



WEDDING  
PLANNING GUIDE  
mrs2be♥ie

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## Welcome!

Firstly, congratulations on your engagement! Thank you for joining mrs2be.ie - we're looking forward to helping you plan your special day. We've got you covered from creating a budget, sending your invitations, to the minute you walk down the aisle.

This Wedding Planning Guide covers all you'll need to know to start planning the wedding you've always dreamed of. Don't forget to regularly visit [www.mrs2be.ie](http://www.mrs2be.ie) where you can find resources to help the planning process, planning guides for all areas of your big day, inspiration boards and real wedding stories to spark your imagination, and our popular wedding forums, where you can chat and share ideas with other brides and grooms around Ireland.

Above all else, don't forget that planning a wedding is meant to be fun! Sure it's a lot of work, and you may need to occasionally vent in our "Rant and Rave" sub-forum, but remember... you're tying the knot with the person you love more than anything in the world. And when you walk down that aisle, and see your loved one waiting at the top for you... take it from us, it's well worth it.

## Happy Planning!

The mrs2be team



	TOPICS	POSTS	LAST POST
<b>2BE.IE MISSIE COMMUNITY</b>			
<b>Say Hello and Welcome :)</b> Recently engaged, don't know where to start? C'mon in and say hello to the other Missies...	515	7097	by <a href="#">fionab1385</a> Fri Dec 16, 2011 12:00 pm
<b>Mrs2Be.ie Stuff</b> Mrs2be.ie Suggestion Box and Official Announcements	69	1521	by <a href="#">Admin</a> Thu Nov 17, 2011 12:29 am
<b>BEFORE THE WEDDING</b>			
<b>General Wedding Discussion</b> General wedding discussion, wedding tips and ideas. Start here if newly engaged and need to post questions to the other Missies.	5514	90508	by <a href="#">sam-4-bob</a> Sat Dec 17, 2011 10:42 pm
<b>Vendors &amp; Suppliers</b> Forum specifically for chatting about particular wedding vendors & suppliers.	1205	8313	by <a href="#">grogmg</a> Sat Dec 17, 2011 9:33 pm
<b>Beauty &amp; Fashion</b> Discuss Beauty, Fashion, Wedding Shoes, Wedding Dresses, Bridesmaids' Dresses, Groomsmen Suits, MOB and MOG outfits here.	908	14024	by <a href="#">Missie84</a> Wed Dec 14, 2011 4:34 pm
<b>Health &amp; Fitness</b> All health & fitness related conversation. Including dieting and weight-loss.	275	4810	by <a href="#">grogmg</a> Sat Dec 17, 2011 9:38 pm
<b>Weddings Abroad</b> If you're NOT tying the knot in Ireland, post all about it here. Greece, Spain, Italy, France.... any destination.	140	1716	by <a href="#">thehappyinlantzarote</a> Sun Dec 11, 2011 5:29 pm
	213	3078	by <a href="#">Galwaylassie</a> Thu Dec 06, 2011 2:35 pm

# First Things First

Once you've announced your engagement and shown off your sparkly engagement ring, you'll need to start the early stages of planning. You and your fiancé(e) will need to discuss some important wedding related issues. This will be the first of many discussions, so practice the fine arts of negotiation and compromise, and wedding planning should be a breeze!

## 6 things to think about: When you want to get married

Some couples may have a special date in mind, like an anniversary. For others, off-peak weddings (usually Monday to Thursday) are a great opportunity to get a bargain or two. Some religions can restrict the days you can get married, due to holidays or festivals. Other times of year might be popular for families or other guests (Bank Holiday weekends, Christmas and New Year's).

In Ireland, the most popular month to get married is September, followed by July, June and August.

Don't forget – in Ireland the law requires that you give 3 months notice of intention to wed to the State, so you'll need to take that in to account when choosing your date.

## Where the wedding will be held

For the ceremony this might be a religious venue, or for a civil ceremony this could be a registry office, hotel or other approved venue. Check the General Register Office website for a list of approved venues for civil ceremonies.

You'll also need to consider your reception site. Ireland has a wide range of reception venues, from hotels and restaurants, to golf and country clubs, to traditional old manor houses. The type and size of wedding you'd like to have will usually help to narrow down the type of venue that will be able to accommodate your guests.

## Type of wedding you'd like to have

If there's one thing we'd urge you to remember, it's that there is no right or wrong way to have a wedding! Formal or casual, religious or civil ceremony, non-traditional or by-the-book... it's your day and you should aim to have it your way.

Other things to consider are your colour scheme, and if you'd like to incorporate a theme or not. On [mrs2be.ie](http://mrs2be.ie) we have a ton of inspiration boards to get your creative juices flowing!

## Number of guests

This is one of the biggest decisions for anyone planning a wedding, as it will affect every aspect of the planning process. Your budget will play a large part in determining the number of guests you'll be able to invite, as will the venues you choose.

First of all, would you prefer a large, extravagant affair, a small, intimate gathering, or something in between? Next, determine your budget and create your

guest list accordingly. Be prepared to make cuts to the list if you have to – or, if you just can't bear to lose a name, you'll have to trim another part of your budget to make room.

## Number of bridesmaids / groomsmen

In Ireland, the law governing weddings states that the couple need 2 witnesses to sign the register, but some have anywhere between 1 and 10 (!! ) attendants each. The bridal party is usually made up of brothers, sisters, cousins and best friends – but they can be anyone special to you. Some brides have male attendants, and some grooms have a female "best woman". The sky's the limit.

## The Budget

Creating a budget for your wedding can be a daunting task at first, but once you get started, it's not all that bad. To ensure smooth wedding planning, set a budget from the start and keep track of those costs!

It's mostly about prioritisation and compromise. While a wedding is a wonderful dream day, nobody wants it to leave them financially crippled for the first few years of their married life. Therefore the first step is to plan how much cash you're willing and able to spend, where it's going to come from, and what you're going to spend it on.



# Know Your Options

In Ireland today, couples have a wide range of options when it comes to the type of wedding ceremony they'd like to have.

## The Basics

Once you've decided on a date and begin the planning process, you must give 3 months notice to the State. This is done by appointment with your local Registrar.

The General Register Office also has a list of preliminary legalities that must be met if you wish to get married or have a civil partnership in Ireland:

1. You must have the capacity to marry each other i.e. over the age of 18, not closely related, not currently married or in a civil partnership.

2. You must freely consent to the marriage.

3. You must observe the marriage notification process (3 months notice) required by law

Once the 3 months notification and all other requirements are met, the Registrar will issue you with a Marriage Registration Form (MRF) giving you permission to marry. You should give the MRF to the officiant who will be solemnising the marriage before the ceremony.

For more on the legal requirements, visit the General Register Office website.

## Religious Ceremony

Modern Ireland is a multicultural, diverse country with many religious traditions – each with their own wedding ceremony. From the Catholic Church to the Buddhist faith, couples can marry in a ceremony that reflects their own religious and spiritual beliefs.

If you're planning to get married in a religious ceremony, you'll need to speak to the priest, minister, rabbi or officiant to discuss your wedding in detail, and to find out the religious requirements you'll have to meet before you're able to be married (pre-marriage course, paperwork, etc).

## Civil Ceremony

If a religious wedding ceremony isn't your cup of tea, you might want to consider having a civil ceremony. Introduced in Ireland for the first time in 2007, civil ceremonies are now the second most popular type of wedding ceremony after Catholic weddings.

Civil ceremonies can either be held in a registry office, or another approved venue (check the General Register Office website for more details) and allow for greater freedom in personalising the ceremony with music, readings and personalised vows. Due to the requirement of having a Registrar perform the ceremony, civil weddings are only available Monday to Friday.

## Spiritual Blessing or Humanist Ceremony

Many couples do not wish to have a religious ceremony, but at the same time want more than a civil ceremony. A Humanist ceremony (or other spiritual blessing) gives a greater degree of freedom, including indoor or outdoor ceremonies, and the option to have the ceremony at the weekend.

With any blessing or spiritual ceremony, it is important to note that in order for a marriage to be considered legal in Ireland, the legalities listed above MUST still be completed.

## Civil Partnership

A civil partnership is Ireland's formal legal recognition of same-sex relationships. It is a way for same-sex couples to pledge their love and commitment to each other, in a meaningful and legally binding way. Civil partnerships became legal in Ireland on 1 January 2011.

Civil partnership ceremonies generally follow the same format as civil marriage ceremonies, and can be held in a registry office or other approved venue. The legal requirements are the same as those listed above. Civil partnerships are ONLY available to same-sex couples.



## Useful Links

General Register Office  
Getting Married (Catholic Church)  
Church of Ireland  
Humanist Association of Ireland  
Civil Partnership (General Register Office)

[www.groireland.ie/getting\\_married.htm](http://www.groireland.ie/getting_married.htm)  
[www.gettingmarried.ie](http://www.gettingmarried.ie)  
[www.marriagematters.ireland.anglican.org/service/default.asp](http://www.marriagematters.ireland.anglican.org/service/default.asp)  
[www.humanism.ie/ceremonies/wedding-ceremonies](http://www.humanism.ie/ceremonies/wedding-ceremonies)  
[www.groireland.ie/civil\\_partnership.htm](http://www.groireland.ie/civil_partnership.htm)

# The Budget

Our 2011 Irish Wedding Survey found that for newlyweds in 2010 and 2011, the average cost of their wedding (including the honeymoon) was just under €29,000. Here is a breakdown:

Ceremony Venue (including donations)	€461
Reception Venue	€9,751
Reception Band	€1,762
Reception DJ	€384
Photographer	€1,632
Videographer	€1,071
Wedding Planner / Coordinator	€1,150
Wedding Dress	€1,329
Bridal Party Attire	€970
Wedding Jewellery	€618
Beauty / Hair and Makeup	€428
Florist / Decor	€613
Invitations / Other Stationery	€351
Wedding Cake	€329
Ceremony Musicians / Singers	€419
Wedding Day Transportation	€427
Wedding Favours	€210
Wedding Accessories / Candles	€204
Miscellaneous Costs	€1,320
The Honeymoon	€5,506

## Some budget pointers

- Figure out how much you're willing (and able) to spend, where it will come from, and what you'll spend it on.
- Determine your priorities – large or intimate wedding? What parts mean the most to you – the photos? the DVD? the venue? the dress?
- If you're considering a loan to help pay for your wedding, do your research and get the best deal.
- Stay organised – use our Wedding Budget Calculator to keep track of what you've spent and how much you have left.

Remember that these figures are just to give you an idea of what other couples spent – we believe that you can plan the day of your dreams no matter what your budget looks like!

We've got lots of tips and tricks on budgeting for your big day – from How To Create A Wedding Budget to a handy Wedding Budget Calculator to help you keep track of all your expenses.



garybarrettphoto.com

# Getting Organised

## *mrs2be* Wedding Countdown

Although some super-organised couples are able to plan their weddings in just a few months, we've found the average planning time to be 12 to 18 months. With that in mind, we've created our Wedding Countdown to help you keep on top of your To Do List!

### 12 Months Before The Wedding

- Announce your engagement!
- Set a budget
- Decide on approximate number of guests (this may impact your choice of venues)
- Decide whether to get married at home or abroad
- Select your ceremony venue
- Research reception venues
- Set a wedding date (remember to ensure that your ceremony and reception venues are both free)
- Book reception venue
- Decide what type of wedding you want – do you want a theme, colour scheme, black tie etc.
- Choose your bridesmaids, best man, groomsmen & ushers
- Book photographer
- Book videographer
- Book ceremony musicians
- Book band, DJ for reception
- Choose your wedding dress

### 9 – 12 Months Before The Wedding

- Choose bridesmaids' dresses
- Book vans / transport
- Book florist
- Research honeymoon destinations

### 6 – 9 Months Before The Wedding

- Book hair stylist
- Book make-up artist
- Book honeymoon
- Arrange hair and make-up trials
- Select invitations
- Order wedding cake
- Plan hen & stag parties
- Book groom's and groomsmen's suits
- Book pre-marriage course if necessary

### 3 – 5 Months Before The Wedding

- Organise the legalities – give at least 3 months notice to registrar
- Give at least 3 months notice to the Catholic Church
- Organise paperwork for church – Pre Nuptial Enquiry, Baptismal Cert, Confirmation Cert, Letters of Freedom
- Decide on prayers, readings and music for mass booklets – check with your priest / registrar
- Organise invitations and order of service booklets
- Ensure passports are in date for honeymoon (or order new ones!)
- Arrange travel vaccinations if necessary

### 6 – 8 Weeks Before The Wedding

- Send invitations
- Attend dress fittings
- Choose wedding rings
- Select gifts for bridal party, parents

### 3 – 5 Weeks Before The Wedding

- Follow up any unreturned RSVPs
- Finalise guest numbers
- Contact reception venue with final menu details, approximate numbers
- Arrange the table plan for the reception
- Contact suppliers to check final arrangements
- Attend final dress fittings

### 1 – 2 Weeks Before The Wedding

- Attend rehearsal
- Collect dresses
- Pack for the honeymoon
- Order foreign currency for honeymoon

### The Final Week

- Confirm final numbers and dietary requirements with reception
- Make last minute changes to table plan if necessary
- Get manicure, massage, waxing and fake tan applied
- Do full dress rehearsal from underwear to veil
- Pack an overnight bag for the reception
- Organise money to be paid to suppliers on the day

### The Day Before

- Ensure the cake is collected from cake shop and delivered to reception
- Collect groom and groomsmen's suits
- Go to bed early and get a good night's sleep!

### The Big Day!

- Relax!
- Get flowers delivered to the bride's house
- Allow plenty of time to get dressed, and have hair and make-up done
- Eat properly
- Enjoy the day!



# mrs2be's Ultimate Wedding Checklist

There's no need for that sinking feeling of "Did I forget to do something?" in the run up to your big day – not with our Ultimate Wedding Checklist!

## BRIDE AND GROOM

- Announce your engagement!
- Decide on a date
- Book ceremony & reception venue
- Prepare a budget
- Decide on number of guests
- Book suppliers
- Pre-marriage course
- Ceremony booklets
- Finalise mass booklet with priest
- Decide on readers
- Candles
- Ceremony music
- Wedding rings
- Gifts for each other
- Gifts for mothers and helpers
- Organise money to be paid on the day
- Full rehearsal in church
- Outfits for next day

## PAPERWORK

- Church notification
- State notification
- Letters of freedom
- Dispensation from archbishop if required (mixed marriage)
- Copies of birth and baptismal certificates
- Passports
- Invitations
- Evening invitations
- RSVPs
- Stamps
- Ceremony booklet
- Directions to ceremony and reception venue
- List of local B&Bs
- Thank you cards

## BRIDE

- Dress
- Shoes
- Veil
- Tiara/head piece/accessories
- Jewellery
- Underwear, Lingerie
- Garter
- Hand bag
- Shoes for dancing
- Tights
- Perfume
- Book hair (including trial)
- Book make-up (including trial)
- Book tan (including trial)
- Facials
- Manicure
- Pedicure
- Book final beauty appointments
- Teeth whitening
- Full dress rehearsal (including underwear, dress, shoes, jewellery)

## GROOM, BEST MAN & GROOMSMEN

- Suit
- Cufflinks
- Shoes
- Hair cut, shave
- Gifts for groomsmen

## BRIDESMAIDS

- Dress & fittings
- Hair accessories
- Underwear
- Shoes
- Jewellery
- Gifts for bridesmaids

## FLOWER GIRL & PAGEBOY

- Outfits
- Ring cushion
- Hair accessories for flower girl

## TRANSPORT

- Cars
- Car ribbon
- Umbrellas

## PHOTOGRAPHS

- Book photographer
- Give basic list of photos to be taken on the day

## FLOWERS

- Bouquet for bride
- Bouquets for bridesmaids
- Flower girl posy/basket
- Buttonholes
- Corsages
- Flowers for church
- Flowers for reception
- Bouquets for mothers
- Pew ends

## VIDEOGRAPHER

- Book videographer
- Discuss the wedding details with the videographer and provide any required music or photographs for inclusion on the wedding DVD

## VENUE

- Book venue
- Confirm numbers
- Choose menu
- Confirm rooms
- Wedding cake
- Deliver cake
- Deliver favours
- Deliver wine
- Table plan
- Deliver luggage and leave a car at hotel for bride and groom for day after
- Pay final bill

## RECEPTION

- Arrival drinks
- Pre-dinner refreshments
- Pre-dinner entertainment
- Band
- D.J.
- Organise wine and corkage with hotel
- Decide on wine/round of drinks for toasting
- Decide on first dance
- Table plan
- Place names
- Favours
- Centrepieces if not supplied by hotel
- Chair covers
- Deliver guestbook

## EMERGENCY KIT

- Make-up
- Hairbrush
- Deodorant
- Perfume
- Spare tights
- Clear nail polish
- Hair spray
- Hair clips
- Breath mints
- Safety pins
- Wet wipes
- Tissues
- Sewing kit
- Party feet
- Plasters/Blister pads
- Tampon/Sanitary towels
- Pain killers
- Lip stick/gloss
- Powder

## HONEYMOON

- Choose destination
- Book flights
- Book accommodation
- Organise travel insurance
- Organise vaccinations if required
- Apply for visas if required
- Order foreign currency
- Ensure bank cards can be used abroad
- Pack suitcases





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