

A WEDDING CHECKLIST

Planning for a wedding in the Catholic Church

The period of engagement can be one of the most joyful and creative times in your lives – or one of the most stressful. This checklist is designed to help you prepare for not just the ceremony but for the celebration of a sacrament – which you will continue to grow and live in for the rest of your lives.

The list presumes that you have around a year to prepare for the wedding; if you have less time, then work through the steps in the time you have available.

This is not a ‘must do’ list, but a series of things that may prompt you to make the wedding truly yours. Only choose to do those things that are essential and important for you.

Remember there is more than one way to ‘do’ a wedding – be creative within the choices that the Church makes available to you.

☞ Before the engagement

- Share and discuss your hopes and dreams of your married life together
- Check – then double-check – that this is the person you want to spend the rest of your life with!
- Plan the engagement; select engagement ring/s
- Announce and celebrate the engagement
- _____

☞ One year out

- Have dinner with both families together
- Discuss and share your hopes and dreams for your wedding
- Check policy and availability of the church, reception centre and priest or deacon for your wedding
- Make initial contact with the celebrant
- Get copy of full birth certificate and recent baptism certificate
- Set the wedding date and time
- Decide the wedding and reception style
- Begin preparing the budget for the wedding
- Choose reception caterer (make sure they can cater for special dietary requirements)
- Discuss who will pay for what, and how much
- Choose wedding attendants
- Discuss and divide the wedding preparation tasks
- Spend time praying together
- Book the photographer, musicians, videographer, cars
- Check out and book a marriage preparation course – ask your celebrant for information
- Investigate and budget for the honeymoon
- Consider residence after wedding
- Start guest list
- Send out a date-claimer email
- Alert overseas guests of the up-coming event
- Organise holidays around the wedding – giving yourself time to prepare the wedding and for the honeymoon
- _____

☞ Six months out

- Spend time praying together
- Seek God’s will for your marriage
- Refine and reduce guest list!
- Shop for gowns – bride and attendants
- Meet with the priest or deacon – begin planning the nuptial Mass or wedding liturgy
- Select wedding attire for groom and attendants
- Go to Mass together at your wedding church to see how things work (if it isn’t your parish church)
- Take part in the marriage preparation course
- Book the honeymoon. Check any visa requirements if travelling overseas and check passport
- Investigate accommodation for guests travelling to the wedding
- Consider what it means to love and honour your partner
- Talk about and plan for children and their future
- Organise fun dates and times away – without any wedding planning
- _____

☞ Four months out

- Spend time thinking about marriage and what it means
- Spend time praying together
- Think about your mission as a married couple
- Finalise guest list
- Choose printer and order stationery
- Discuss dress colours for the two mothers
- Re-confirm bookings – for everything and check that deposits are paid (church, reception, etc)
- Book hairdresser and beautician
- Have quality time together and stay connected
- _____

☞ Three months out

- Discuss the liturgy, readings, prayers and music with your celebrant and begin preparing ceremony booklet
- Choose and invite the readers / ministers for the liturgy
- Sign the government and church forms

- Arrange dress fittings
- Decide on gift registry or gift suggestions
- Prepare and address invitations – include information on special dietary needs, accommodation, gift register, protocols regarding confetti/rice etc at the venues
- Select going away clothes
- Order wedding cake
- Go on a weekend retreat
- Choose the music for the bridal waltz – and begin practicing
- Research natural family planning information
- Plan for and diarise a weekend off a month before the wedding
- Continue praying together
- Share and discuss your hopes and dreams for married life
- _____
- _____

🌀 Two months out

- Mail invitations
- Select wedding rings
- Select florist and flowers – for church and reception
- Discuss and select music for reception
- Order place-cards, napkins, glasses, gifts
- Pray about the commitment you are preparing for
- Review ceremony with the priest/deacon
- Sign government form, 'Marriage Declarations' with the celebrant [any time before the wedding]
- Arrange residence after wedding
- Keep praying together
- Ensure that stress levels are managed
- Organise celebration with your friends before the big day (hen's and buck's)
- Choose and invite people to MC and do wedding speeches
- _____
- _____

🌀 One month out

- Choose gifts for the wedding attendants
- Choose gifts for each other
- Arrange financial and legal matters [eg open joint bank account; change of address; new will; change of name]
- Check any special arrangements with photographer
- Think about honeymoon clothes/wardrobe
- Arrange dress fitting and wedding rehearsal
- Have a weekend off
- Spend time praying together
- Begin speeches
- Arrange any alterations or accessories to clothing
- _____
- _____

🌀 Two weeks out

- Provide guest count to reception centre/caterer (including any special dietary needs)

- Finalise menu at reception
- Make table seating plan
- Prepare place cards
- Confirm photographer
- Confirm honeymoon bookings
- Arrange access to new home
- Have a hair and make-up trial
- Organise wet-weather contingency (umbrellas etc)
- Keep time free for people to drop in
- Consider celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation
- _____
- _____

🌀 One week out

- Have final dress fitting
- Attend wedding rehearsal
- Organise who will make necessary payments on the wedding day – eg celebrant, musicians, cars, etc
- Give final guest count / diets / table plan to reception centre / caterer
- Confirm delivery of cake and flowers
- Have a massage
- Pack your bags for the honeymoon
- Make a list of things you need for the big day
- Have a fun date together
- Organise for the safe transfer of gifts from the reception
- Finalise and practice speeches
- _____

🌀 Two days out

- Arrange collection of hired items – clothes etc
- _____

🌀 The day before

- Relax and enjoy yourselves
- Spend time praying about the commitment
- Rest in God's love
- _____

🌀 The wedding day

- Relax; eat well; stay hydrated
- Remember to breathe :-)
- Enjoy yourselves – you have worked hard enough!
- _____

🌀 After the honeymoon

- Send thank you notes
 - Organise change of address and change of name
-

🌀 One year after

- Celebrate your first anniversary
- Book into a marriage enrichment program
- _____