



WHERE TO START WHEN PLANNING YOUR WEDDING

Congratulations, you're engaged! Now what!? Hopefully this article will get you started, and thinking of the right things so that this planning process will be an enjoyable one, not one making you tear your hair out at times.

Once you have announced your engagement, and perhaps had your engagement party or dinner it's time to start planning your Big day.

1. THE PLANNER

So, first things first, find a 12-month planner that you like and can modify to your own needs, and the things you want. We have a great and very comprehensive list you can print and use.

2. YOUR NOTEBOOK

Start browsing! Look at pictures everywhere, look through magazines and try our Pin Board for inspiration. Find what you like, get inspiration and have some fun! This stage is important, as it will allow you to be creative and inspired, and get lots of ideas to work with.

3. THE BUDGET & GUEST LIST

Your budget will, to a large degree, be based on how many you invite and how many you invite will dictate how much your wedding will cost. So try to finalise these two important points at the same time. For your budget, speak to your partner, your parents and your partner's parents. There is no 'set' way any longer so open the conversation to see where it leads you. Same with the guest list... sit down with your partner and start writing down everyone you want to invite and ask the parents to do the same and email to you. Once you have all the names, compile your final list. We have a great tool for you to upload all the invites you want, it's in your bride area. This will also in many ways dictate what venue you choose as some will be too small - and it is a lot better to know this in advance to avoid falling in love with a venue where you will have the very hard task of cutting people off the guest list.

4. LOOK FOR YOUR VENUE

Now that you know your budget and venue, it's time to start this search. Take a look at 'Search Venues' to browse and add to your Notebook. Once you have found a selection you like; call them, get an idea of their costs and if you like what you hear - arrange a visit to get a feel for the place. Don't forget to print and bring the 'The must-ask questions for the: Venue' article in Useful Tips. It's good to have it handy so you cover all grounds when you are there. Once you find it, reserve the date - and if they are extra nice they may give you two options making it easier for you to confirm church and other suppliers before deciding on the final date.

5. THE CHURCH / CEREMONY VENUE

Take a look at our 'Choosing your Church/Ceremony Venue' article for useful tips when starting this search. Then visit the church/ceremony venues you want to use. Book the officiant. The closer this is to your venue the better on the day. Less coordinating needed for you and your guests. At this stage as well, it's a good idea to get any help or guidance you can get regarding the paperwork you need to have in place to get your marriage license and how the process works.

6. BRIDAL PARTY

If you haven't already, pick your bridal party as they will be very helpful in your planning quest. Maid of honour, bridesmaids, flower girls, best man, groom's men, master of ceremony, ring bearer and so on.



MY WEDDING NOTEBOOK

Everything you need to organise your dream wedding

7. THE DRESS

This is a very good idea to start with early. Most brands will have a long lead time from receiving your order to having the dress done. And this is not something you want to be rushing with. You want to take your time, browse, try on different shapes to see what you feel best in. Remember when you try them on, try to sit in the dress as well. You will be sitting through dinner and the last thing you want is to be dreadfully uncomfortable. Bring some heels when you try and have your hair nice and good make-up. Makes you feel a lot prettier when you are there in the dressing room spot light.

8. SUPPLIERS

Research and contact other suppliers you need. Flowers, photographers, DJ, live music, entertainment, cake, invitation suppliers, wedding rings, accessories, transportation, grooms attire, bridesmaids' dresses, decoration, catering if needed, hair & make-up and so on. Get quotes so you can see what fits in with your budget and also how they compare to each other.

There are of course more tasks but these 8 steps should get you started in a good and efficient way. The rest you can find in our 'Wedding planning - a comprehensive checklist' article. Hope it helps and good luck with everything!