tastings to sample various flavours and fillings, and discuss the design and size of the cake with your baker. Consider factors like the number of guests, the style of your wedding, and any dietary restrictions when making your decision.

## Deciding on Drinks and Cocktails

Your drink offerings should cater to a variety of tastes and preferences. Plan for a range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic options, such as wine, beer, spirits, soft drinks, and water. You may also choose to offer a signature cocktail that represents your personal style or the theme of your wedding. Work with your caterer or a professional mixologist to create a drinks menu that complements your overall wedding experience.







## Planning a Rehearsal Dinner

A rehearsal dinner is an opportunity to gather with close friends and family before the wedding. When planning the event, consider factors like the venue, the guest list, and the formality of the dinner. The rehearsal dinner can be as formal or as casual as you like, and it's an excellent opportunity to add personal touches or incorporate traditions that may not fit into the main wedding day. Collaborate with your partner and families to create a memorable and enjoyable event for all involved.

## Wedding Entertainment

### Selecting Your First Dance Song

Your first dance as a married couple is a special and memorable moment. Choose a song that has personal meaning to you and your partner, whether it's a sentimental ballad or an upbeat tune that reflects your unique personality. Consider factors like the tempo, lyrics, and any dance skills you'd like to showcase when making your decision.

### Hiring Live Music or a DJ

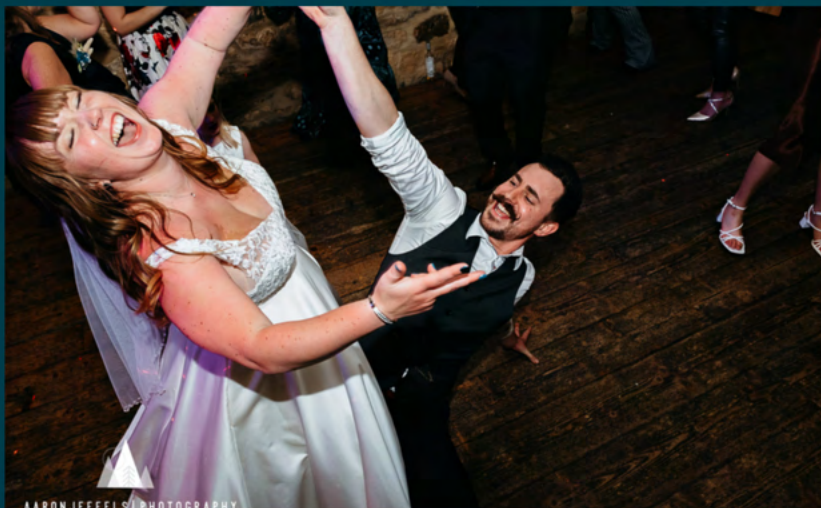
The choice between live music and a DJ largely depends on your personal preferences and the atmosphere you wish to create at your wedding. Assess factors like the size of your venue, your budget, and the type of music you enjoy when making your decision. Whether you opt for a live band or a DJ, be sure to discuss your music preferences, any special song requests, and any restrictions in advance.

## Planning Additional Entertainment (e.g., Photo Booth, Games)

Adding extra entertainment elements to your wedding can help create a memorable experience for your guests. Options such as a photo booth, games, or even a live artist can provide unique and engaging activities for guests of all ages. Consider your wedding theme and personal style when selecting additional entertainment elements, and be sure to communicate any special instructions or requirements with your vendors.

## Creating a Wedding Day Timeline

Creating a wedding day timeline is essential for keeping everything on track and ensuring a smooth flow of events. Work with your wedding planner, venue coordinator, and vendors to create a comprehensive schedule that outlines the timing and sequence of each element of your wedding day. Be sure to include important details such as the arrival time of vendors, hair and makeup appointments, and any special events like the first dance or cake cutting. Communicate the timeline with your wedding party and family members in advance to ensure everyone is aware of the schedule and can help keep things on track.



# Wedding Day Logistics

## Coordinating Transportation

Transportation is an important logistical element to consider on your wedding day. Determine how you, your wedding party, and your guests will travel to and from the ceremony and reception venues. Consider options like hiring a limousine, renting a party bus, or arranging for a shuttle service. Communicate transportation details with your guests in advance, ensuring everyone knows the schedule and any pick-up or drop-off points.



## Arranging Accommodations for Out-of-Town Guests

If you have out-of-town guests attending your wedding, it's essential to arrange accommodations in advance. Research hotels or other lodging options near your wedding venues and negotiate group rates if possible. Communicate lodging options with your guests, and consider providing transportation to and from the accommodation to make their stay more convenient.

## Creating a Seating Chart

Creating a seating chart can help ensure a smooth and enjoyable reception for all guests. Work with your caterer or venue coordinator to create a floor plan and determine table sizes and configurations. Consider factors like guest preferences, family dynamics, and any special needs when assigning seats. Communicate the seating chart with your wedding party and family members in advance to minimise confusion on the day.



## Planning the Flow of the Day

The flow of the wedding day is crucial to creating a seamless and enjoyable experience for all involved. Create a detailed timeline that outlines the sequence of events, from hair and makeup appointments to the last dance. Ensure that all vendors, wedding party members, and family members are aware of the timeline and their roles in the day's events.

## Designating a Day-of Coordinator

A day-of coordinator can be a valuable asset in ensuring a smooth and stress-free wedding day.

Consider hiring a professional coordinator or delegating the task to a trusted friend or family member. The coordinator can help manage logistics, communicate with vendors, and handle any unforeseen issues that may arise.

## Pre-Wedding Events

### Planning an Engagement Party

An engagement party is a celebratory event to announce your engagement and share the news with loved ones. Determine the guest list, venue, and theme of the party, and consider incorporating personal touches that reflect your relationship. Send invitations well in advance and communicate any dress code or gift-giving expectations.

### Organising a Bridal Shower

A bridal shower is a special event to celebrate the bride-to-be and provide her with gifts and well wishes. Select a date, venue, and theme that aligns with the bride's preferences, and consider activities like games, crafts, or a spa day. Send invitations well in advance and communicate any gift preferences or expectations.

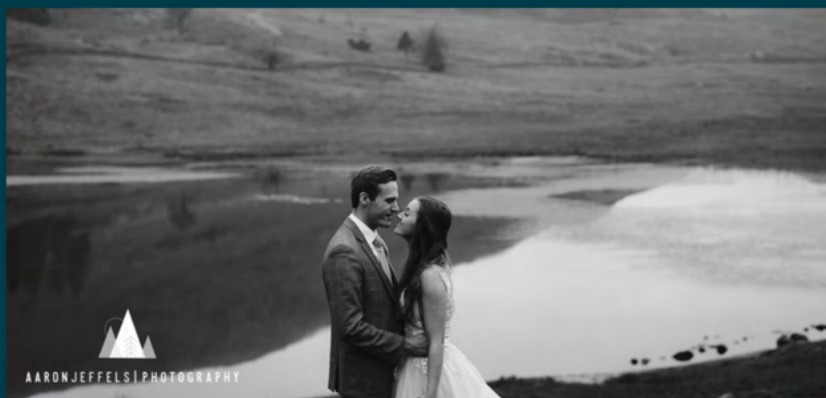


## Scheduling Stag and Hen Parties

Stag and hen parties are a chance for the groom and bride to celebrate with their closest friends before the wedding. Determine the guest list, activities, and budget for the parties, and ensure that all plans align with the couple's preferences and comfort levels. Communicate expectations and logistics with guests in advance to minimise confusion or misunderstandings.

## Coordinating a Rehearsal Dinner

The rehearsal dinner is an opportunity for the wedding party and immediate family members to gather before the wedding day. Determine the venue, guest list, and menu, and consider incorporating personal touches or traditions that reflect the couple's relationship. Communicate the timeline and logistics with guests in advance to ensure a smooth and enjoyable event.



# Post-Wedding Activities

## Writing Thank-You Notes

Writing thank-you notes is an important task to show appreciation to guests who attended your wedding or provided gifts. Set aside time after the wedding to write personalized notes, thanking guests for their support and generosity. Include specific details about the gift or how the guest contributed to the wedding, and send the notes within a few weeks of the wedding day.

## Preserving Wedding Memories (e.g., Photos, Videos)

Preserving wedding memories is an essential part of ensuring that the day is remembered and cherished for years to come. Hire a professional photographer and videographer to capture the day's events, and consider investing in a [wedding album](#) or digital gallery to showcase the photos. Ensure that all digital files are backed up in multiple locations to avoid any loss or damage.

## Changing Your Name (if Applicable)

If you plan to change your name after the wedding, begin the process as soon as possible to avoid any complications. Research the requirements and steps for changing your name in your country, and ensure that all necessary documentation is completed and submitted in a timely manner.

## Returning or Exchanging Wedding Gifts

If you received any wedding gifts that you wish to return or exchange, do so as soon as possible after the wedding day. Keep track of the gifts and who they came from, and ensure that all returns or exchanges are handled with care and gratitude.



# Honeymoon Planning

## Choosing a Destination

Choosing a honeymoon destination is an exciting and fun part of post-wedding planning. Consider factors like your budget, travel preferences, and time of year when selecting a location. Research the options and book accommodations and travel arrangements well in advance to avoid any last-minute stress or complications.

## Budgeting for Your Honeymoon

Creating a honeymoon budget can help you stay on track and avoid overspending. Consider all expenses, including travel, accommodations, food, and activities, and ensure that you have enough funds to cover everything comfortably. Be realistic about your budget and avoid any unnecessary expenses to minimise stress and financial strain.

## Booking Accommodations and Activities

Booking accommodations and activities in advance can help ensure that your honeymoon is smooth and enjoyable. Research and book hotels, rental cars, and any tours or activities well in advance to avoid disappointment or unavailability.

## Packing and Travel Tips

Packing for your honeymoon can be a fun and exciting task, but it's important to be practical and prepared. Consider the weather and activities at your destination and pack accordingly. Don't forget to bring any necessary travel documents and medications, and ensure that all bags are labelled clearly and securely.

## Wedding Planning Tools and Resources

### Recommended Wedding Planning Apps

There are various wedding planning apps available to help you stay organised and on top of tasks. Research and download apps that align with your planning style and preferences, and use them to create to-do lists, track budgets, and communicate with vendors and wedding party members.



### Tips for Staying Organised

Staying organised throughout the wedding planning process is essential for avoiding stress and confusion. Create a detailed timeline and schedule, use a planner or spreadsheet to track tasks and deadlines, and communicate regularly with vendors, wedding party members, and family members.



## Budgeting and Tracking Expenses

Creating and sticking to a wedding budget is crucial for avoiding financial stress and overspending. Use a spreadsheet or wedding planning app to track expenses and ensure that you stay within your budget. Be realistic about your expenses and avoid any unnecessary costs to minimise stress and financial strain.

## Helpful Websites and Blogs

There are various websites and blogs available to provide inspiration, advice, and tips for wedding planning. Research and bookmark websites that align with your style and preferences, and use them as a resource throughout the planning process.



## Conclusion

### Final Thoughts and Advice

Wedding planning can be a challenging and overwhelming task, but it's also an exciting and memorable experience. Remember to focus on what's most important – your love and commitment to your partner – and don't get too caught up in the details. Seek support and advice from family and friends, and don't be afraid to ask for help when needed. Enjoy the process and take time to celebrate each milestone and achievement.

### Wishing the Couple a Happy Marriage

As you embark on this new chapter of your lives together, we wish you a lifetime of love, happiness, and joy. May your marriage be filled with laughter, adventure, and endless love. Congratulations on your wedding day, and best wishes for a happy and fulfilling future together.