

ULTIMATE WEDDING PLANNING GUIDE



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO
KNOW TO PLAN THE
WEDDING OF YOUR DREAMS

ANOPIAEVENTS.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 WELCOME
A note from our Events Director,
Anastasia

5 CHECKLIST
Our handy checklist of everything you
need to remember!

6 ROLES
Who does what when it comes to your
wedding day?

8 CEREMONY
How to decide between a church or civil
ceremony

10 ATTIRE
Everything from the history of the wedding
dress, to the significance of your rings

14 ON THE DAY
Useful tips from our experienced wedding coordinators
to make sure your wedding day goes to plan

20 TRADITIONS
Other wedding traditions that you might
not have considered

21 TRIVIA
A bit of fun!



CONGRATULATIONS!

Welcome to our bespoke guide to help you plan your wedding. We've put together some information covering our most asked questions to save you some time on Google!

We've also included a handy checklist for you to tick off those important jobs as you go.

We hope this will cover most of your questions, but if you still feel you need a helping hand, get in touch and we'd love to help you plan your special day!

Anastasia x



WHY HIRE A WEDDING PLANNER?

The most common misconception of hiring a wedding planner is that you will lose control of organising your own wedding, This isn't the case at all!

A wedding planner is simply there to provide advice, and take the stress and admin from you so you can relax and enjoy the process.

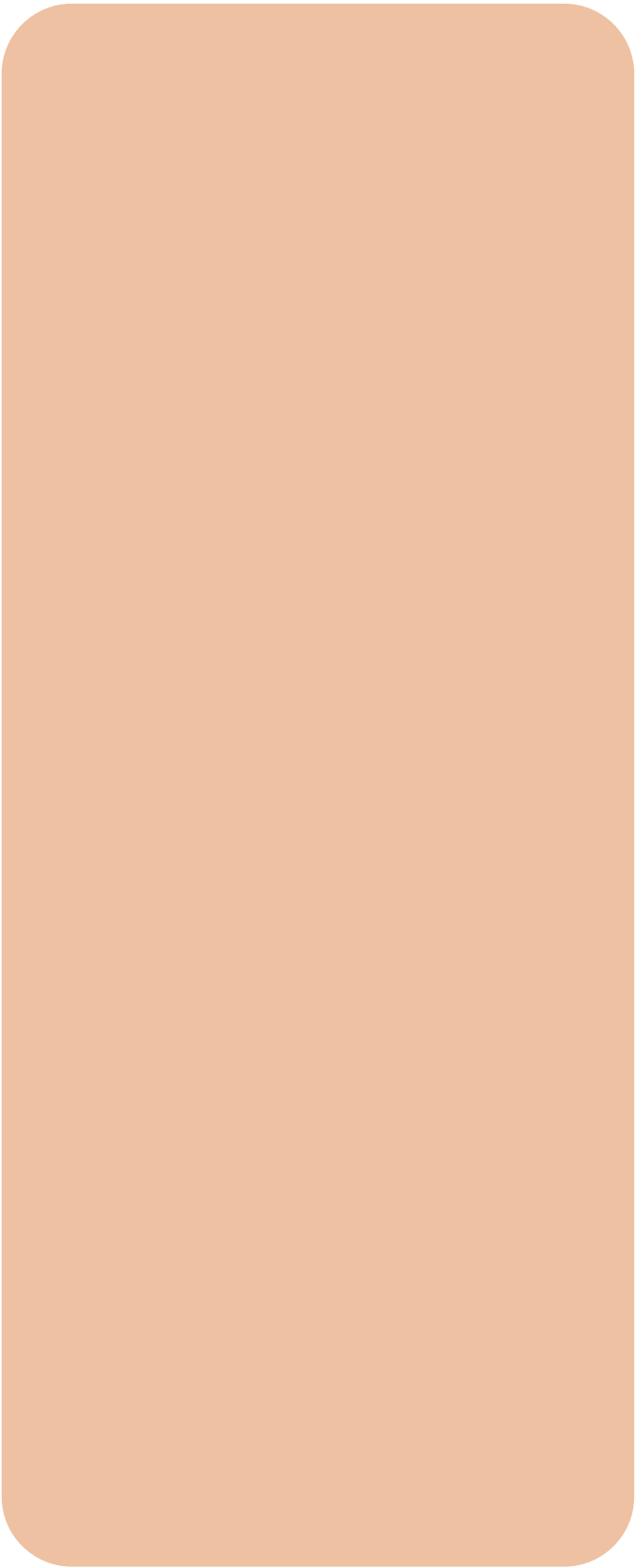
With many years of experience, they've seen what does and doesn't work! They'll present you with the best suppliers and assist you in designing your ideal day, so you can be sure that everything will come to life perfectly.

Your wedding planner will also be there on the day to make sure everything runs smoothly and manage any unanticipated emergencies; so that you don't have to worry if suppliers have arrived, how long dessert will be or where the flip flops have gone!



WEDDING CHECKLIST

- ☐ Dates selected
- ☐ Hired wedding planner
- ☐ Venue chosen
- ☐ Chosen your bridal party
- ☐ Bridesmaids dresses bought
- ☐ Chosen your groomsmen
- ☐ Ceremony booked
- ☐ Ceremony music chosen
- ☐ Said 'YES' to the dress
- ☐ Flowers arranged
- ☐ Wedding bands bought
- ☐ Receiving line arranged
- ☐ Speeches and toasts written
- ☐ Photographer chosen
- ☐ Videographer chosen
- ☐ Toastmaster booked
- ☐ Bridal cars booked
- ☐ Wedding cake arranged
- ☐ Bouquet throw (yes/no?)
- ☐ First dance song chosen
- ☐ Table plan arranged
- ☐ Table decorations chosen
- ☐ Children's entertainment booked
- ☐ DJ or band booked



WEDDING ROLES



YOUR BRIDESMAIDS

Your Bridesmaids are picked by you as your nearest and dearest. You may also opt to have a 'Maid of Honour' or 'Chief Bridesmaid' who is expected to be your lady in waiting on the day! Your bridal party are responsible for planning your hen party, getting you dressed and keeping you calm throughout the day.

FLOWER GIRLS

Flower Girls traditionally carried sheaves of wheat and bouquets of herbs to symbolise fertility for the new couple. Although, we recommend that you stick to petals! Commonly, fresh or hydrated rose petals are scattered down the aisle and can be supplied by your florist, however this could be done with almost any flower.

THE REALLY LITTLE ONES

We recommend giving them a wand rather than petals, and if you're worried about them making it down the aisle, put a familiar face close to the front for them to run straight to!

Three times a Bridesmaid...

The saying dates back to the 16th century when it was believed that if a woman had been a bridesmaid 3 times and not caught a suitors eye then she would never marry! Once a woman had been to 7 weddings, the curse was thought to be broken!



More than he bargained for?

Tradition has it that if the Groom doesn't turn up to the wedding, then it becomes the Best Man's role to step up and marry the Bride himself!

GROOMSMEN

Traditionally, the groomsmen were called 'Brides-knights' and selected by the Groom to protect his would be Bride from kidnappers - nowadays they have a much more relaxed job! Ushers and Groomsmen make sure that guests are seated, and the day is going as the couple planned. The Best Man is responsible for planning the stag event, looking after the rings, getting the Groom to the ceremony (on time!) and making a speech.

PAGEBOYS

Just as with Flower Girls, Page Boys are the chosen by the couple from close friends and family. Traditionally Page Boys would carry the Brides long dress train, however more commonly nowadays, they will walk down the aisle first with the Flower Girls and Bridesmaids.

RING BEARER

This is a special Page Boy who is chosen to carry the rings on the cushion down the aisle. Often real rings are used and tied on with ribbon, or these are given to the Best Man for safekeeping and a symbolic cushion is used with imitation embroidery or print.



YOUR CEREMONY

CHURCH

A church ceremony is much longer than a civil ceremony, lasting from 45 minutes - 1 hour, or longer if you opt for a Catholic service. If you are religious, this may be the perfect option for you, however if not, a Church ceremony does usually include a lot of religious references, so bare this in mind when making your decision.

PHOTOGRAPHS

On the day if you decide you would like longer at the Church for photos it is important that someone calls the venue so that chef can be advised, and timings can be revised.

CIVIL CEREMONY

Civil ceremonies are much shorter than Church ceremonies and last around 25 minutes. They can take place in any location that has been licensed. You can still include all the traditions such as giving of rings if you choose. The only thing that is not permitted is the mention of any religious words or references in your songs, which have to be approved beforehand. So, if your favourite song is Hallelujah then you may want to reconsider!

GUEST ARRIVAL

Your venue may be able to offer your guests pre-reception drinks i.e.: Water & Orange Juice or maybe even a Tea & Coffee station (normally a good idea if guests have travelled some distance). Wherever you get married, no alcohol is allowed to be taken into the room where the marriage ceremony is taking place.



MUSIC

Whichever option you go for, you'll need to think about music. Will there be live music? In which case, you could arrange something traditional like a string quartet. If you want something more modern, what about an acoustic singer, or pianist? If burning your music onto a CD or Ipod, tracks should be burnt in order of play to avoid any confusion for the person responsible. Don't forget to remove the password on your device, and make sure it's also on airplane mode, no one wants to receive a call mid ceremony!

HOW MANY TRACKS DO WE NEED?

Prelude - 30 minutes

Processional - 1 track

Signing the register - 3 tracks

Recessional - 1 track

SEATING

The front row on either side should be reserved for parents, the immediate wedding party, and grandparents. If you are having readings, it is advisable for the readers to sit at the end of the row so they have easy access to get to the front of the room!

Traditionally the Bride's side is the left and the Groom's the right, but as the saying goes: 'As two families become one, we ask that you pick a seat not a side'



WEDDING ATTIRE

THE DRESS

This dates all the way back to 1840 when Queen Victoria started the tradition in the Western World for Brides to wear white on their wedding day. The Japanese had long before worn white on their wedding day, symbolising the willingness to be painted with their new families ideas and standards.

Prior to this, the Bride always wore the best gown that she owned.

THE VEIL

In addition to the Groom not being able to see the Bride before the ceremony, the veil was used to protect her from evil spirits and jealous suitors. Traditionally the veil would stay covering the Bride's face until she arrives at the bottom of the aisle where he would lift it off. Many people however, choose to wear a veil as an accessory and have it pulled back from the start.



Although you and your partner may come in over budget in a few aspects, remember to remind him that the most expensive Wedding Dress cost the small equivalent of £8.2 million and had 150 carats of Diamonds. You won't hear him complain again!



WEDDING ATTIRE

WAISTCOAT BUTTON

King Henry VIII was not able to do his last button of his waistcoat up, so as not to be embarrassed he decided to make it law that no man wearing a waistcoat was allowed to do his up. To this date this law is still in place.

BUTTON HOLES

Button Holes can be supplied by your florist to match your bouquet, and traditionally are worn by the men in the bridal party: the Groom, the Best Man, Ushers, Father of the Bride and Father of the Groom. The Mother of the Bride and Mother of the Groom traditionally wear a corsage around their wrists, however it is just as popular - if not more - to opt for a button hole that is slightly more feminine than the mens.

HOW TO WEAR THEM

These are fixed to the front of the lapel, usually with a pin, but sometimes a magnet. Ask your wedding planner on the day to help put on all of the button holes for you.

Men should wear theirs to the left, facing upwards. Whereas women should wear them on the right, facing downwards.

SHOES



A lot of Brides wear beautiful shoes on their big day. To stop these from getting ruined, we recommend you purchase some heel protectors. These can be bought from ASOS or Amazon and only cost around £6.00.

Later on in the evening, it's a good idea to swap out of those killer heels and into something that will be comfortable for hours of dancing with family and friends! Custom trainers are a popular choice, providing comfort whilst still being special enough for your big day.

Don't forget about your guests! Providing a basket of flip flops for your guests is low cost and will ensure hours of dancing without nasty blisters! You can pick these up for as little as £1 a pair and don't forget to include a variety of sizes!



MIX AND MATCH

Your Bridesmaids are likely to be all different shapes and sizes and we don't all feel comfortable in the same dress. Why not pick a colour and let your Bridesmaids choose their dress? Or, they could even choose a jumpsuit! Everyone can match in colour, but no one is uncomfortable on the day, or unhappy with the photos that follow!

Another popular choice is to pick a colour palette that matches your theme, and have each bridesmaid in a different shade. Just as everyone doesn't suit the same style of dress, not everyone suits the same colour.

You can get Bridesmaids dresses to suit all budgets, but a great place to get some instant inspiration is JJ's House (jjshouse.co.uk). Your dress store should also be able to get different dresses made in your chosen colours.



RINGS

ENGAGEMENT RING

The giving of an "engagement" ring was practiced when the Groom "purchased" his Bride. By giving a token, such as a ring, he pledged to marry her in return for her dowry and social status, among other things. The tradition of giving a diamond began with the Italians. It was believed that diamonds were created from the "names of love" and represented everlasting love.

WEDDING BANDS

The ancient Egyptians began the practice of wearing a wedding band. It was a symbol of unending love, since the ring has no beginning and no end. Giving a wedding band of gold represented purity. In medieval England, the practice of wearing the ring on the third finger of the left hand was because of the belief that the veins in the left hand led directly to the heart.

By wearing the ring on this finger, the couple were "Joined at the heart."

Don't forget...

Before the ceremony you will need to remove your engagement ring and place it on another finger or give it to someone to look after temporarily. After the ceremony, you are able to put it back on.

RECEIVING LINE



MEET AND GREET

The Bride & Groom should introduce each other to guests when necessary.

BE BRIEF

Keep the conversation brief, you will probably have a lot of guests to greet, you want to keep this quick as you can mingle later.

WEDDING PARTY

The Best Man, Chief Bridesmaid, and Ushers can help to introduce guests to each other and make sure they all feel welcome.

TAKE A SEAT

Once you have welcomed your guests, you both should take your place at the top table. You may choose to be announced into the room at this point as the new 'Mr and Mrs'.

CHURCH

If you have a church wedding you tend to greet each guest as they leave the church therefore, a receiving line is usually not required.

THE ORDER

Father of the Bride, Mother of the Bride, Father of the Groom, Mother of the Groom, Groom and Bride. You may choose just to keep it simple with the two of you.

THE MORE THE MERRIER

Sometimes, Grandparents or special members of the family may also join the receiving line.

**One important thing to remember - the
bigger the line, the longer it takes!**



SPEECHES AND TOASTS



WHEN DO SPEECHES TAKE PLACE?

Traditionally, these would take place at the end of the meal. This gives those speaking a chance to have a few drinks, and guests on the tables to mingle and relax beforehand. However, if the speakers are of a nervous disposition, do the speeches before the meal. This way the meal can be enjoyed by everyone.

ORDER OF THE TOASTS

- 1.** Toast to the Bride and Bridegroom, this is normally proposed by the Bride's father or a close relative or friend of the family.
- 2.** Toast to the Bridesmaids this is always proposed by the bridegroom following the response to the first toast.
- 3.** The Best Man would then respond to the Bridegroom's speech on behalf of the Bridesmaids. He also traditionally reads the telegrams to the guests.

WEDDING CAKE



The wedding cake is normally cut after speeches and taken away to be portioned prior to the evening food by your venue. Let them know how much of each tier you would like cut up for guests, and be very clear if you would like a piece of each tier or an entire tier saved for you to take home.

CUTTING THE CAKE

- 1.** The Bride should hold the knife in her right hand, with the Grooms' right hand on top, her left hand on top of that and cut the first slice together.
- 2.** It is customary to send people who have not been able to attend the wedding a piece of cake. This is usually taken care of by the Bride's mother.
- 3.** The Bride and Groom may feed each other some cake, if they choose too.

TABLES



TABLE PLAN

This is usually the most difficult part in the planning of your wedding. Who to sit with whom and where?

Depending on family politics it is advisable to sit close family near top table, and if you have grandparents or siblings try to seat them at the table facing you. Should the Chief Bridesmaid or Best Man be married it is nice for them to have their partners close by, so if possible try to put them on a table adjacent.

If you're looking for something different, long tables with guests either side are a great alternative to traditional round tables and create a completely different look to your wedding breakfast!

The venue will need to have a copy of the table plan prior to the day to ensure this is all set up correctly for you.

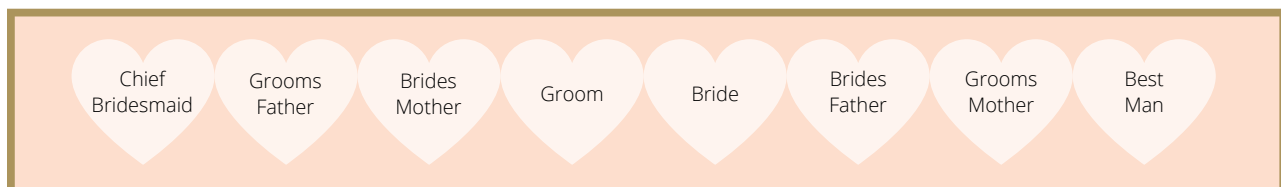
The Bride should always be to the Grooms left

This is because the right arm was considered the sword arm, allowing him to draw his sword and fight off attackers whilst holding his wife back with his left arm.



SET UP

Many couples chose to have a traditional long top table. However, a round table with laid out in a half moon / semi circle can be a lovely alternative and provides a great cosy and intimate atmosphere for the top table, giving everyone an opportunity to talk, rather only turning to the people next to them. Alternatively, you could choose not to have a top table at all, instead splitting up the wedding party so they can enjoy the day with family and friends.





PERSONAL TOUCHES

TABLE NAMES

As well as numbering the tables, there are lots of great ideas for table names. There are a couple of examples below, but the possibilities are endless and should be tailored around you as a couple.

- Places you have both been on holiday or are special to you both
- Flowers
- Favourite films
- Types of cars (one for the Groom)
- Special people who have passed away

DECORATIONS

Remember that your guests are going to be sitting around the table when you choose the style of flowers or other decoration for your centre piece. A classic mistake is large and low flowers that restrict your guests seeing the people across the table.

It can be a nice idea to give these to a special guest from each table at the end of the night. Your venues wedding planner can assist in getting these to the correct people and ensuring that they are taken. How you tell them is up to you – you can do this personally at some point throughout the day or pop a little card on their napkin at the table instructing them to take them home at the end of the night.



KEEPING CHILDREN HAPPY



If you opt to have children at your wedding, it's a good idea to do something small to keep them quiet. This can be placed on the table ready for when they come into the room and take their seat, or given out just before speeches to keep them occupied.

GOODIE BAGS

Make up a goody bag for each of the children, these can contain toys, colouring books & pencils, sweets etc.

DISPOSIBLE CAMERAS

Consider giving each child a disposable camera and assign your new mini photographers to get candid shots. It will keep them busy for hours and you may even get some funny photos.

CHILDREN'S TABLE

A small table in a corner can become a great play table if you provide colouring/activity books, crayons and a few puzzles.

ENTERTAINMENT

It is not much fun when parents have to constantly run after their children, so, you might consider hiring a few childcare helpers to provide supervision. You could even hire a bubbleologist or a balloonist to keep the little darlings occupied.

WEDDING TRADITIONS



BOUQUET TOSS

Everyone knows that all the single ladies huddle around and the first to catch the bouquet is the next to get married! If you like this idea but do not want to risk ruining your bouquet, you can do one of the following options:

**HAVE THE FLORIST
MAKE UP A SMALLER
BOUQUET**

**THROW ONE OF THE
BRIDESMAID'S
BOUQUETS**

**PURCHASE AN
ARTIFICIAL BOUQUET
TO THROW**

FIRST DANCE

The first dance starts with just the Bride and Groom on the dance floor to their chosen song, which is usually one that is special to them.

You may choose to follow this with a Father-Daughter dance, or the Groom and Mother of the Groom. This will be different for every family.

Alternatively, the Best Man and Chief Bridesmaid would move onto the dance floor afterwards, followed by both sets of parents. Finally, the DJ or band should call on the rest of the guests to join.

GIFTS FOR MOTHERS

Should you decide to give your Mothers flowers on the day as a thank you it is tradition that the Groom give the flowers to the Bride's Mother and the Bride to the Grooms Mother. It is a way of acknowledging that you are now part of each other's families and saying thank you for any help they may have inputted.

It is also quite common to give gifts to your Groomsmen and Bridal party to say thank you for their help leading up to the day. Try cufflinks or a bracelet for them to also wear on the day!



WEDDING TRIVIA

**SOMETHING OLD,
SOMETHING NEW,
SOMETHING BORROWED,
SOMETHING BLUE,
AND A SILVER SIXPENCE IN HER SHOE**

**DO YOU KNOW THE ORIGIN OF THIS
TRADITIONAL SAYING?**

Something old signifies the life you had with friends and family previous to the marriage.

Something new signifies your future life with your new mate.

Something borrowed was usually something borrowed from a happy former bride to ensure the current Bride's happiness, and which is later returned.

Something blue represents the Bride's purity and faithfulness (this comes from the Jewish tradition where the Bride wears blue to represent fidelity).

The silver sixpence in the shoe is to ensure wealth to the couple in their married life (most Brides now opt to put a penny or five pence in their shoe).

TOP TIPS FOR BOOKING YOUR SUPPLIERS



PHOTOGRAPHER

Some Photographers want to take you both away during the entire Drinks Reception - remember, although photographs are important, your guests are there to see you.

Therefore, the time allowed for photographs should be no longer than **45 - 60 minutes**. Remember that although photos are important, your guests are there to see you.

Remember that the photographer is working for you. Give the Photographer a list of all the group shots you would like, get these done first and then do the intimate shots. Find out if it costs you anything extra for the photographer to stay longer than First Dance; if it doesn't - ask for some outside shots when all the lights are on at your venue. These photographs capture the magic of the evening.

Check your contract carefully as most photographers stipulate that they require a meal. If they do, please remember that you are not obligated to seat them with your guests and your chosen venue will be able to provide a separate area for them to eat.

VIDEOGRAPER

The day will go so quickly, and everything will seem very surreal so this can be a good idea - they capture all the little details that you will miss!

Most videographers will also do a video diary (if requested where they will ask your guests to leave a short message). They can also create a Marioke for you, which is a great video to watch back! Remember that they will likely require a meal, as they will be with you for most of the day, especially if they are with you for Bridal prep first thing!



CARS

You would normally require two formal cars. One for the Bridesmaids, and one for the Bride & her Father. If you opt for a church wedding this will also be used for the Bride and Groom to arrive at the venue later.

POPULAR CARS:

Beauford Convertibles
Rolls Royce Silver Cloud
Volkswagen Camper Van
Viscount Landaulette
Bentley Continental GT

TOASTMASTER

To have or not to have, this is the question! How formal do you want your Wedding Day to be? If you have more than 100 guests, and would like them introduced and announced as they come through the receiving line, then your answer should be yes! If however, you would like a more informal occasion, then there may be no need. Your coordinator will announce in the Bride & Groom, will organise the Line-up, and can announce the first speech. They will also hold your hand throughout the day ensuring that you have a stress-free and enjoyable day.



ANOPIAEVENTS.

We hope that you found this guide useful and it's answered some of your wedding-related questions!

If there's anything that you're unsure about or anything else you would like to know, we'll be more than happy to help!

You can reach Anastasia or one of the team on 01702 588002 or email us at info@anopiaevents.co.uk

