

the wedding guide uk.com

Your planning
starts here...

100 page
special!



WELCOME:

Congratulations! You are getting married!

Planning your wedding is one of the most exciting things you will ever do and at The Wedding Guide UK our aim is to help you find the right venue and the best wedding suppliers to create your perfect day. Inspired ideas, expert advice, real weddings and bespoke services... true wedding inspiration!

Your wedding celebrations should be exactly as you and your partner want – intimate, extravagant, elegant, rustic, loud, relaxed, personal, traditional, bohemian, minimalist, romantic, glamorous, simple, colourful or a generous mix of everything!

It's 31 years since I planned my first private wedding and wedding fair and this Guide has been brought together using all of my knowledge and experience. See my Wedding Planning Tips on pages 10 and 11 for expert advice on how to get started and stay one step ahead in the madness / excitement of your wedding planning!

From deciding which type of marriage ceremony is right for you both, to finding your perfect venue, booking a photographer, florist, day and evening entertainment, knowing which flowers are safe to decorate your wedding cake, to alternative ideas for favours, it is all here for you.

I hope you love this wedding planning guide and find it helpful; use it alongside our website www.theweddingguideuk.com for even more expert advice, inspiration and guidance. Oh, and if you want to star in one of our Real Wedding features after your Big Day, get in touch!

Cover Shot Story...

Kate and Nick had a two-day wedding celebration in August 2025. Their legal ceremony was followed by a drinks reception at a favourite local pub. The day after, they had a lavish 'at home' wedding for 152 guests with free-flowing drinks and wild entertainment!

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Dawn Marie

Editor

The Wedding Guide UK



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CIVIL MARRIAGE OR PARTNERSHIP IN A LICENSED VENUE

An Easy Guide

A civil ceremony is a beautiful, personal, non-religious way to legally marry. You may choose a grand country house, a cosy boutique hotel, or even outdoors - as long as it's within the grounds of a licensed venue. Two registrars will attend: one to conduct your ceremony, and the other to register your marriage. You'll need two adult witnesses (they must be aged 16 or over), and then you can simply soak up the magic of your surroundings and the happiness of the moment.

Here, the Northumberland Registration Service guide you through the steps of planning your civil ceremony, from securing your date to personalising your vows.



STEP 1: BOOKING YOUR REGISTRAR

As soon as you've found your dream venue the next essential step is to book a registrar to conduct your ceremony. This should be done at the same time as securing your venue to ensure a registrar is available not just on your chosen date, but also at your ideal time.

Lunchtime ceremonies work well for a traditional reception with a wedding breakfast, whilst a later ceremony can set the tone for a more relaxed and intimate celebration.

Your venue will give you the contact details of the local Registration Team so you can book the date and time of your civil ceremony. A booking fee or deposit is usually required at this stage, along with your contact details – don't forget to keep these up to date if you move or change your phone number or email address.

STEP 2: GIVING LEGAL NOTICE

From 12 months before your wedding date, you can legally 'Give Notice' of your marriage or civil partnership – this is a crucial legal step that must be completed for your ceremony to go ahead.

'Giving Notice' involves a face-to-face appointment at the Register Office in the district where each of you lives (which might be a different county to where your venue is).

At the appointment, you'll need to bring documents proving your identity, nationality and residence. The fee for giving notice is currently £42 per person in England.

We recommend giving notice around 6 months before the big day (but never leave it later than 29 days before)! If one or both of you live outside England and Wales, or you're not a British citizen, additional steps and documents may be needed – your registrar will be able to advise you.

STEP 3: PLANNING YOUR CEREMONY

Once you've given notice, the registrar team conducting your ceremony will receive confirmation, and you'll receive a Ceremony Pack to help you create your ideal ceremony script.

This is your moment to add personal touches. Civil ceremonies can't include religious content, but there's still plenty of room for creativity and to inject your personality. Here are a few ideas to personalise your ceremony:

Write your own vows. Express your love in your own words. Whether romantic, light-hearted or poetic, personal vows can be incredibly moving.



Choose meaningful readings. Ask a loved one to read a poem or passage that is meaningful to you both. You can choose from the many options online or ask a guest to write some special words just for the two of you.

Incorporate a unity ritual. From candle lighting to planting a tree together, symbolic gestures can create powerful memories.

Select your own music. For walking down the aisle, signing the register and for your exit as newlyweds, choose songs that reflect your style, personality and your relationship story.



seanelliottphotography.co.uk

Theme it your way. Whether you're going rustic, vintage, coastal or colourful, let your registrar know. Some will happily join in the spirit of the day!

Once you've chosen your readings, vows, and any extras, return your script to the registrar. One of the team will call to run through the ceremony with you and answer any questions. This is also when your final ceremony fee is due. Costs vary by district and date but typically range from £550 to £850.

STEP 4: ON THE DAY

Your registrars will arrive around 30 minutes before the ceremony to meet each of you separately, and privately, away from your guests. They'll check your details, calm any last-minute nerves, and make sure everything is ready. You will not need any legal documents with you on the day as everything has already been finalised.

Your photographer and videographer can discreetly capture the ceremony – except the signing of the Marriage Schedule, which remains private under data protection rules. Don't worry, your registrar will help stage a beautiful mock signing for those all-important photos!

DON'T FORGET TO:

Bring printed copies of your vows or readings – why not have them mounted as keepsakes?

Arrange your ceremony music in advance with your venue or musician.

Be on time – registrars may have other ceremonies to attend.

STEP 5: SIGNING THE MARRIAGE SCHEDULE

Since May 2021, the traditional handwritten register has been replaced with a more secure electronic system. You'll now sign a one-page Marriage Schedule, which allows up to four parents to be named on the record. This can include natural, adoptive and stepparents, living or deceased.

You sign the Schedule in the name you held before the marriage (i.e. your maiden name). Your two witnesses also sign (responsible adults, over 16 years of age). Your marriage certificate will be posted to you after your big day.

RELAX AND CELEBRATE

From that very first phone call to the final 'I do', your registrar team is there to ensure your ceremony runs smoothly. With the legalities taken care of, you're free to enjoy a happy, heartfelt ceremony that's tailored to you both – the start of your married life together!

With thanks to the
Northumberland Registration Team

www.mynorthumberlandwedding.co.uk



LOUGH HOUSE FARM

Claire McGowan Photography

NOTES

WEDDING DATE:

VENUE & CONTACT DETAILS:

TIME OF CEREMONY:

REGISTRARS CONTACT DETAILS:

WITNESSES:

CEREMONY MUSIC:



NORTHUMBERLAND

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your Wedding Day*

Whether you are looking for an idyllic castle along the spectacular coastline or an opulent stately home in the tranquillity of the countryside, picturesque Northumberland has something for everyone.



Carm Patrick Photography



Visit our website to see over 70 of our stunning licensed premises or choose from our own venues, Hexham House and Morpeth Town Hall.

At Northumberland Registration Service, we pride ourselves on delivering a unique and personal service to every couple who chooses to marry in our stunning County. We will be with you every step of the way from taking your booking, explaining the legalities, planning and personalising your ceremony before legally marrying you at your perfect Northumberland venue. Have the memorable, bespoke ceremony you have always dreamt of.

Contact our friendly ceremony coordination team:

Telephone: **01665 602870** Email: alnwickreg@northumberland.gov.uk

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www.mynorthumberlandwedding.co.uk

DIRECTORY OF MAIN REGISTER OFFICES

in the North East & Yorkshire

If you are having a civil marriage ceremony, (not a church or celebrant-led service), once you have chosen your venue, it's time to book a registrar. Your venue will be able to give you the telephone number of the Local Authority Registrar Team that covers the venue.

These registrars will guide you through the process of booking a registrar to conduct your ceremony and where you need to give legal notice of your intention to marry. You 'give notice' to the registrars in the district where you live - the district (council) you pay your council tax to.

These are the main Registrars Offices in our region. You can also use the government website www.gov.uk/register-offices to find the correct office, just enter a postcode.

♥ NORTH YORKSHIRE

Central contact:

Tel: 01609 780 780

Email: ceremonies@northyorks.gov.uk

Web: www.northyorks.gov.uk

Offices also in Harrogate, Northallerton, Scarborough, Skipton, Malton, Richmond, Selby, Whitby

♥ YORK

York Register Office,
56 Bootham,
York, YO30 7DA

Tel: 01904 553 190

Email: ceremonies@york.gov.uk

Web: www.york.gov.uk

♥ EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

Beverley Registration Office,
Walkergate House,
67 Walkergate,
Beverley, HU17 9BP

Tel: 01482 393 600

Email: registration.service@eastriding.gov.uk

Web: www.eastridingceremonies.co.uk

Offices also in Beverley, Bridlington,
Cottingham, Goole, Pocklington

♥ WEST YORKSHIRE

Leeds Register Office,
Merrion House,
Marrion Way,
Leeds, LS2 8BB

Tel: 0113 222 4408

Email: register.headoffice@leeds.gov.uk

Web: www.leeds.gov.uk

Offices also in Calderdale, Pontefract,
Wakefield, Bradford, Huddersfeld

♥ SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Civic Office,
Waterdale,
Doncaster, DN1 3BU

Tel: 01302 735 222

Email: registrars@doncaster.gov.uk

Web: www.doncaster.gov.uk

Offices also in Mexborough,
Rotherham, Sheffield

♥ NORTHUMBERLAND

Alnwick Register Office,
27 Fenkle Street,
Alnwick,
Northumberland, NE66 1HW
Tel: 01665 602 870
Email: alnwickreg@northumberland.gov.uk
Web: www.mynorthumberlandwedding.co.uk
Offices also in Morpeth, Hexham

♥ NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Civic Centre,
Barras Bridge,
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8PS
Tel: 0191 278 7878
Email: registrars@newcastle.gov.uk
Web: www.newcastle.gov.uk

♥ NORTH TYNESIDE

Maritime Chambers,
1 Howard Street,
North Shields, NE30 1LZ
Tel: 0191 643 6164
Email: registrars@northtyneside.gov.uk
Web: www.northtyneside.gov.uk

♥ SOUTH TYNESIDE

The Register Office,
10 Broughton Road,
South Shields, NE33 2RN
Tel: 0191 424 6350
Email: registrars@southtyneside.gov.uk
Web: www.southtyneside.gov.uk

♥ GATESHEAD

Civic Centre,
Regent Street,
Gateshead, NE8 1HH
Tel: 0191 433 3000
Email: ceremonies@gateshead.gov.uk
Web: www.gateshead.gov.uk

♥ SUNDERLAND

Civic Centre,
Sunderland, SR2 7DN
Tel: 0191 520 5553
Email: registrars@sunderland.gov.uk
Web: www.sunderland.gov.uk

♥ DURHAM

The Register Office,
Aykely Heads House,
Aykley Heads,
County Durham, DH1 5TS
Tel: 03000 266 000
Email: aykleyheadshouseregisteroffice@durham.gov.uk
Web: www.durham.gov.uk
Offices also in Bishop Auckland, Barnard Castle

♥ REDCAR & CLEVELAND

Civic Centre,
Ridley Street,
Redcar, TS10 1TD
Tel: 01642 444 440
Email: registrars@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk
Web: www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

♥ MIDDLESBROUGH

Town Hall,
Albert Road,
Middlesbrough, TS1 2PA
Tel: 01642 729 004
Email: register@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Web: www.middlesbrough.gov.uk



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- Max 140 Day & 180 Evening Guests

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A TWO-NIGHT WEDDING

Experience

It's been months, or even years in the planning and your wedding day is finally here! The highly anticipated moment when you marry the love of your life in front of your favourite people and celebrate all together. Then, in the blink of an eye, it has passed. The whole day just whizzing by in a whirl of getting ready, photographs, emotions, trying to speak to every guest, eating, drinking, dancing, and feeling pulled in every direction. Squeezing all of your celebrations into a single day can feel like a very rushed experience and can leave you feeling somewhat overwhelmed: enter the two-night wedding!

A two-night or 'weekend wedding' gives you both the luxury of spending quality time with the people you love, relaxing rather than rushing with more time to absorb the magical atmosphere.

Lynn, Group Sales & Marketing Manager for Unveiled Venues, explains why a two-night wedding is becoming increasingly popular.

"One of the most special things about a two-night wedding is the time you gain either side of the big day. Rather than your wedding day ending in a blur, couples and guests are invited to slow down and enjoy the unforgettable experience together. With a two-night wedding at exclusive-use Ellingham Hall, your wedding will feel less like a single event and more like a meaningful celebration shared over days, allowing memories to unfold naturally.



The night before your wedding is perfect for easing into celebrations. Many couples choose to welcome their friends and family with relaxed evening dining in the Hall or a laid-back BBQ outdoors.

It's a chance to shake off travel, reconnect with loved ones, and set the tone for the exciting days ahead. With space to roam and the beautiful Northumberland countryside all around, guests can catch up, explore the grounds, and settle in at their own pace. Lawn games such as giant Jenga or croquet add a playful touch, while drinks on the Chapel Terrace next to our cosy fire pit creates a warm, informal atmosphere as the evening draws in.



The celebrations don't have to end once the wedding day is over. The following morning, a hearty Ellingham breakfast offers guests a chance to reconnect and reflect, before late morning farewells. There's no rush - just great food, shared stories from the big day, and the calm of waking up somewhere special. Some couples reflect with a gentle walk around the grounds, whilst others simply enjoy little moments of laughter, bringing a truly memorable wedding experience to a calm and joyful close."



Over the past 17 years, Ellingham Hall has become renowned for its unforgettable two-night weddings. Get in touch for a viewing appointment and see for yourself how relaxed your wedding days could be.

A WEDDING PLANNER SINCE 1995

Expert advice

Working in the Wedding Industry since 1995, Dawn Marie, of Dawn Marie Wedding & Event Design, is the longest established, independent wedding planner in our region with over 30 years of experience. Dawn has successfully helped almost 600 couples find their perfect venue and suppliers, as well as planning and coordinating all elements of their day from keeping everything on time to announcing the happy couple in to dine!



Having worked with the best suppliers, venues and registrars in the North East for so long, Dawn Marie knows the industry inside out and her reputation for the highest standards in professionalism, attention to detail and patience along with her sense of humour make her the perfect planner. Here is some of Dawn's expert advice to help couples navigate through the wedding planning process...

"The first decision you have is about what kind of marriage ceremony suits you both. You can choose a church service, a civil marriage ceremony or a celebrant-led service. A church service is a legally binding, religious service and follows certain rules such as giving official notice, having an authorised officiant, and holding the service between the hours of 8am and 6pm.

A civil marriage is also legally binding but is secular (no religious elements: music, words or references). There are still regulations which need to be followed but they are more relaxed than in a church, see the 'Easy Guide for Civil Marriages' on pages 2 and 3 for full details. There is also more scope to personalise your day by writing your own vows, including personal readings, and non-religious music and rituals.

A celebrant-led service is not legally binding so you will need a separate, legal ceremony to make the marriage official (which can be held in your local registry office before hand). As this is not a recognised legal ceremony, there are no rules to follow: religious or non-religious, midday or midnight, inside or outside, the choice is yours. Couples usually engage a professional celebrant to write and conduct the ceremony, but you could opt for a confident family member or friend to perform the task.

Whichever service is right for you both will help with the next, very important decision: your wedding venue. If you choose to marry in your local or family Church, look for a venue within a reasonable travelling distance. No one wants to spend hours travelling on their wedding day. If a Civil Ceremony is for you, the venue will need to be licensed, however, if a Celebrant-led ceremony is right for you both, you can look at any venue, marquee site or even hosting your day at home.



Next, think about what other factors are important: on-site accommodation, exclusive-use (only your wedding guests onsite), exclusive wedding use (one-wedding policy but where other guests may be using the venue such as a hotel, or golf club house) and travel time for the majority of your guests. These factors will all help you narrow down the suitable venues to view.

Once your venue is booked, start to look around for the best suppliers. The best florists, cake makers, photographers, entertainers etc. get booked up years in advance but all will take bookings on basic information e.g. table centres for approximately 10 round tables and 4 bridesmaids' bouquets or a cake to serve

around 80 day-guests. They don't need finer details – flower type, colours, cake flavours – until nearer the event. Couples don't realise you can reserve suppliers time without knowing the full details of your day and I have seen many couples disappointed because of this.



I offer a 2-hour 'power consultation' with couples to discuss all aspects of your wedding: venue, suppliers, the running order / flow of events, and to help build a realistic timing schedule so nothing is rushed and there are no 'gaps'. It is a really popular service and can help couples massively in planning their perfect day.

Visit lots of good quality wedding fairs. Suppliers and venues often have special offers available if you book at, or just after, a wedding fair. At my Elite Wedding Events, I like to showcase smaller, local companies that are often more quirky and can offer a really personal touch. Before booking, **ALWAYS** confirm special deals, discounts and full descriptions of what you have agreed, with prices, in writing. This is invaluable, especially if your wedding is 2 or 3 years away.

Take help when offered. As long as you trust them, people contributing to your day in lieu of a present can create very personal touches and save you a fortune. Many couples already have an established home together before they get married, and guests can find it difficult to choose a wedding gift; not everyone is comfortable giving cash. Asking guests to help with your day not only helps you but can also save a lot of 'what do I get them' gift stress for your guests. So, the aunty who wants to make your cake, the friend who loves making stationery, the neighbour who has a beautiful car...accept the help.

If you can, view your venue at the time you are getting married – height of summer, mid-autumn, depths of winter. This will help with all sorts of things such as how the gardens look, which areas need more decoration, where outside drinks receptions could be, good places for photographs...even if your venue could be snowbound!

Finally, **CHECK AND DOUBLE CHECK**. This is where a good planner will be invaluable. My 'Final Check' service includes contacting all suppliers to ensure they have the right timings, names, delivery addresses, quantities, sizes, special request information, etc, etc. **ALWAYS** get a mobile/emergency number for suppliers in case of any difficulties.

Once done, sit back, relax and trust that you have done everything possible to make your day fantastic!"

WHAT COUPLES SAY

We cannot recommend Dawn highly enough! From our very first meeting, where she spent over two hours going through every detail and offering ideas we hadn't even thought of, we knew we were in great hands. Throughout the entire planning process, she was incredibly organised, communicative, and thoughtful. On the day itself, we didn't have to worry about anything, Dawn created such a calm, stress-free experience, and we genuinely wouldn't change a single thing. We're so grateful for everything she did for us. Thanks to Dawn, we had the absolute best day of our lives.

Jamie and
Jonathan,
June 2025



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— A VENUE FOR ALL SEASONS —

Every season offers unique opportunities for weddings, from blooming spring gardens to the cosy warmth of winter celebrations, and, at Scarborough Spa, we have locations to suit every time of the year.



SPRING celebrates new beginnings with a focus on soft light and blooming flowers. Our veranda looks out upon the North Sea and presents perfect views of the building whilst capturing the coastline from Cayton Bay to Scarborough Castle. You are surrounded by green cliffs and classic Victorian planters filled with colourful flowers leading up the stairs towards the Italian Gardens.



SUMMER weddings and our bandstand go perfectly hand in hand; the ideal spot for a ceremony or relaxing in deck chairs for fabulous, happy photographs! Under warm skies and starry nights, this dreamy area dates to 1858 with a special feel that you are part of a rich history. You are dancing with your partner in the same space lovers danced 150 years ago. Reception drinks and canapés will be served whilst your favourite music is playing; it simply doesn't get any better! The Sun Court suite, situated very close to the bandstand, is ideally placed to dine and dance whilst looking out to sea.



AUTUMN provides a rich, cosy vibe with earthy tones of orange, red, and gold, and crisp air that enhances both indoor and outdoor events. The Platinum Lounge is an intimate indoor ceremony option with its own private bar and quaint outdoor seating area, all with breathtaking sea views. The Victorian features throughout the whole of the Spa twin perfectly with an autumnal vibe – a gloomy day looks otherworldly in photos with the building in the backdrop.



WINTER weddings provide a magical, intimate atmosphere for relaxed celebrations. There is a warm glow surrounding the Spa at wintertime; the Spa Bridge built in 1827, lights up the way towards our unique venue. Twinkly fairy lights cover the Sun Court both outside and inside creating a soft, flickering, romantic setting. When the tide is in, the colourful lights from the arcades reflect in the sea creating a beautiful, unique scene for your wedding. Guest comfort is paramount, with provisions for warmth, indoor coat storage, and hot beverages like mulled wine and hot chocolates topped with marshmallows and cream!

We would love to show you around at any time of the year @scarboroughspa

MARRIAGE READINGS

Your marriage ceremony should be unique to you both: personal, meaningful and emotional. Writing your own vows and including music that instantly conjures up happy memories for you both, are perfect ways to help create a completely unique marriage ceremony.

To go that extra step, inviting a guest, or guests, to read during your ceremony can bring a whole new wave of emotion. Readings can evoke tears (of happiness!), waves of remembrance for absent friends, knowing nods and winks amongst guests as well as roars of laughter! Selecting the right emotion-inducing words for a family member to read or a light-hearted look at marriage for your best friend to recite, adds a really personal touch.

Readings can be romantic or funny; chosen from the vast array online or extracted from your favourite films, songs or books; or, they can be written just for you by a trusted guest. The only legal requirement is that they must not have any religious content e.g. extracts from the bible or words used to celebrate religious beliefs cannot be used. Non-religious readings that include words such as 'angel' and 'heaven' may be used but if you are in any doubt, consult with your Registrar.

Here are some of our favourite readings that you could easily adapt to suit your own love story:

THE PRINCESS BRIDE

by William Goldman

Do I love you?

If your love were a grain of sand,
mine would be a universe of beaches...
I have stayed these years in my hovel
because of you.

I have taught myself languages because of you.

I have made my body strong because I thought
you might be pleased by a strong body.
I have lived my life with only the prayer that some
sudden dawn you might glance in my direction.

I have not known a moment in years when the
sight of you did not send my heart careening
against my rib cage.
I have not known a night when your
visage did not accompany me to sleep.

There has not been a morning when you
did not flutter behind my waking eyelids...
You have done it by being yourself.
Perhaps that is what being a friend means,
after all.

THE ALCHEMIST

by Paula Coelho

When he looked into her eyes, he learned the
most important part of the language that all the
world spoke — the language that everyone on
earth was capable of understanding in their heart.
It was love.

Something older than humanity, more ancient
than the desert. What the boy felt at that moment
was that he was in the presence of the only
woman in his life, and that, with no need for
words, she recognized the same thing.

Because when you know the language, it's easy
to understand that someone in the world awaits
you, whether it's in the middle of the desert or
in some great city. And when two such people
encounter each other, the past and the future
become unimportant.

There is only that moment, and the incredible
certainty that everything under the sun has been
written by one hand only. It is the hand that
evokes love, and creates a twin soul for every
person in the world. Without such love, one's
dreams would have no meaning.

MARRIAGE READINGS

A LOVELY LOVE STORY

by Edward Monkton

The fierce Dinosaur was trapped inside his cage of ice. Although it was cold he was happy in there. It was, after all, his cage.

Then along came the Lovely Other Dinosaur. The Lovely Other Dinosaur melted the Dinosaur's cage with kind words and loving thoughts.

I like this Dinosaur thought the Lovely Other Dinosaur.

Although he is fierce he is also tender and he is funny. He is also quite clever though I will not tell him this for now.

I like this Lovely Other Dinosaur, thought the Dinosaur. She is beautiful and she is different and she smells so nice. She is also a free spirit which is a quality I much admire in a dinosaur.

But he can be so distant and so peculiar at times, thought the Lovely Other Dinosaur.

He is also overly fond of things.

Are all dinosaurs so overly fond of things?

But her mind skips from here to there so quickly thought the Dinosaur. She is also uncommonly keen on shopping.

Are all Lovely Other Dinosaurs so uncommonly keen on shopping?

I will forgive his peculiarity and his concern for things, thought the Lovely Other Dinosaur. For they are part of what makes him a richly charactered individual.

I will forgive her skipping mind and her fondness for shopping, thought the Dinosaur. For she fills our life with beautiful thoughts and wonderful surprises. Besides, I am not unkeen on shopping either.

Now the Dinosaur and the Lovely Other Dinosaur are old.

Look at them.

Together they stand on the hill telling each other stories and feeling the warmth of the sun on their backs.

And that, my friends, is how it is with love.

Let us all be Dinosaurs and Lovely Other Dinosaurs together.

For the sun is warm.

And the world is a beautiful place.

HOW FALLING IN LOVE IS LIKE OWNING A DOG

by Taylor Mali

First of all, it's a big responsibility, especially in a city like (insert your city). So think long and hard before deciding on love.

On the other hand, love gives you a sense of security: when you're walking down the street late at night and you have a leash on love ain't no one going to mess with you. Because crooks and muggers think love is unpredictable.

Who knows what love could do in its own defence?

On cold winter nights, love is warm. It lies between you and lives and breathes and makes funny noises.

Love wakes you up all hours of the night with its needs. It needs to be fed so it will grow and stay healthy.

Love doesn't like being left alone for long. But come home and love is always happy to see you. It may break a few things accidentally in its passion for life, but you can never be mad at love for long.

Is love good all the time? No! No! Love can be bad. Bad, love, bad! Very bad love.

Love makes messes.

Love leaves you little surprises here and there.

Love needs lots of cleaning up after.

Sometimes you just want to get love fixed.

Sometimes you want to roll up a piece of newspaper and swat love on the nose, not so much to cause pain, just to let love know 'Don't you ever do that again!'

Sometimes love just wants to go out for a nice long walk. Because love loves exercise. It will run you around the block and leave you panting, breathless. Pull you in different directions at once, or wind itself around and around you until you're all wound up and you cannot move.

But love makes you meet people wherever you go. People who have nothing in common but love stop and talk to each other on the street.

Throw things away and love will bring them back, again, and again, and again.

But most of all, love needs love, lots of it.

And in return, love loves you and never stops.

MARRIAGE READINGS

HE NEVER LEAVES THE SEAT UP

by Pam Ayres

He never leaves the seat up
Or wet towels upon the floor
The toothpaste has the lid on
And he always shuts the door!

She's very clean and tidy
Though she may sometimes delude
Leave your things out at your peril
In a second they'll have moved!

He's a very active person
As are all his next of kin
Where as she likes lazy days
He'll still drag her to the gym!

He romances her and dines her
Home cooked dinners and the like
He even knows her favourite food
And spoils her day and night!

She's thoughtful when he looks at her
A smile upon his face
Will he look that good in 50 years
When his dentures aren't in place?!

He says he loves her figure
And her mental prowess too
But when gravity takes her over
Will she charm with her IQ?

She says she loves his kindness
And his patience is a must
And of course she thinks he's handsome
Which in her eyes is a plus!

They're both not wholly perfect
But who are we to judge
He can be pig headed
Where as she won't even budge!

All that said and done
They love the time they spent together
And I hope as I'm sure you do
That this fine day will last forever.

He'll be more than just her husband
He'll also be her friend
And she'll be more than just his wife
She's be his soul mate 'till the end.

YES I'LL MARRY YOU

by Pam Ayres

Yes, I'll marry you, my dear.
And here's the reason why.
So I can push you out of bed
When the baby starts to cry.
And if we hear a knocking
And it's creepy and it's late,
I hand you the torch you see,
And you investigate.

Yes I'll marry you, my dear,
You may not apprehend it,
But when the tumble-drier goes
It's you that has to mend it.
You have to face the neighbour
Should our Labrador attack him,
And if a drunkard fondles me
It's you that has to whack him.

Yes, I'll marry you,
You're virile and you're lean,
My house is like a pigsty
You can help to keep it clean.
That sexy little dinner
Which you served by candlelight,
As I do chipolatas,
You can cook it every night!!!

It's you who has to work the drill
And put up curtain track,
And when I've got PMT it's you who gets the flak,
I do see great advantages,
But none of them for you,
And so before you see the light,
I DO, I DO, I DO!!!

MARRIAGE READINGS

THE AMBER SPYGLASS

by Philip Pullman

I will love you forever; whatever happens. Till I die and after I die, and when I find my way out of the land of the dead, I'll drift about forever, all my atoms, till I find you again...

I'll be looking for you, every moment, every single moment. And when we do find each other again, we'll cling together so tight that nothing and no one'll ever tear us apart.

Every atom of me and every atom of you... we'll live in birds and flowers and dragonflies and pine trees and in clouds and in those little specks of light you see floating in sunbeams...

And when they use our atoms to make new lives, they won't just be able to take one, they'll have to take two, one of you and one of me, we'll be joined so tight...

THE ONE

by Cheryl Barclay

When the one whose hand you're holding,
Is the one who holds your heart.

When the one whose eyes you gaze into,
Gives your hopes and dreams their start.

When the one you think of first and last,
Is the one who holds you tight.

And the things you plan together,
Makes the whole world seem just right.

When the one whom you believe in,
Puts their faith and trust in you,
You've found the one and only love,
You'll share the whole life through.

I'LL BE THERE FOR YOU

by Louise Cuddon

I'll be there my darling, through thick
and through thin

When your mind's in a mess and your
head's in a spin

When your plane's been delayed, and you've
missed the last train

When life is just threatening to drive you insane.

When your thrilling whodunit has lost its last page

When somebody tells you, you're
looking your age

When your coffee's too cool, and your wine
is too warm

When the forecast said "Fine", but you're
out in a storm.

When your quick break hotel, turns into a slum
And your holiday photos show only your thumb
When you park for five minutes in a resident's bay
And return to discover you've been towed away.

When the jeans that you bought in
hope or in haste

Just stick on your hips and don't reach
round your waist

When the food you most like brings you out
in red rashes

When as soon as you boot up the bloody
thing crashes.

So my darling, my sweetheart, my dear...

When you break a rule, when you act the fool
When you've got the flu, when you're in a stew
When you're last in the queue, don't feel blue

'cause I'm telling you, I'll be there.

RELATIVITY

by Albert Einstein

Gravitation cannot be held responsible for people falling in love. How on earth can you explain in terms of chemistry and physics so important a biological phenomenon as first love? Put your hand on a stove for a minute and it seems like an hour. Sit with that special girl for an hour and it seems like a minute.

That's relativity.

WEDDING CELEBRANTS

— Gemma Jay —

Gemma Jay, North East Celebrant, has been in the weddings and events industry for almost 2 decades. Gemma has a reputation for professionalism but loves to bring a dose of fun – and sometimes mischief - to the proceedings!



“My focus is on creating ceremonies that feel natural, personal and genuinely enjoyable, for couples and their guests. Moments that invite laughter, emotion and connection, with just the right balance of warmth, structure and fun – and occasionally a gentle Nerf gun reminder to stay present and keep the phones tucked away!

I bring a calm, friendly confidence to every ceremony. I understand the importance of timing, flow and holding the room, whilst still allowing each couple’s personality to shine through.

Every ceremony I write is thoughtfully crafted and carefully delivered. It is tailored to reflect the people at its heart - their story, their values, and the atmosphere they want to create on the day.

Your ceremony should be felt, remembered and enjoyed; it should be fun, relaxed and all about you.”

— Melody Diamond —

Melody, an award-winning independent celebrant, has been working in the wedding industry for over a decade. She specialises in writing and conducting wedding ceremonies, providing a friendly and attentive service with bags of Yorkshire charm!



“I love getting to know my couples! Spending quality time with them, understanding their love stories and what marriage means to them helps me create a bespoke and personal wedding script that is meaningful, memorable and totally reflective of their personalities.

On their wedding day, couples know there will be a friendly, familiar face who they know and trust, guiding them through their unique ceremony.

There are no rules or restrictions on time, place or content, meaning you have the opportunity to be creative – which is great. Want to incorporate your values and beliefs, sing a song, play a game, take a shot of your favourite tippie - let’s do it! You can even have your dog’s paw print as your witness!

Forget stuffy, formal, templated ceremonies and make sure your ceremony is the best ceremony anyone has ever been to; full of love, laughter and memorable moments!”

MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Rituals

Marriage ceremony rituals often symbolise deep cultural and spiritual traditions that mark the beginning of a new chapter in a couple's life. By incorporating rituals into your ceremony, you can create a deeply personal and meaningful experience.

Popular rituals symbolise unity, commitment, or new beginnings. You will already be familiar with the exchange of vows, expressing love and promises for the future, and the exchanging of rings which symbolises eternal love and commitment. These form the basis of most marriage ceremonies. But then there are other lesser known rituals like the Unity Candle Ceremony, Hand-fasting, the Sand Ceremony and the Quaich Ceremony.

UNITY CANDLE CEREMONY

This represents the merging of two individuals into one life. A couple each light a separate candle and together, light a larger 'unity' candle. Representing the union between the couple and their families, words can be added or names of children included to make the ceremony really personal.

HAND-FASTING

This is where the couple's hands are tied together, and where the phrase 'tying the knot' is believed to originate. An ancient Celtic tradition, a couple stand face-to-face while their hands are tied together with ribbon, cord, cloth or even some leftover material from the wedding gown or outfit.



As their hands are bound, the couple may exchange vows or enjoy a special piece of music to signify they are now bound together.

SAND CEREMONY

This can involve the couple as well as children. Each person pours sand from their own container into one larger bottle or box, symbolising the combining of lives, hopes, dreams and ambitions into one as the sand grains can't be separated.

The sand can be different colours or, and this can make it even more personal, gathered from your favourite beaches.



A QUAICH CUP

Pronounced 'Kwek', a Quaich cup is a two-handled cup which historically demonstrates trust on the part of both giver and receiver as, if drinking from the same cup, you couldn't be poisoned! Also known as a 'love cup', it is symbolic of love, peace, sharing and trust between a couple. You can choose to drink anything from the Quaich, perhaps the cocktail you drank on your first date, your favourite champagne, something non-alcoholic or the more traditional tippie of whisky.

You can also include the Quaich in other parts of your day such as during your speeches or before your first dance. You can take a handle each and drink your first Toast together or get the dancing off to a rowdy start!

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REAL WEDDING

Perfection on a budget

Wendy and Andrew were married at Bootham Registry Office, York in October 2025, followed by a reception at Ambiente restaurant in Fossgate, York.



Andrew tells us about their day...

"We stayed in York with 30 of our family and closest friends. The house was divided into two; girls got ready on one side and the boys on the other. As the girls were going to take a little longer to get ready, I went with the best men to enjoy the obligatory pre-wedding pint at a local pub where we were unexpectedly joined by half the wedding crew - which was a lovely surprise! From there we walked up to the venue and stylishly, the girls arrived soon after by car.

We were met by our very last-minute photographer, Charlotte Atkinson, as our original photographer had let us down only two days before. Charlotte stepped in saving the day and was a consummate professional throughout!



THE CEREMONY

The ceremony was fantastic. Both of us were so overcome with emotion that we giggled all the way through, much to our own amusement, resulting in my inability to say my vows correctly. The whole thing was amazing from start to end.

PHOTOGRAPHS

We had some of the photos in the Bootham grounds. Everyone was on form for this, especially Charlotte who, having never met anyone before, was on the ball and managed to get everyone into position for all the photos.

We walked from the registry office to the restaurant taking photos in various parts of York. We truly felt like celebrities as we were congratulated by hundreds of people who walked past us. This was a magical moment for us both. We never crave attention, but it truly felt amazing having people wish us congratulations as we went along!



TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS

We didn't really do speeches, but the best man provided some kind words and entertainment as he regaled our guests with some funny stories of how we all met!

Because we had travelled from out of the area for the wedding, we didn't have a cake for the day itself but we did have a huge party for over 100 people when we arrived back home and had a delicious two-tier cake made for this celebration; one vanilla sponge layer and one of carrot cake. It was sublime!

We also saved our first dance for this party. We danced to greet our guests to the song 'Tequila'. This was so much fun and set the tone for a fabulous party.

SPECIAL TOUCHES

Because we were doing everything ourselves on a £5k budget, we bought second hand flowers from Vinted for the bridal party, and dried flowers for the buttonholes from Etsy. All the table decorations and flowers were designed and made by us and the whole vibe was very boho and eclectic. We had small bottles of tequila for our guests along with moustaches, Mexican hats and glasses which added a lot of fun to our reception.



FAVOURITE MOMENTS

For me, the whole weekend away was an overall favourite moment. Arriving at our accommodation with our family and best friends, taking over a local pub on the first night and the wedding day itself, which was just amazing from start to finish! Highlights would be how happy and giddy we were throughout the ceremony, walking hand in hand through York, catching candid moments on camera, and ending our wedding evening in a karaoke bar which was great fun and such a brilliant finale to our incredible day.

TOP TIPS

Set a realistic budget and track your spending. Our whole wedding cost under £5k which included accommodation for our wedding guests.

Have the day you both want and don't be pressured into anything. We had the most wonderful wedding in York on a small budget and created some unforgettable moments. Our friends and family all said that it was one of the best weddings they'd been to. Our main focus was to have a relaxed, fun day with no pressure and stress and we absolutely achieved that!



OUTFITS

Wendy's unusual and stunning taffeta dress was purchased online from Needle and Thread at a total cost of £220. The bridesmaids were dressed in Maya embellished taffeta knee length dresses in green lily. I wore a suit from Next and had it altered to fit perfectly by a local seamstress, Abbie, at Perfect Fit.



CHARLOTTE ATKINSON PHOTOGRAPHY

— WEDDING VIDEOGRAPHY —

Telling your love story

Based in the North East of England, Stacey of Silver Fern Films creates heartfelt wedding films that capture genuine moments, natural emotions and the unique story behind every celebration. So, what makes a great wedding video? Let Stacey explain...

"A wedding film isn't just a sequence of beautiful shots edited to music. It's a unique story that captures the true spirit of a couple's day and recreates those emotions every time you press play. The way a groom exhales just before turning around. The laughter rippling through the room during speeches. The stillness after a kiss. These are the subtle threads that weave together a film that is not just watched but felt.



As a videographer, my role is not merely to provide you with a highlight reel of events. It is to capture the rhythm of your day - the gentle pace of the morning, the hush of anticipation before the ceremony and the joyful chaos of the dance floor. The experience, observation, and instinct of a skilled videographer will capture the raw emotion in every part of the proceedings.

A fleeting glance can convey more meaning than a posed shot ever could, and these are the moments I look for in every wedding. Of course, every couple's story is unique. Some films feel like quiet poems - soft, romantic and full of stillness. Others are vibrant montages of movement and laughter. The magic lies in authentically capturing the way each wedding day feels.



Years from now, when couples re-watch their wedding film, it won't be the décor or the cake they remember, it's the mix of emotions they felt on the day. The trembling voice during their vows, the laughter shared among guests, the nerves before the first dance. These are the moments I look for because the best wedding films aren't about perfection; they're about honesty and emotion. When you watch them years later, that's what brings the day back to life - not as a highlight reel, but as the story of two people in love."





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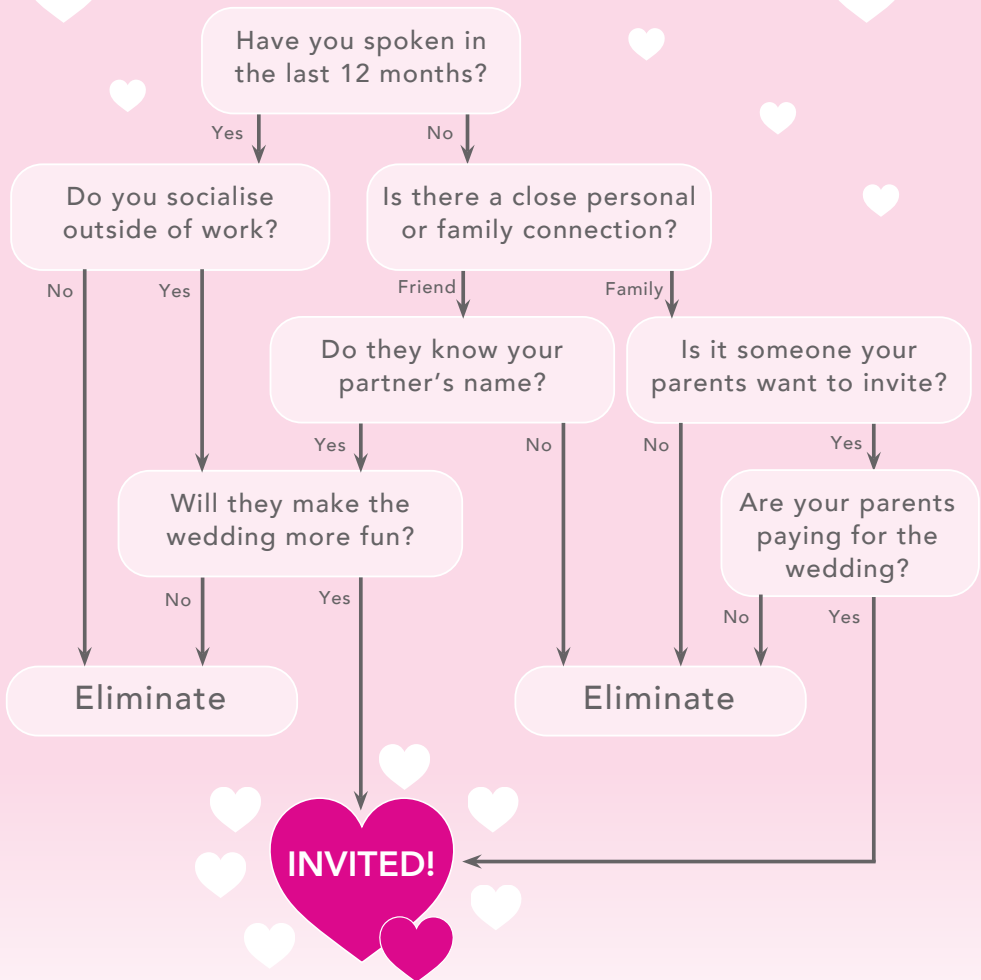


GUEST LIST

Who should you invite?

Is your guest list getting out of hand? Are parents trying to add their friends you don't even know, or workmates asking to bring a plus one? This is your wedding; the last thing you want is to look around and only recognise half of your guests!

Try this helpful tool to help keep that list trim.



Thanks to @weddingfayresyorkshire for the inspiration

WEDDING FAVOURS

The tradition of giving guests a gift, or favour, to remember your wedding day by, has been around for hundreds of years. One of the first references to handing out wedding favours is back in 16th century England when couples would often give love knots made of lace and ribbon to symbolise their connection in love. A wedding was seen as a lucky occasion and it was believed that by giving guests something to take home, the happy couple were sharing their good fortune.

For a long time, a popular favour was five sugared almonds which represented health, wealth, happiness, long life and fertility but let's be honest, how many people actually like sugared almonds! Thankfully, today's couples can be far more creative with their favours. From the practical to the playful, there's a perfect favour for every wedding. Imagine delighting your guests with personalised keepsakes, delectable treats, or fun activities that they'll cherish long after the confetti has settled. Let's explore some inspired alternatives which guests will be sure to take home...



Tea-in-a-tube, a packet of wild flower seeds or bulbs, a succulent plant, a thoughtfully chosen book, wedding festival wristbands, personalised temporary tattoos, DIY s'mores kits or a box of tic-tacs.



For the practical guest, a 'day after survival kit' filled with pain relievers, breath mints, water, and an energy bar is a thoughtful touch. For something with a longer life, consider personalised key rings or shot glasses. For those with a sweet tooth, luxurious chocolates or macaroons, homemade alcoholic miniatures or, combine the practical with the pleasurable, and create chocolate name tags that double as place cards. How about a token for an after-dinner visit from the local ice-cream van!



If you want to add a personal touch, consider a miniature picture frame with a photo of you and your guest or write a thoughtful note in a pretty envelope – a keepsake they'll treasure. You could even get creative with a mini Lego figure designed to look like your guest!



Keep little ones entertained with activity packs filled with crayons, paper and puzzles to keep them occupied during the speeches. Beach balls (outside use only!) bubbles (good for the photographs) an 'eye-spy' challenge card or a treasure hunt / jigsaw-piece treasure hunt to be completed throughout the day. Tried and tested favourites like miniature teddy bears are perfect for cute photo moments, or try disposable cameras to get a unique child's-view take on your wedding!

Remember, favours should reflect your personality, the style of the wedding and your guests. There is no rule that says everyone should get the same favour! So, mix it up, get creative and choose something that will make each guest feel truly special.

— YOUR WEDDING STYLE —

Truly captured

Couples today have more freedom than ever before to truly personalise their wedding day. From the traditional to the alternative, your celebrations should be uniquely and unapologetically 'you'!

Milly Rose Dennison Photography uses a genuine, storytelling approach to perfectly portray your day and has captured an array of wedding styles.

"One couple had their dream gothic wedding with black and purple decorations, a horse-drawn carriage, a stunning historical setting for their ceremony and a drag queen to provide entertainment! They chose black and white images to reflect their distinctive style and document a fantastic day.

I also recently photographed a smaller, intimate wedding at a church with only the couple's children and closest family in attendance.

They celebrated their love in a quiet, relaxed way, with the photos reflecting the importance of their family bond.

My flexible approach as a candid photographer means whatever your day brings, I will be there to quietly capture it in a way that truly shows your individuality and creative wedding style."



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REAL WEDDING

Our perfect venue right on our doorstep

Claire and Chris were married in September 2025 at Spanish City, Whitley Bay.



Both lovers of the Northumbrian coast, one cold Saturday morning whilst out for a walk, they saw the famous Dome of Spanish City shining through the gloomy clouds and decided that was where they would marry.

Claire explains: Chris has always loved being by the sea. Choosing Spanish City as our wedding venue was the easiest decision of the entire planning process. When we stepped into the building on that cold January morning, we were blown away by the stunning architecture inside the Dome. It was beautiful. The view from the wedding space did not disappoint either and provided the perfect backdrop for stunning photographs - including a rainbow over the sea mid-afternoon.

We wanted our day to be as meaningful and personal as possible. Having lost my parents, I wanted to incorporate elements of them both into our day. My dad was a skilled baker and I always knew I would make my own wedding cake. He would have been very proud of the red velvet, Sicilian lemon, and chocolate tiers I created. My mum was an avid gardener who used to craft beautiful floral displays for family weddings. To honour her, I asked my sister and daughter to create my bouquet and the buttonholes for Chris and his best man, and they did a beautiful job.



Because Chris and I come from different parts of the country, we chose to frame a Welsh rugby jersey and a West Bromwich Albion football shirt as part of the seating plan. It was a quirky addition that made an excellent talking point!

We didn't want a formal photographer and instead opted for a QR code that allowed guests to upload all of their images. This was definitely the right decision for us - we have laughed so much while scrolling through them! We now have great, natural photographs of our friends and family enjoying the day, just as we wanted.



I lost count of the number of people who told us it was the best wedding they had ever been to. The combination of a relaxed atmosphere, sensational food and the professionalism of the team at Spanish City ensured our day ran smoothly from the moment I arrived until the last dance of the night.

TOP TIP

Stay true to what you both want and your day will be everything you imagine and more. Plan around what makes you happy. For us, it was the sea, a beautiful venue, and laughter - and that is exactly what we got.



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REAL WEDDING

Just the right amount of grandeur

Georgina and James married in July 2025. Their 2-day celebrations were held at Carlton Towers, North Yorkshire, and their ceremony at Selby Abbey.



When looking for their perfect wedding venue, they wanted somewhere that would exude the right amount of grandeur for a wedding weekend whilst still feeling relaxed and welcoming; somewhere that had everything in one place both for them and their guests. They found all this and more at Carlton Towers!

Georgina explains: We knew we wanted a full wedding weekend in a grand venue with lots of character, a warm relaxed atmosphere, good food, accommodation for us and our wedding party, and somewhere that would work with us, make suggestions, and give us choices to tailor our wedding day. Carlton Towers offered all of this and more. It is just exquisite.



The food and drink offered is delicious. The chefs take such pride in their food. As self-confessed foodies, we love modern twists on English classics, and that is exactly what we had – like the wild mushroom soup which was served with a blue cheese rarebit. Carlton Towers makes their own wine which we happily drank all weekend - it was a bespoke touch we knew we couldn't have anywhere else.

As a venue, Carlton Towers speaks for itself. In fact, the first time one of our parents attended with us to view the venue, he was so taken by it, he fell up the stairs whilst staring at the displays!

It is magnificent, brimming with history, opulence and timelessness. Each room, and bedroom, is one-of-a-kind with bespoke furnishings which gave us, and our guests, the element of constant surprise throughout the weekend. From the vineyard to the Venetian room, Carlton Towers was everything we wanted in a venue. For our guests, it was not just another wedding, but a place where they each took away everlasting memories of their own.



THE NIGHT BEFORE

After our rehearsal at Selby Abbey on the Friday evening, we arrived at Carlton Towers for our champagne supper. It was just the perfect way to start our wedding weekend.

Our wedding was one of the scorching weekends in July 2025, so we were able to start with Carlton Tower's home-made fizz in their adjoining vineyard! This was followed by a glorious 3-course banquet in the Venetian

Room and more of Carlton's home-made wine. The table was decorated lavishly with gold candlesticks and the summer sun setting made our evening appear just magical.

Some of our guests wanted to make speeches to start the weekend, which was lovely and a great opportunity for those other than the traditional speech-makers to say a few words. It suddenly hit us that all of our friends and family were together to celebrate with us in this incredible place; what a great start to our celebrations!

The Friday evening food was absolutely delicious. We had a succulent lemon and thyme roasted chicken supreme which ticked all the boxes. We highly recommend taking up the opportunity to have the full two-course dinner beforehand – it is so good!

All in all, having an evening to settle into our wedding venue was one of the best decisions we made when organising and planning our wedding with Carlton Towers.

TOP TIPS

Choose what is right for you both - it is your day!

Have all the tasting menus your venue offers (but go with an empty stomach!) If you want to make changes to the menus, just ask. Most of the time, things can be changed.

Work with your wedding planning team. Carlton Towers were able to ensure our day was just perfect from a request to cut our cake with a 'something borrowed' sword, to making sure our day ran like clockwork, we never had to worry about anything not being done, or not being perfect.



Book your preferred suppliers early! We had some of our suppliers booked 18 months in advance which meant we had our perfect suppliers for our wedding day. Not only did this help with financial planning, but as everything was taken care of early on, we had time to fully relax in the couple of weeks that led up to our day.



Oh, and choosing the right photographer is everything! Our photographer bent over backwards, quite literally, to take some incredible photos and we both felt so comfortable with him. He knew the venue too which helped.

Your wedding day will fly by; it honestly goes so quickly! We would recommend spending as much time with each other on your wedding day as you can. It's so easy to get swept up in the day.

Photographer: Peter Rollings
rollingsphotography.com



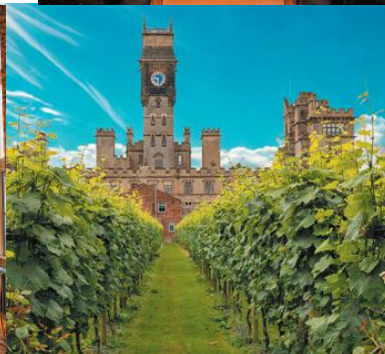
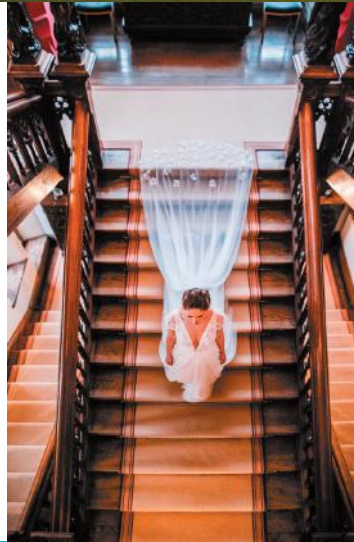
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WEDDING BOUQUETS

Your Floral Masterpiece

Your wedding bouquet is more than just an accessory; it's a floral masterpiece that should complement both your dress and the wedding theme, as well as being a real statement of your style. Whether you want timeless and elegant or bright and bold, choosing your wedding bouquet is so exciting!

Bridal bouquets come in lots of shapes and styles: hand-tied, cascading, round, posy, asymmetrical, fresh flowers, dried, faux - to name a few. To get yours just right, here are a few things to consider...

Think about the time of year you are getting married, seasonality is everything when it comes to your wedding bouquet. Choosing blooms that are in season, and ideally are locally sourced, will ensure freshness and vibrancy and can help keep the cost under control. You could also explore the beauty of dried or faux flowers or combine some good quality faux blooms in with your fresh bouquet.

Match your theme. Is your wedding traditional, modern or rustic? A cluster of loosely tied wild flowers looks great in a rustic barn setting but would not suit a very formal affair where a more structured look would work well.

Would you like to incorporate heirloom pieces, such as a grandmother's brooch, a favourite family flower or a photo memory-charm? A skilled florist can be invaluable in bringing their expertise and creativity to help craft a bouquet that will surpass your expectations and keep it really personal.

Think about the overall colour scheme of the wedding and the exact colour of your dress. White and ivory dresses can look very different with varying colour tones.

Perhaps the most important consideration is the shape and style of your wedding dress. A sleek and minimalist column gown, narrow at the waist and close fitting to the floor, suits long, linear arrangements or small, compact designs to maintain the overall clean aesthetic and draw the eye in.

A wedding ball gown can take a grander bouquet with large, dramatic blooms - smaller flowers will get lost amongst the attention-grabbing skirt.

For a boho or rustic gown, loose, natural bouquets with wildflowers or greenery-focused designs will complement the bohemian vibe perfectly.

Lastly, if the top of your dress has lots of detail, a bouquet which is held lower won't hide the embellishments. Your florist will be able to guide you.



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CONFETTI

How much do I need?

With the current trend for a 'confetti walk', have you thought about how much confetti you will need for maximum effect?



Confetti can be purchased in pre-portioned, individual packets or with cones. This is great for making sure each guest has some, but you may want to fill one large basket for guests to help themselves. This is where it can get confusing as confetti is generally purchased by the litre.

Nichola, from The Dried Petal Company, offers some advice to make sure you get just the right amount.

"First you need to decide what effect you want from your confetti. Larger-sized petals, such as freeze-dried rose or hydrangea petals, will create a 'flutter fall' effect where individual petals will be more visible on your photographs. Because of their size, you get less petals per litre.



Smaller-sized petals, such as larkspur and calendula, will create a 'shower' effect for your photos. You get a larger number of these petals per litre.

Heavier petals, such as preserved rose petals, lavender or jasmine, will fall more like rice when thrown.

To help you work out how much of each type you need, 5 litres of larger-sized petals will generally fill 50 cones or give you 30 to 40 handfuls. For smaller petals, work on 5 litres still filling 50 cones, but providing more like 50 handfuls.



The advantage of presenting your confetti already portioned in cones or envelopes is that you control the portion size and your confetti throw should be quite even. If you present it in a basket or similar for guests to help themselves, you have no control over the amount they will take, and it can vary quite a lot from one person to another. This may result in some guests not having enough and a 'lopsided' confetti photograph. If you are confused about quantities, just get in touch.

Providing ready-made portions is a great way to help balance the very important perfect confetti shot and to help you stay in control of your budget."

@driedpetalcompany



Photo credit @erikograph



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REAL WEDDING

The wedding we wanted with no limits

Amy and Tom were married in September 2025 at Lough House Farm, Morpeth.



Lough House Farm is a DIY wedding venue that allows you to have exactly the day you want.

Amy explains: From the moment we walked into Lough we knew it was the place for us. We both really wanted to have a day that was unique to us and not your typical wedding package from the big corporate venues. Lough was exactly that. We went to view it initially when it was set up for a wedding which really helped to see what could be done in the vast space. The venue is private and solely yours for the day - and with our raucous friends and family, that was definitely required!

The venue itself is so beautiful and rustic. We really loved that we could make this day our own, using our chosen vendors, but with the support of their wedding planner. Planning a DIY wedding can be daunting, but with the guidance from Lough, I never felt unsupported.

With Lough being a 4-day hire, we set up on the Thursday before our Saturday wedding. This really helped to know everything was exactly how we wanted it. We were able to have so many personal touches at the venue that wouldn't have been available in your usual wedding venues including a dog-treat stand, pictures of us everywhere, and a special seat for my grandad who sadly died before the wedding and couldn't be physically there with us.

There is so much space in Lough that there is really no limit to what you can provide. There are also so many places for photographs too including the ICONIC log pile!



TOP TIP

Book the entertainment you want. I booked our sax player as a surprise for my husband who consistently said we didn't need any other entertainment. And not for the first time in our relationship, he was very, very wrong! Spencer Sax was an absolute hit, and months on from our wedding, guests still talk about him - especially me requesting him to play Local Hero in a wedding full of Sunderland fans!



Our favourite part of our wedding was simply being surrounded by all of our favourite people, in a place that we loved, styled how we chose and having the freedom to just relax and enjoy without a care in the world. Lough allowed us to have the wedding we wanted with no limits.

Photographer: leopardprintsphotography.co.uk



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THE FINAL CHAPTER NO ONE TALKS ABOUT

Emily Harding is best known as The Yorkshire Violinist but, in addition to performing beautiful music for your wedding, Emily is also the founder of 'Tune Into Calm,' a supportive podcast designed to ease your busy wedding brain.

In this open letter, Emily talks about what often happens after your big day, the post-wedding blues.

Dear Bride,

I want to share something with you that often gets tucked quietly out of sight. After the wedding day, once the last hug has been given and the final sparkler has fizzled away, many brides experience an unexpected emotional dip. It can feel confusing, especially after such a joyful celebration. I want you to know that this feeling is normal. I can say that with certainty because I have lived it more than once.

Having been married twice, I have felt that strange stillness that arrives after months of planning, imagining and anticipating. During the build up, your mind develops a steady rhythm of decisions, lists and excitement. I often call this Busy Bride Brain because it becomes part of your daily landscape. When the wedding is over, that rhythm falls away almost instantly, and the sudden quiet can feel like a wobble. It is not disappointment, and it is certainly not a reflection on your day. It is simply a natural emotional shift after something deeply meaningful.

In my podcast series, Tune Into Calm, I spoke about the emotional layers of wedding planning, not just the practical ones. Brides In Harmony is a community and resource space that continues that conversation by offering brides a gentle place to land during every stage of the journey, including this final chapter that so few people prepare you for.

If you are feeling a little adrift, be kind to yourself. Look back at your favourite moments slowly. Talk about the bits that made you smile. Reintroduce the hobbies and routines that were paused while you were planning. Allow yourself time to settle into the next phase without rushing it.

You are not alone in this. Post-wedding blues are simply your heart adjusting after something significant. Your balance will return, slowly, softly and in its own time.

With warmth and love,
Emily Harding
Yorkshire Violinist and podcaster

Search 'Tune into Calm Yorkshire Violinist'
on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and
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REAL WEDDING

Fun and inclusive

Duncan and Paul were married in September 2025 at York Racecourse.

The McCallum wedding was all about inclusivity; not just bringing together Scotland and Wales but by embracing every one of their 350 guests from 2 to 82 years of age, from every social group. Inclusivity was at the heart of their wedding.

Paul explains: One highlight of our hugely lavish day was the poignant moment when one of our good friends read a poem entitled 'Inclusivity'. This perfectly encapsulates what Duncan and I stand for. A wedding day, a special day, shouldn't be known as a straight or gay wedding, or by any other label. The day should just focus on celebrating two people's lifelong love and commitment to each other, and sharing that joy with as many friends and family as possible, from every walk of life. Duncan and I cherish every single person in our lives, and we wanted everyone to celebrate with us.

York Racecourse is a special place to me. My company has provided staff for the venue for more than six years so it feels like a second home, with friends always around. Given that it can accommodate 200 daytime guests and host a rather flamboyant evening event with masses of entertainment for 350 people, it was the perfect choice for us. I manage hundreds of staff at work, and Duncan owns and runs Blayds Bar in Leeds, a 'people-friendly' bar that offers a safe space for the local community, so the Racecourse was the perfect fit for us and our huge number of guests.



We held an outdoor ceremony with 200 guests seated in the autumn sunshine. A Scottish bagpiper commenced the proceedings, and refreshing drinks rounded off the reception. We then moved indoors for a delicious three-course

wedding breakfast of homemade minestrone soup, supreme of chicken, and a magnificent sticky toffee pudding.

We finished with coffee and traditional Scottish Tablet – a real treat! The room was decorated in autumnal colours and looked stunning – just as we had envisioned.

As another 150 friends joined us, the evening reception kicked off with a full line-up of entertainment, continuing our theme of inclusivity. We had local and international artists performing, including a drag cabaret which went down so well!! Our nieces provided an elegant dance routine before a surprise conga got most people up dancing! It was a lively and happy party from start to finish. Traditional fish and chips were served from the onsite chippy, much to Duncan's delight!

Carriages were away at 1am. Duncan and I wanted to be the last to leave so that we didn't miss a thing! We finished our exceptional day with a glass of fizz on the balcony overlooking the Racecourse - a perfect end to a perfect day.

TOP TIP: York Racecourse has a great team of wedding planners. Rebecca and the team took the time to understand exactly what we wanted from the day and executed it all perfectly. If your venue doesn't provide a planner, consider employing one. Their knowledge of local suppliers and understanding of how a wedding should flow is invaluable.





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REAL WEDDING

By the sea

Bridie and Paul were married in August 2025 at The Grand Hotel, Sunderland.



It was their perfect venue with stunning views overlooking their happy place – the beach!

BRIDIE EXPLAINS: We had looked at many wedding venues but nothing felt quite right until we viewed The Grand. We were warmly welcomed into the hotel by Leanne, who was amazing and a calm influence from start to finish. The function rooms and hotel bedrooms were great; a lot of the hotel has recently been refurbished and has a good feel about it. The icing on the cake for us was how close we were to the beach! We both love being by the sea and the photos of us happily strolling along the prom are some of our favourites.



FAVOURITE MOMENT: Our absolute favourite moment of the whole day was the time we had together just after saying 'I Do'. The two of us spent 15 quiet minutes alone, walking along the seafront. Our brilliant, unobtrusive photographer captured some of this time from a distance, and these are some of our favourite photographs.



FIRST DANCE: It was a lovely and awkward first dance: we hadn't taken any dance classes or practised! We just swayed and twirled and pretended it was just the two of us in the room. The way it should be!



TOP TIP: Enjoy every second of planning and organising! Don't worry or stress about things you don't have. We didn't, and it made for a perfect wedding day. Also, focus on what you and your future spouse want. Don't do things just to make other people happy - it's YOUR wedding!

We enjoyed every single second of our wedding and are so sad that it's over. We planned it for over two years and can honestly say we wouldn't change a single thing.

Photographer: liammccormickphotography.co.uk

WEDDING DRESS SHOPPING

Embracing your unique style

Elizabeth is the founder and owner of Maidens & Ravens, a unique boutique in the centre of York, renowned for stunning, colourful and alternative designs. Here she shares some wise words about staying true to your style on your wedding day.

"I am a firm believer that your wedding dress should feel like you – a reflection of your personality and something that makes you feel fabulous.

Although a white dress is typically what most people think of for a wedding, it is actually a relatively recent tradition. Popularized in the 19th century by Queen Victoria, white symbolised status and purity of fabric - not purity of the bride as is often believed! After Queen Victoria made the colour fashionable, wearing white became the norm but prior to this, brides would choose a dress in their favourite colour and style.

White or ivory dresses do not suit everybody and if doesn't resonate with you, there is absolutely no reason to wear one. Your wedding day is meant to reflect your relationship, and your own style so do not feel pressurised into wearing a colour you dislike, or a dress that does not feel like "you" for the sake of tradition.

Fortunately, there is now a lot more choice when it comes to bridalwear. There are so many styles: vintage inspired, ethereal, glamorous, sexy, romantic and gothic.

Before you start shopping, think about your style and what you actually want to look like on your wedding day. It is a question I always ask my customers. Recently, one of my brides summarised her vision with "I want to look like I fight dragons in a castle!" and I knew exactly what she meant! We experimented with a few styles before she picked a beautiful ivory chiffon dress with statement sleeves and multi-coloured floral embroidery - perfect for her enchanted theme.

Wearing colour can be an easy way of injecting your own personality into your dress. A coloured dress always makes a statement, and it can be as subtle or bold as you wish. An ivory dress with beautifully coloured floral details, or a champagne, blush or pastel gown overlaid with ivory lace or bold details are both ways of introducing colour without going too far. Equally, a gown in your favourite jewel colour will look fabulous especially when you bring the bold colour into your flowers, accessories and the clothing of the other members of your wedding party. Many of my brides opt for a black dress which I think looks timeless and edgy.

If you think your family may not be supportive of your choice, then don't be afraid of going to your dress appointment by yourself. One of the biggest challenges when choosing a wedding dress is ignoring the well-meaning opinions of family, friends, and even strangers. Everyone has an idea of what a bride "should" look like. But the truth is there is no single definition of a perfect wedding dress. There is only the dress that feels perfect to you.

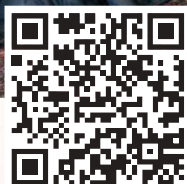
If you find yourself drawn to something non-traditional, unconventional, or surprising, trust that instinct. It is your day. You are the one who will walk down the aisle, appear in the photos, and remember how the dress made you feel so wear exactly what you want. No regrets.

You will be gorgeous!"



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WEDDING DRESSES

Finding your perfect style

With so many different dresses to choose from, figuring out which style will suit you the best and complement your body shape can be overwhelming. Be open to trying on different silhouettes and ask the advice of the stylist – they are there to help you and their experience can be invaluable.

Here is a guide to help you find your wedding dress style...

BALL GOWN

Ball gowns are the most formal styles of wedding dress. Their attention-grabbing skirts are often multi-layered and extremely full. Layers of ruffles, tulle, and satin organza provide endless details - real show-stoppers! A long veil can be added for extra dramatic flair.

Suits: Tall, slender, hourglass, pear-shaped and inverted triangle ladies



MERMAID / TRUMPET

Mermaid gowns are incredibly fitted through the bodice down to the booty with a dramatic flare down to the floor. A different material is often used for the lower part of the dress such as tulle. Trumpet wedding dresses have a similar fitted look but rather than having a different fabric for the bottom of the gown, a structured petticoat makes the dress flare out more.

Suits: Hourglass, tall, slender and pear-shaped ladies



FIT 'N 'FLARE

Similar to the mermaid style but a little easier to wear, these gowns hug nicely through the bodice and bottom without feeling too tight or too loose. Using the same material for the whole dress, they gently flare out emphasising your curves.

Suits: Hourglass, tall, slender, athletic and pear-shaped ladies



MINI AND MINI OVERSKIRT

Shorter styles are becoming increasingly popular. If you wanted a more traditional gown through the day, choose a dress that can be worn with an overskirt. This can then be easily removed for an evening update.

Suits: Pretty much everyone!



COLUMN GOWNS

Close fitting with a straighter skirt that loosely skims your figure. Very similar in shape to a fit 'n' flare dress but without the flare at the bottom. These are exceptionally elegant gowns. Beautiful details like lace and beading can be added, or you could opt for a minimalist, natural option that will look stunning.

Suits: Hourglass, tall and slender and petite ladies

PRINCESS / A-LINE

These silhouettes have a narrow top and a flowing bottom creating an "A" shape, perfect if you have concerns about larger hips. Typically easy and comfortable to wear as they are less fitted across your tummy and bottom.

Suits: Petite, apple, pear shaped, hourglass, tall and slender and fuller figure ladies

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WEDDING RINGS

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"During your consultation, we'll explore metals, profiles, finishes, and any special details you'd like to include. Designs are refined through sketches and CAD before being handcrafted to order. Whether you want to transform heirloom gemstones into modern masterpieces or create something entirely new, I will ensure every detail is thoughtfully designed and expertly crafted."

From timeless simplicity to a subtle statement, Ginger & James offers a calm, considered approach to bespoke wedding rings - crafted to be worn every day, for a lifetime.



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DIY WEDDING NAILS

Meamora is an award-winning company that specialises in at-home, salon-quality products, renowned for their innovative gel-finish press-on nails.

The nails are easy to apply in just a few minutes, do not damage your natural nails, and can be easily removed using only warm water and olive oil. Made from a high-performance resin material, these press-ons mould to your own nails using a conditioning adhesive rather than glue, ensuring that your nails remain completely unharmed by the process.

They are strong, flexible, waterproof, chip-resistant, affordable, and do not require lengthy appointments at a nail salon. This makes

them perfect for your hen do, wedding, and honeymoon, without having to factor in time-consuming trips to the salon.

Each box includes a preparation alcohol wipe, a cuticle pusher, a mini nail file, and 30 press-ons giving up to three manicures. The price ranges from just £7 (lighter adhesive to last 2 – 4 days) to £14 per box (longer lasting at 10 – 20 days). With online tutorials demonstrating exactly how to apply and remove, as well as personal support available from your supplying stylist, it couldn't be easier to achieve picture-perfect nails at home for every stage of your wedding celebrations!

Full range available from Dawn Jones, @dawnmeamorayork



WEDDING HAIR EXTRAS

Euphoria Hairdressing is a professional, mobile, Yorkshire-based company that offers pre-wedding trials and packages to make sure your hair is at its best on your wedding day. However, it is another service they offer that has caught our eye.

Once your perfect wedding look has been created, Claire can stay throughout your photographs to help keep you looking amazing – to take out your veil, make those small adjustments to ensure perfection, even creating a new evening style for your dancing! Now that really is a full bridal hair service.



Unique Hair Combs is an online, eco-friendly bridal accessory and vintage jewellery business. Based in York, they specialise in sustainable bridal hair combs, lovingly handcrafted by upcycling antique brooches. Claire is the founder of the company.



"Transforming cherished pieces of jewellery, or family heirlooms such as a brooch or pendant, into bridal hair accessories, adds a real touch of glamour whilst helping to minimise the environmental impact of your wedding day - something couples are becoming increasingly aware of."

DIAMONDS

LAB GROWN V NATURALLY MINED DIAMONDS

Lab grown diamonds have become more popular in recent years, but what is the difference between these and naturally mined diamonds?

Both are chemically and physically the same; both are composed of pure carbon with slight impurities (from the formation process) and have the same hardness, brilliance and sparkle. They are both graded using the same four C's: cut, colour, clarity and carat weight. Both lab grown and mined diamonds are 'real' diamonds and cannot be told apart. The main differences are how they are formed and the cost.

Mined or 'natural' diamonds are formed within the earth under high pressure and temperature

taking billions of years. They are more expensive to buy and over time will increase in value due to their rarity.



Lab grown diamonds take a few months to form in a laboratory using technology that replicates the diamond formation process. They are less expensive than mined diamonds so many people are able to choose a larger size or higher grade of diamond, while others may only want the rarer mined diamonds. It's your own personal choice.

Kingston Jewellers offer both lab grown and mined diamonds, along with the appropriate diamond certificate. To help you choose, they have a fabulous selection available to try on or you can go to their web site and use the online 'ring builder' to select different styles, metals and stones to find your perfect ring!



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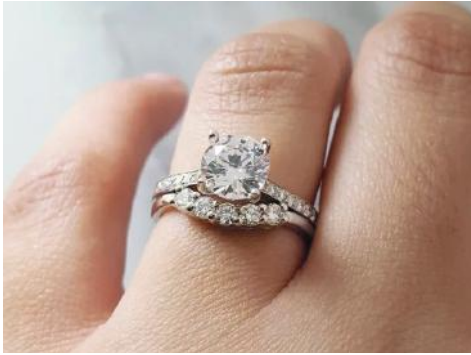
WEDDING RINGS

The perfect fit

Engagement rings come in many different beautiful shapes and sizes, ranging from a traditional solitaire, to a cluster of stones, squares, ovals, and many more.



Whilst stunning, these designs often mean a straight wedding ring won't sit snugly, leaving gaps between the two. This is where shaped wedding rings become the perfect solution.



Queensbury Jewellers stock a wide selection of different shaped bands, both plain and diamond-set, allowing you to comfortably try on as many as you like to get a flawless fit with your engagement ring.

In the rare event that they don't have an exact fit in stock, they offer an exceptional, affordable, 'shaped to fit' service. Their skilled jewellers will use your engagement ring to handcraft a bespoke band that sits perfectly alongside it, ensuring a precise, comfortable, and beautifully matched set.



Queensbury's collection of shaped bands is available in a variety of metals to complement your engagement ring.



Plus, you can choose from an array of diamond setting styles, including elegant channel, classic claw, and sparkling pavé options, to ensure your wedding band is both unique and personal to you.

www.queensburyjewellers.co.uk



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GOOD TO KNOW

When it comes to decorating your wedding cake, there are so many options: sugar paste flowers, fresh fruit, hand-crafted cake toppers, Lego people, sparkly initials, personalised signs or fresh flowers to match your bouquet. But did you know there are a number of common flowers that are highly toxic to humans and should not be used as cake decoration?

FOOD SAFE FLORALS INCLUDE:

Alliums	Olive leaves
Bizzie Lizzie	Palm leaves
Corn flowers	Pansies
Echinacea	Peony
Freesia	Pine cones
Fuchsia	Roses
Geraniums	Stocks
Gerbera	Sunflowers
Hibiscus	Thistle (but not Yellow Star)
Lavender	Viburnum
Lilac	
Lisianthus	

ONES TO AVOID:

Alstroemeria	Heather
Amaryllis	Holly and berries – including Mistletoe!
Azelea/ Rhododendron	Hydrangea
Beargrass	Iris
Bluebell	Ivy
Calla Lily	Lily-of-the-Valley
Cherry Blossom	Poinsettia
Clematis	Poppy
Daffodils (Narcissus)	Ruscus
Eucalyptus	Sweetpea
Gypsophila	Tulip

Disclaimer – this list is not finite, ALWAYS check with your cake company!

DIY WEDDING CAKE

There are many reasons why you might want to bake and decorate your own wedding cake. Perhaps you have a cherished family recipe that holds sentimental value, maybe you want the really personal touch or perhaps a 3-tier professional cake is a little out of your budget. Whatever your reason, a homemade wedding cake could be a great addition to your day.

Browse online galleries and magazines for inspiration or maybe you already have your own unique design in mind – just remember to factor in your skill level! Consider taking some cake decorating classes that will teach you how to ice,

make sugar flowers or even how to craft little animal characters!

Next, decide how many tiers your cake needs to feed your guests and choose a recipe that fits your taste - and baking experience. You can personalise with fresh or sugar-craft flowers, characters or meaningful details that are important to you both.

Most importantly, have fun! This is your chance to create a one-of-a-kind masterpiece. It doesn't have to be perfect - just perfect for you both!
Happy Baking!

CAKE DELIGHTS

Wedding cakes come in all sorts of shapes, sizes, flavours and finishes. From traditional to modern, eccentric to plain, to cakes made of cheese and even cakes made of pork pies! These are a collection of our favourites from some of the excellent, talented companies across the North East and Yorkshire.



Valkyrie Cakes with florals by
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GROOMS LOOKING GOOD

— Getting it right —

Your venue, colour scheme and wedding theme have been chosen. Now it's time to start thinking about suits. A larger wedding may include a best man (or best men), ushers, page boys and fathers of the happy couple. It is never too early to start planning, especially if these important people are scattered around the country.



Colours and fabrics are important, but the overall style and those all-important finishing touches can really complete the look. Choose a style that complements your venue; a formal morning suit or a swish Tuxedo for an elegant country house or upmarket hotel, a 3-piece tweed suit or chinos and shirt for a rustic barn wedding.

Think about accessories too: shoes, cufflinks, watch, braces, tie pin, bow tie, pocket square, flat cap – you might even want to make sure you have a suitable pocket for a hip flask or have your initials or date of wedding sewn into your outfit!

If you are hiring suits, start with a company that carries stock on the premises so you can try different styles, colours and sizes.



This way you can be happy with your choice. If you have page boys at your wedding, remember to check that the suits come in smaller sizes too. If you are looking for an alternative to hiring, you may consider having a suit tailor-made or, if buying off-the-peg, try using a personal shopper to help you navigate your way through the many different options available on the high street. Whatever you decide upon, make sure you feel comfortable in it. Listen to suggestions from friends or professionals but remember that ultimately it is your decision.



Your first suit-finding trip will start with having a range of measurements taken: chest, waist, inner leg, sleeve length, collar size and height. It is important you look and feel good in a suit that fits properly.

Some of the most common mistakes that men make when wearing formal clothes are having their trousers too long or too short, the waistcoat being too small and wearing a shirt with too large a collar that results in the shirt not hanging properly. For a well fitted shirt, you should be able to place no more than one or two fingers between your neck and your collar.

Above all, give yourself plenty of time. Too many grooms begin their search only a few months before their wedding date, but this can really limit your choice, especially if you are hiring.

With thanks to Smart As Suits.

— WEDDING TRADITIONS —

Have you heard of ‘Something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue’? Most people have, but do you know where the saying comes from? Or how the tradition of throwing the bridal bouquet came about?

Of course, it is entirely up to you if you follow wedding traditions; a lot of couples now opt for a less formal, more relaxed day to celebrate their nuptials. However, it is still nice to incorporate a little bit of blue into the bride’s outfit, and the bouquet toss always makes for such good photographs!

Here we look at some of the more common Wedding Traditions you may, or may not, choose to include in your day.

DID YOU KNOW?...

*Something old,
something new,
something borrowed,
something blue,
and a silver sixpence in her shoe*



This popular wedding tradition started in the 1800s and can be traced back to an old English rhyme that first appeared in 1871 in St James’ Magazine. Each ‘something’ represents an item that is meant to bring good luck and fortune to the bride and the marriage.

Something old represents a tie to the past. This could be a piece of family jewellery such as a necklace or bracelet.

Something new is for good fortune and success in the new chapter of the bride’s life. This is often represented by the new wedding dress.

Something borrowed traditionally comes from a happily married family member or close friend in the hope that the new couple will also have a happy marriage. It also reminds the bride that her family and friends will be there for her when help is needed. In the past, a lace handkerchief was often used or a small piece of jewellery.

Something blue; the colour of purity, faithfulness and love. A wedding garter often has a blue ribbon running through it or, if you look closely, some bridal gowns have a small blue stitch or tiny blue bead sewn into the hem!

A silver sixpence in her shoe was to bring the couple wealth and happiness during their life together, and was also a sign that the bride’s father had sent the couple well wishes. You often see sixpences for sale in bridal shops.

DID YOU KNOW?...

Traditionally, touching the bride or running off with a piece of her wedding dress was considered to bring good luck and an impending proposal of one’s own. The bouquet toss was created as an escape strategy to distract any frenzied, single young ladies so the bride could leave without being harmed!



DID YOU KNOW?...

The distraction of the bouquet toss can also be linked to the garter.

Before elasticated tights were invented, pieces of material were used to hold up stockings. To stop guests trying to tear a lucky piece of wedding dress from the bride, the bride would toss both her garters into the crowd. Whoever caught the piece of material was thought to be next to marry.



Fast forward to today and a garter is a personal choice. It has become customary to wear only one and rather than a plain piece of cloth, they have evolved into statement pieces made from silk, satin or lace and can feature bows, crystals or even beading to match dress details.

In America, the removal of the garter has become quite the photo opportunity with a groom removing it either by hand or with his teeth. Not always comfortable if your Grandparents are watching!

DID YOU KNOW?...

There are several explanations of why a Bride wears a veil. It is believed the veil predates the wedding dress by centuries perhaps originating in the days when a groom threw a blanket over the head of his chosen woman as he captured her and carried her off!!

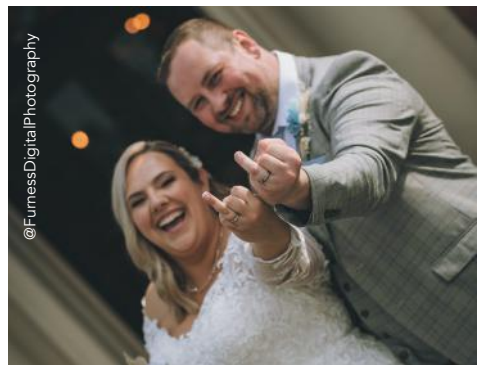
Another explanation is that a veil was used to disguise the Bride to confuse evil spirits who were believed to attend marriages to cause mischief. The veil became popular in Britain in the eighteen hundreds and is now associated with modesty and chastity.



In some Eastern ceremonies the veil is used to hide the Bride's face until after the wedding ceremony. This is especially true for arranged marriages as by the time the veil is lifted, the couple are already committed to each other and it is too late for the Groom to change his mind!

DID YOU KNOW?...

In the UK, USA, Canada, New Zealand, Italy, France, Sweden, Mexico, and many other countries, wedding rings are typically worn on the fourth finger of the left hand. This is said to have originated from the Romans, who believed a vein ran straight from the fourth finger on the left hand to the heart. Ahh! A less romantic option is that, as the majority of people are right-handed (roughly 90%), the left hand is simply a more practical choice for a piece of jewellery.



Not everyone uses the left hand though. In Austria, Greece, Russia, Norway, Poland, Cuba, and parts of Spain and Portugal, couples wear wedding rings on the right hand. Reasons vary from country to country, but the right hand is often associated with strength, righteousness, and taking oaths. By placing their wedding band on this hand, couples may have been emphasising their unwavering commitment and loyalty to one another.

There are also several superstitions associated with the wedding ring, including: it is unlucky for a bride to wear any ring on her wedding finger before she is married or to even try on her wedding ring before the marriage; if the bride or groom drops the wedding ring in the church, they shall be the first to die (!!); and it is unlucky to remove a wedding ring during the first seven years of marriage.

DID YOU KNOW?...

In the past, brides wore their best dresses when getting married, whatever the colour. Although some brides did choose white - as a symbol of purity and virginity and to ward off evil spirits - it was not until Queen Victoria wore white at her wedding in 1840 (not silver as previous royal brides) that white became popular.

Today, pure white is worn less often with off-white being preferred. Colourful and black gowns are becoming increasingly popular as are gowns with bright details and overlays.



SPECIAL GUESTS

Entrusting someone to look after your dog on your wedding day can be a very big decision. It is important that not only is your dog chaperone fully insured and qualified, but that they have taken the time to get to know your pooches. Pre-service visits ahead of your wedding day are essential so that your dog gets to know the chaperone and is comfortable throughout the (sometimes chaotic) wedding day activities.



If you are lucky enough for your venue to allow your pooch to join you for walkies down the aisle, as your ring bearer or to attend for some photographs, don't forget to dress them correctly with a floral collar or a Tuxedo bib for cuteness overload!



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— BESPOKE STATIONERY —

Wilde & Scribe design beautiful, bespoke wedding stationery. One of their most requested services is their hand-drawn range which guarantees your stationery will stand out.



Working in watercolours and ink, the natural style offers a clean, contemporary, elegant aesthetic setting the perfect vibe for your day.



From designs featuring your venue, to details and motifs that reflect your personality and story, Wilde & Scribe will ensure your wedding stationery is treasured well beyond the last dance.

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— TOP TABLE ETIQUETTE —

Traditionally, a straight top table would be (from left to right looking at the table): Chief Bridesmaid, Groom's Father, Bride's Mother, Groom, Bride, Bride's Father, Groom's Mother, Best Man. However, this does not work for all couples. Blended families, same-sex couples, older couples and divorce can all mean a variation to the traditional top table. If parents are divorced or have new partners, consider seating them on tables near to the top but with friends or family they feel comfortable with. An alternative top table could include the couple with brothers and sisters, the Best Man and partner and the Bridesmaids and partners.

Round top tables are more popular than ever giving a less formal feel. They are also more conducive to easier conversation than a straight table.

A Sweetheart Table seats just the newly-weds and allows for some quiet moments between the two of you in what will be a whirlwind of a day.



Mixing the two families or groups of friends may be traditional but if they have never met before, this can create awkward silences. Your wedding breakfast should be filled with chatter and laughter so sit people where they will be most comfortable and where the conversation will flow.

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Can you play my favourite song?

Imagine walking down the aisle to your favourite song. Now imagine it played live, perfectly timed to fade in and out as you make your grand entrance. Live music adds a whole new dimension to your marriage ceremony, setting the mood for your entire celebration - so getting it right is crucial.

Unlike recorded music, a live musician can personalise arrangements, adapt to the flow of your event, and create a truly unique atmosphere that a playlist simply can't match. Occasionally ceremonies don't go exactly to plan, such as a slightly longer walk down the aisle or a delay when signing the marriage schedule. A skilled live musician can adapt to these unexpected moments and adjust the music seamlessly, ensuring the flow of your whole ceremony remains flawless. This adaptability extends to the wedding reception too, where a live musician can read the room and adjust the tempo or genre to keep the atmosphere lively.

A talented musician will work with you to create a personalised soundtrack for your entire wedding.

Discuss your favourite genres, artists, individual songs and the overall mood you want to create, and let your musician weave their magic.

Whilst some musicians prefer you to select your ceremony and reception songs from their set portfolio, others will happily learn new songs for you. However, a word of caution, you do need to ask the question. Whilst some will do this as part of their fee, others will charge an additional amount for their time to learn your special song or songs.

Do remember that musicians can also personalise arrangements of your ceremony songs including wonderful mash-ups (thanks Tik Tok!) but again, do ask if there are any additional charges.

A good musician will strive to provide a fabulous soundtrack for your perfect day. Invest some time in the process and ask a few simple questions to find the right musician for you. With the right live music, your wedding will be an unforgettable, emotion-filled celebration giving memories to last a lifetime. So, start planning your perfect soundtrack today! @rayspiano

—YOUR WEDDING MUSIC—

From ceremony to first dance

Music is one of the most powerful tools you have when planning your wedding day, yet it's often left until the last minute. Choosing the right music for each stage of your celebration helps create a natural flow, enhances emotion and ensures every moment feels intentional.



The ceremony is the heart of your day, and music plays a vital role in setting its tone. Pre-ceremony music should feel welcoming and calm, allowing guests to arrive and settle. The processional - whether traditional or modern - is often one of the most emotional moments of the entire wedding. When working with a professional musician, you are not limited to traditional choices.

Any song that holds special meaning – be it a modern favourite or a nostalgic classic - can be reimagined into a beautifully slow, romantic version that suits the walk down the aisle perfectly. This creative freedom allows you to visualise this perfect moment and bring it to life in a way that feels entirely your own.

During the signing of the register, couples have a wonderful opportunity to include meaningful music that might not otherwise fit into the ceremony. This is a chance to add personality, romance or even a subtle nod to a shared memory. As you exit as newlyweds, uplifting and joyful music sets the tone for the celebrations ahead.

The drinks reception is where music subtly guides the energy of the day. Light, elegant background music helps guests relax, encourages conversation and fills the space without demanding attention. Instrumental live music works particularly well here, creating a luxurious ambience while complementing the natural buzz of the occasion.

When it comes to the wedding breakfast, music should enhance rather than distract. Soft live music between courses keeps the atmosphere warm and polished, while allowing speeches and key moments to take centre stage. Thoughtful musical planning ensures there are no awkward silences or abrupt transitions.

The first dance marks a shift into the evening celebrations and deserves careful consideration. Whether you choose a classic love song, a modern favourite or a re-imagined instrumental version, this moment should feel personal and comfortable. Live performance can make the first dance feel intimate and unique, even in a large room filled with guests.

Across every stage of the day, the key is cohesion. When music is planned as a continuous journey rather than separate moments, your wedding feels seamless and beautifully curated. Couples who value atmosphere and emotion often choose to work with a professional wedding musician who can advise on timings, song choices and transitions.

A wedding violinist can provide elegant live music for every part of your day, ensuring each moment flows effortlessly and feels just as special as you imagined!

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HOW I FIT MAGICALLY INTO YOUR BIG DAY...

Every couple wants their day to be filled with fun and laughter, creating happy memories from the ceremony to the first dance, and every moment in between. That's where 'magical' entertainment can be perfect! A close-up magician can keep the energy high and guests engaged through every part of your day. Here's how jaw-dropping magic can fit effortlessly into your celebration.

YOUR DRINKS

RECEPTION. After the ceremony, guests gather with drinks and canapés while your photographer captures the happy scene. Many will be meeting for the first time, and the last thing you want is awkward silences. A magician can mingle seamlessly among groups, performing astonishing close-up magic and sparking conversation. Suddenly, strangers are laughing together, debating impossible mysteries, and sharing an unforgettable experience.



YOUR WEDDING BREAKFAST. Guests settling into their seats, waiting for the different courses, the build-up to the speeches: a magician can fill these moments with table-side performances, ensuring every guest feels included. Working around the staff and service, a skilled magician delivers bursts of wonder to keep the atmosphere lively, yet personal, at all times.

YOUR EVENING PARTY.

As the wedding breakfast concludes, guests drift to the bar or explore the venue. New evening guests may also arrive. Before the band or DJ begins, a magician can set the tone, welcoming newcomers and keeping the atmosphere lively. This provides a perfect transition into the evening as your party truly begins.

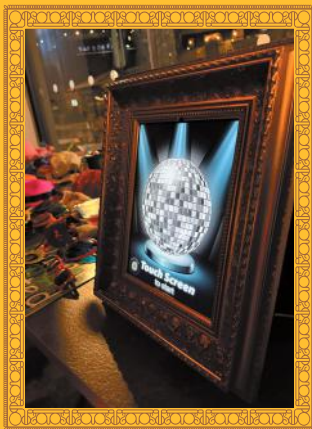
When you invite a magician to your wedding, you are investing in atmosphere, joy and memories that sparkle long after the last dance.

YORKSHIRE MAGIC MIRROR

The selfie revolution

The Magic Mirror has had a baby!

Welcome the Mini - the newest creation from Yorkshire Magic Mirror, taking everything couples love about a luxury Magic Mirror experience and shrinking it into a sleek, stylish tabletop showstopper.



The Mini fits seamlessly into your day, whether it's placed near the welcome drinks, the gift table, the dessert station, or even the evening reception entrance. It becomes a natural gathering point. Guests can jump in for quick selfies, group photos, cheeky gifs, boomerangs, slow-motion clips, and video messages — all guided by the Mini's interactive touch-screen animations that make it ridiculously easy for all ages to use. Even your technophobe uncle will be tapping away like he's 21 again!

If space is tight, no problem. If you want entertainment without a lengthy setup, sorted. If you are looking for unique and modern but still classy, the Mini is made for you!

Think bespoke wedding overlays that match your theme, personalised templates that feel magazine-worthy, and a finish that looks high-end in every

single shot. Guests don't just leave with content; they leave with keepsakes.

There's also something brilliantly social about it. The Mini doesn't dominate the room — it draws guests in. It creates those spontaneous "come on, one more!" moments. It turns friendship groups into mini photoshoots. It captures the bits you never want to forget: the laughter, the chaos, the sparkly dresses, the ties loosened at midnight, and the couples who are clearly living their best life on the dance floor AND prints take only 10 seconds to appear!

In a time where weddings are becoming more personalised and experience-led than ever, the Yorkshire Magic Mini feels like the perfect match: modern, glamorous, interactive - and totally unforgettable

Big entrance. Mini mirror. Maximum magic. Yorkshire, you're going to love this one...





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— ENTERTAININGLY BRILLIANT —

SASHAY DANCE

Looking for an unforgettable addition to your hen party? How about an energetic dance class - perfect for performing at your wedding reception! Sashay Dance is the UK's leading hen party dance class provider, offering themed hen parties across the UK. They make the planning simple and stress-free too, hiring a venue near your celebrations, joining you in your garden, Air B&B, or local village hall.

There are over 25 exciting themes to choose from. Say 'Yeehaw' with the trending One Last Rodeo theme, or unleash your inner Dancing Queen with an ABBA party. For a unique, personalised experience, try their Flash Mob Fiesta upgrade, where they create a bespoke

song mix and choreography based on your favourite tracks - perfect for surprising guests at your wedding reception.

Sashay classes promise laughs, memories, and good vibes and are totally 2-left-feet friendly!



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Premier Ents and Events pride themselves in their ability to work with you, to create your dream wedding. From table centrepieces and blossom arches to casinos, LED letters, dancefloors, photo booths, cold sparks, and DJ with dancing on the clouds effects, they have a range of packages to fully dress and entertain at your wedding. They offer venue visits and private consultations to ensure that every detail is perfect.

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Paul can entertain your wedding guests during the drinks reception, meal, room turnaround period, or evening reception. He can also entertain the younger guests with his children's magic. Winner of 'UK Magician of the Year 2026' (The Wedding Industry Awards), these reviews say it all...

"Paul left everyone absolutely speechless. He was engaging, funny and charming but it was his magic that stole the show. A class act and I couldn't recommend him more." Mark, groom.

"From the very first contact to the moment he left, he was a 5-star experience. Every single guest was astounded. An absolute gentleman and he made my party extra special!" Nicola, birthday girl.

@paulinnesmagic, bringing unforgettable mind-blowing magic, laughter, incredible reactions and lasting memories that will be talked about long after your wedding.





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— ENTERTAININGLY BRILLIANT —

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Can't decide on just one tune? Sarah can craft a custom medley tailored to your own love story, or even transform a high-energy hit into a moving, slowed-down version for your ceremony.

Follow and connect with Sarah on Socials: @bushsarah.music



STEVIE BAGPIPES

Having Bagpipes at your Wedding is nice...but having Stevie Bagpipes is fantastic!

A multi award winning wedding piper, Stevie will create moments your guests will talk about long after your day is over. From powerful entrances to emotional exits, the bagpipes offer a memorable backdrop to your day.

For an extra wow factor as you are announced in to dine as newlyweds, add a piped entrance and a Gaelic Toast. A Gaelic Toast wishes good fortune upon the marriage; a way of making good wishes stick for a long, happy, healthy and prosperous union.



FIRST DANCE PRESSURE

It is surprising how many couples feel anxious about their First Dance. You know, the dreaded three-and-a-half-minute 'sway' that seems to go on forever whilst your guests crowd around and take photos and videos of your pain!

This is where Kay from @WestHenEvents can help.



"Your First Dance should be an amazing moment to treasure – not torture! With a few relaxed lessons, I will have your feeling comfortable, confident and hopefully excited for your first dance, taking you from first dance stress to first dance yes!"



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The UK Wedding Event

www.theukweddingevent.co.uk

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Scarborough Spa Open Day
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♥ **Tuesday 28th April, 5.30pm - 7.30pm**

Lough House Farm Open Evening
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♥ **Sunday 27th September, 12 - 3pm**

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Holdsworth House | Halifax | Sun 14th June

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