

THE HUNGRY PLAICE®

The Ultimate Wedding Planning Guide for Brides and Grooms

Use this indispensable and ultimate wedding planning checklist from [The Hungry Plai](#)ce to help you organise your big day and take the stress out of getting everything ready when there's so much to do. You may even feel like taking a bite out of [fish and chips wedding catering!](#)



Day 1

BRAINSTORM IDEAS

It is one of the most important days of your life, so get your dream wedding ideas down now and work out which ones you absolutely love — and those that are actually feasible.

THE BIG DAY DATE

What time of the year do you dream of holding your wedding? Are there any dates you would need to avoid? Think about what time darkness falls and how this will affect your planning — in the hopefully sizzling summer or a winter wonderland? Many factors, such as venue availability will affect the date and costs will generally be lower outside wedding season.

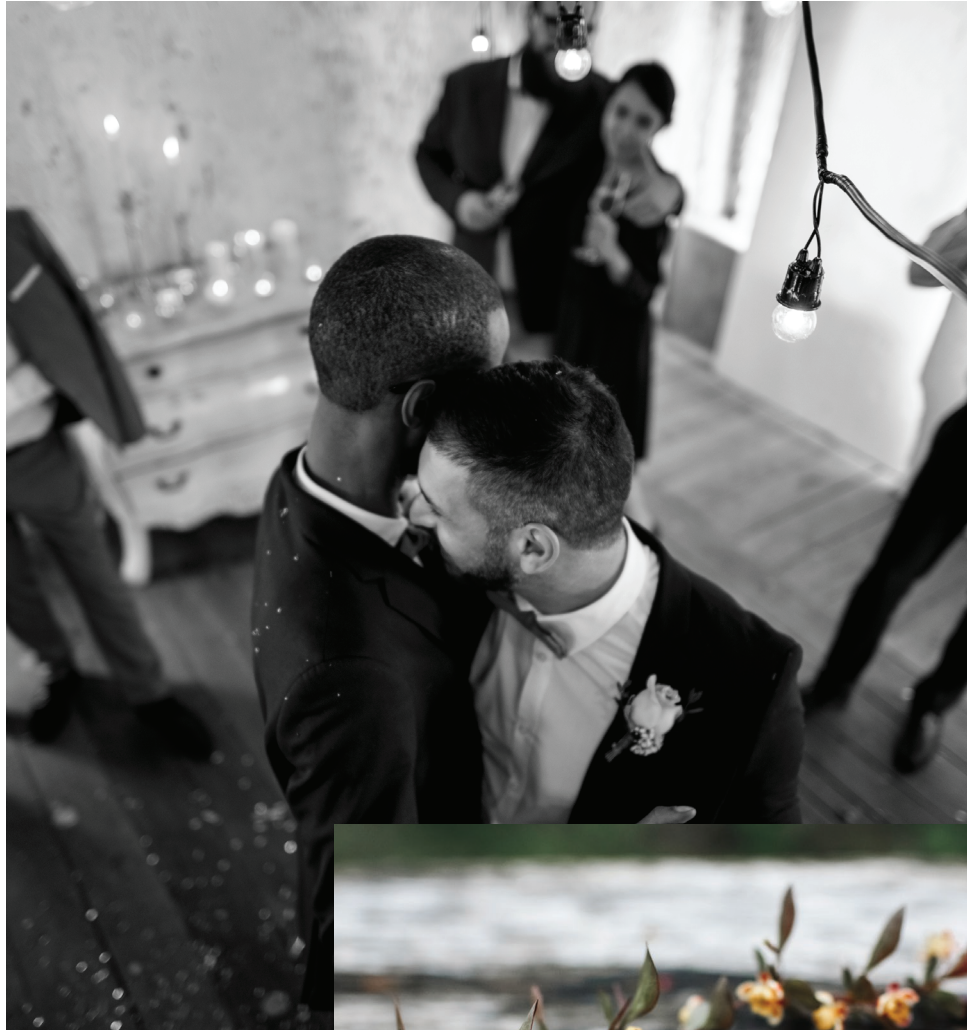
HIRE A WEDDING PLANNER OR NOT?

Decide if you would like to employ a wedding planner to oversee some or all of your wedding planning and if you'd like one start making some enquiries.

WORK OUT THE BUDGET

How much is your wedding going to cost and where is the money coming from? Are you both contributing or are your parents helping out? Having a rough idea of your budget will let you plan with more ease [and a wedding budget template can make it a breeze.](#)





DECIDE ON A WEDDING LOCATION

Agree on where you are going to get married. Will your wedding be in your local area, a faraway city or perhaps on a tropical island somewhere? Will your wedding have a religious aspect — in a church or other place of worship — or take place in a registry office? It is time to make enquiries about availability and you need to do it ASAP as venues are often booked up to two years in advance. Check out some unique, non-traditional locations to make it a truly special and magical day. At this stage, you should have a rough estimate of the number of guests remember this will also affect your venue choice as it will affect your venue choice. The laws on weddings in England and Wales are changing; this includes being able to get married in more locations including outside so there might be more venue choice for you to consider if your wedding date is a long way off.

WHERE WILL THE RECEPTION BE, AND WHAT KIND OF RECEPTION WILL YOU HAVE?

What kind of reception are you thinking about and where might you hold it? How about a hotel or village hall or perhaps outdoors in a marquee? Have you considered a venue that can host both the ceremony and the reception? Draw up a shortlist of some places you like and perhaps arrange some viewings so you can make a firm choice then you will be ready to make enquiries about your proposed date.

WEDDING INSURANCE?

Consider taking out wedding insurance to cover you in the event of cancellations and look at the insurance cover options and costs. [Wedding insurance](#) will give you peace of mind in case things go wrong.

12 Months to Go

GIVING NOTICE

You are legally required in England and Wales to “give notice” of your wedding at your local register office and you should do this when you have decided where you will get married. Giving notice must be done at least 29 days before the wedding, and you have to marry within 12 months of giving notice. You will need to account for a small fee which is required when you give notice.

GUESTS AND INVITATIONS

By now, you should have your final guest list. How many guests will you invite to your wedding, either to the formal ceremony and/or reception? Does your budget allow for everyone you want to invite or do you have to scale it back?

It is prudent to now send out save-the-date cards but before you do that make a draft of the guest list and get their contact [details](#).

TRY ON WEDDING DRESSES AND A TUX

Visit bridal boutiques and men’s wedding suit hire shops and — respectively but not together! — try on some gowns and tuxedos you like to see how you look and what the fit is. Whether you hire or buy, you may need alterations so that the fit is perfect, and ordering or buying now gives you plenty of time to do this. Don’t forget to arrange fittings for bridesmaids and groomsmen.

Bear in mind that bridal shops usually need around eight months to order bespoke wedding dresses including accessories like shoes and make alterations. If your budget is tight you may want to consider readymade wedding attire including those from secondhand shops, eBay and other online marketplaces. If you need more help with buying your Wedding Dress see our [guide](#).

DECIDING ON MENUS

What kind of food do you want at your wedding, and how will it be served? Formally, at a sit-down multi-course dinner as part of a buffet or as something fun and unusual? You could do something unique and [hire a fish and chip van](#) for a more casual affair.

Think about all the moments throughout the day when food will be available for your guests. Food and drink are probably one of the most important aspects of the day so it needs to be memorable.

Perhaps you will be able to sample some menus. Get in touch with your venue to see if this is possible. Consider your menu as there may be guests with special dietary requirements — like gluten-free, vegetarian, fruitarian or vegan — so you need to ensure that your venue will be able to cater to these guests. And what about drinks? Will there be an open bar or perhaps just wine at the dinner table?



ENTERTAINMENT

Wedding entertainment is just as essential as the food and drinks as it is a time for everyone — including the bride and groom — to finally let their hair down and have a great time.

What is best for you a live band or a DJ? Now is the time to get looking and get booking.

Start by looking for ideas to keep your guests entertained throughout the day. Try trawling through Facebook for the latest bands around and watch some sets to decide what you want for your day. Consider alternative entertainment such as magicians, children's entertainers, photo-booths and outdoor games — you can also theme your guests' activities to make them more fun and enjoyable.

Remember, don't forget to plan your first dance!

THEME, STYLE AND FLOWERS

Decide on your dream decorations and wedding theme, research wedding stylists and florists — and get your suppliers booked up in the diary. For Wedding Inspiration Ideas check our Pinterest or Online Wedding Blogs to find your perfect wedding look.



9 Months to Go

DECIDING ON THE WEDDING PARTY

These are tough decisions but they have to be made. Now is the time to choose your bridesmaids and best man so they have time to get used to the idea and prepare. Don't forget about flower girls, ushers and who will walk the bride down the aisle. Draw up a shortlist to whittle it down, make those calls or meet in person, and pop the question.

HONEYMOON DESTINATIONS

Where will you go for some much-needed R&R when the wedding is over? Book extra early to get the best deals whether you choose a week in the Lake District or a fortnight or more in a far-flung exotic destination.

ARRANGE YOUR WEDDING GIFT LIST

Think about the items you would both like as wedding gifts. Perhaps your favourite store has a wedding gift list where your guests can purchase everything in one place. If you and your partner are setting up home together usual household items such as kitchen equipment and utensils are a good idea — helping to reduce the cost while at the same time being practical. If you want a more modern gift list or want to do something for the environment, ask your guests to donate to your's or their favourite charity rather than requesting gifts.



6 Months to Go

ORDER THE WEDDING CAKE

Consider your dream wedding cake, try visiting some local bakeries for inspiration and Wedding Cake Makers. Talk to them about wedding cakes to see what they have. Many will have photographs of past creations and possibly some foam models in-store. Discuss what you are looking for — fancy, towering, classic, quirky — and what your favourite flavours are. They may be able to make up a sample for you to taste the flavours to see which you prefer. You need to order at least six months in advance as many bakeries and Wedding Cake Makers are incredibly busy — especially around peak wedding season from early summer to autumn.

ORDERING INVITATION CARDS

Now it is time to peruse a selection of invitation cards and see which you like best to ensure that they fit with the theme of your wedding. You may be able to order your invitations to do it online, or you could drop into a stationery store that specialises in wedding invitations, allowing you to get a feel for the paper. If your budget allows you may wish to contact a graphic designer and have email invites made — these are better for the environment and there is no chance of your invitations getting lost in the post.

Generally, you should aim to send your wedding invitations no later than two months before the big day to give everyone

enough time to respond, clear their diaries, buy outfits and gifts and organise transport to attend. Leaving it until the last minute as in a few weeks before the nuptials is not a good idea and your guests won't thank you — weddings are a big deal and require a lot of preparation on everyone's behalf.

DECIDE ON SEATING

If you are having a formal, sit-down dinner at your wedding reception, pay attention to who sits with whom. Think carefully about the seating plan taking into account family members that do not get on, any exes, and where any children may be seated. And perhaps, just for fun, you can try a bit of matchmaking and seat people you think might make great couples at the same table.

HIRE A WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER

Browse the internet for wedding photographers in your area, see if there are any sample photos on their sites and, if not, ask to see some. What style are you after — traditional, arty or something entirely different? Don't be afraid to ask questions about their photography style and service. You might want to enquire if they provide a videography service as well, which could lead to a reduction in your budget costs. See if the ones you are interested in would be available on your wedding day.



ORGANISE HEN/STAG DOS

If you have a hen and stag do, what will they be like — a raucous weekend in a European city or a more sedate affair touring the local pubs? Now is the time to figure out what you want and make bookings and invite your pals.

RESEARCH HAIRDRESSERS AND MAKEUP ARTISTS

If you don't already have a favourite hairdresser and makeup artist who would be perfect for your wedding day, have a look around and find ones that would be suitable. Ask them for advice about the perfect look for your big day and book in a practice session so that you are happy with your wedding day look.

COMMUNICATIONS

Make it easy for friends and family to chat with you about your wedding by setting up a Facebook group chat; you might also want to consider having your own wedding website to showcase your special day.





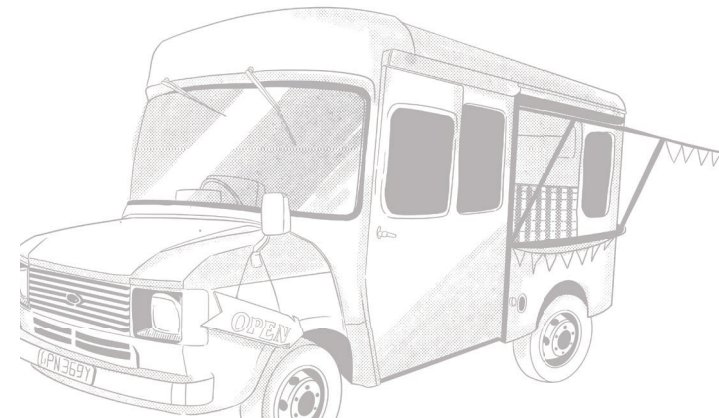
3 Months to Go

SELECTING WEDDING RINGS

Plan trips to jewellers and browse the wedding ring collections. You can also look and order online. If there is nothing either of you especially like why not design your own and have unique wedding rings made? Finding and ordering rings will take some time you need to ensure you get the sizing correct — whether in-store or online — as orders may need to be made or returned several times before you get the right ones.

BOOK TRANSPORT

How will you get to your wedding — in a vintage car or a sleek, modern model? Check out wedding car hire sites online to see what's available and book now to get your date locked in.



2 Months to Go

DECIDE ON YOUR MARRIED NAMES

Will you keep your own name, take on your partner's — or will you go double-barrelled? Start practising your new signature! What do I need to think about legally regarding my name? See our quick [guide](#).

WRITING YOUR VOWS

For many couples writing vows is a process that takes some time. Start now, jotting down the main points you like about your partner and why you want to spend the rest of your life with them. There will be certain wording that you legally have to include in the ceremony. This wording is widely available on the internet and will be given to you by your Local Registry Office or Registrar.

Perhaps add some lines from a favourite poem or a song to make it that bit more special. Go back to your vows every few days and read through what you have written; there may be parts you now don't like and you may want to add more elements.

A RECAP

By now, you need to go through everything you have organised and make sure everything is in place and ready to go. Also check your wedding day timings so that every element is in sync and get your wedding day Order of Service down on paper.





1 week to go

FINAL CHECKS

Go over everything and make sure nothing much is left to do — check all the final details, resolve any last-minute items and contact your suppliers to make sure all is well. It's essential now to take some time to relax so that you're not stressed as the wedding day approaches.

The Day Before

HOLD A WEDDING REHEARSAL

Invite the key people involved in the wedding — bridesmaids, groomsmen and immediate family members on both sides — to attend a rehearsal at the church, registry office or wherever else the ceremony will be held so that everyone is clear on the process and what they need to do.

The Big Day

After all that planning and getting the many different elements to sync, your wedding day has finally arrived — best of luck for a life of happiness and health together, love from your friends at The Hungry Plaiice!

YOUR COMPANY



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