

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING BUDGET

It is important to set a provisional budget before starting any wedding preparations. Many couples contribute a large part of the wedding funds as well as receiving financial assistance from both families. Wedding budgets can run from hundreds of pounds to thousands of pounds depending upon style, theme, number of guests or type of venue. Establish precisely what contributions are being made and how expenses will be allocated before deciding on your wedding priorities.

Open a separate wedding account to simplify paying the bills and keep a running account of expenditure as you go along. Set up a manual checklist system or a spreadsheet on your PC and enter actual costs as they become available.

Compile a list of likely needs and expenses and consider whether your provisional budget will cover these amounts. Decide whether you may need a loan and try to arrange well in advance. Do make careful enquiries before committing to extra finance and consider making changes to your wedding plans first to try to reduce the need for borrowing for your wedding day. Only draw on a loan if and when required.

Depending on the investment being made to make the perfect wedding day, you may also consider taking out a wedding insurance policy to protect against unforeseen problems.

Contacting Wedding Suppliers

Start shopping early and take time to shop around. Contact a wide range of suppliers, request brochures and product literature and then compare prices and quality of service.

Carefully analyse product specifications, service agreements, estimates and quotations. Check whether VAT and delivery charges are included or there is a time limit on acceptance of quotations. Read the small print of any contractual agreements before adding your signature. When in doubt, contact your local Trading Office for help or guidance.

Pay deposits as and when required to do so, but do check what penalties would be payable if you needed to cancel any order. Be reasonable about the settlement of any outstanding balances and pay at the appropriate time for goods and services supplied. Any dispute or complaint must be made in writing as soon as possible and give full details of the problem and the consideration required.

Who Pays For What

Though many couples now opt to finance their wedding themselves, the more traditional allocation of expenses between families would have been as below:

The Bride Pays For

Hen party

Wedding ring and special gift for the groom

Her own beauty and hairdressing bills

Her going away outfit

The Bride's Family Pays For

Press announcements

Bride's wedding dress and accessories

Bride's attendants' outfits

Flowers for ceremony and reception

Photography and videography

Wedding transport to the ceremony for bride and attendants

Wedding stationery including invitations, order of service sheets

Reception venue, catering and wedding cake

The Bridegroom Pays For

Engagement and bride's wedding ring

Special gift for bride

Honeymoon and going away transport

Stag party

The Bridegroom's Family Pays For

Bridegroom's and ushers' outfits

Church or registrar's fees including organist, choir, bellringers etc

Flowers for bride and attendants, corsages and buttonholes

Gifts for attendants

Transport for bridegroom and best man to ceremony

Out of pocket expenses for the best man