

Celebration Your Guide to a South African Wedding

The Ultimate Wedding Day Checklist

Print this list and tick each item off as you accomplish it to ensure that you have everything in place and under control for your wedding day:

Immediately:

- Work out your budget.
- Open a bank account specifically for your wedding and put a certain amount of savings into this account every month.
- Decide on what sort of ceremony you want (in a church, courthouse, home, etc...).
- Book the officiant and church, if applicable.
- Start looking at reception venues. Availability may determine your wedding date. Book your venue as soon as possible.
- Ask your friends and family members whether they will be willing to be your bridesmaids, maid of honour, best man and groomsmen.

12 months to go:

- Book your photographer and / or videographer.
- Consult with different caterers (if different suppliers to the venue).
- Book the civil ceremony venue and Registrar now, if applicable.

10 months to go:

- Book your caterers.
- Confirm honeymoon arrangements and organise your travel insurance.
- Visit wedding gown boutiques and start trying on a range of styles.

9 months to go:

- Decide on a colour theme for your wedding (this may depend on the dress you choose).
- Order your dress.
- Book the entertainment (band or DJ) for your wedding reception.
- Book or arrange your wedding transport (remember to ensure that your bridal party also has transport from the ceremony venue to the reception venue).

6 months to go:

- Start to think about the sorts of wedding gifts you want and need and look around for places at which to have your registry.
- Consult with and book the florist that will be responsible for your bouquets as well as the flowers at the ceremony and reception.
- Decide upon and organise the dresses and suits for the bridal party.

5 months to go:

- Try on and purchase your underwear for the wedding and the wedding night.
- Consult with cake makers and decide on a design and a supplier.
- Confirm the menu with your caterers.
- Finalise your guest list.

4 months to go:

- Decide on the music to which you want to walk down the aisle, exit the ceremony venue and arrive at the wedding reception. Also decide on hymns and provide the marriage official with these.
- Choose readings or poems for the ceremony and confirm these with the marriage official.
- Print your wedding invitations.
- Decide on your veil, tiara or fascinator.
- Decide on what vaccinations and medications you will need for your honeymoon and begin plans to start these as some are required some time before the event.
- Book guest accommodation, if necessary.
- Organise your fiancé's suit if he has not already.

3 months to go:

- Print the programmes and menus.
- Send out the invitations.
- Ensure that your passports are still valid if you are honeymooning abroad. If not, do this immediately. Keep in mind that you will need to change your passport to your married surname if you want to travel as Mrs ...
- Book your make-up artist, hair dresser and beautician.
- Hire crockery and cutlery, if necessary.
- Organise your table plan.
- Decide on a hairstyle and experiment with colours now, if you are planning to dye your hair for the big day.
- Buy your wedding favours.

2 months to go:

- Write your vows and confirm with your wedding official that they are appropriate.
- Write or print the place cards.
- Choose your wedding rings and plan to have them made or customised.

1 month to go:

- Have a make-up and hair trial. Take photographs and include any accessories you want for the day (clips, veil, etc...) so that you have a good idea of the final effect.
- Collect the wedding rings.
- Write your speech.
- Book your final dress fitting.
- Ensure that you have bought gratitude gifts for your bridal party.
- Call *all* suppliers to confirm dates.

2 weeks to go:

- Confirm the final guest numbers and let the caterers know.
- Trim and colour your hair one last time before the wedding.
- Organise your rehearsal for the ceremony.
- Get any foreign currency that you may need for your honeymoon.
- Buy the refreshments, if you are responsible for arranging this yourself.
- This is around the time that Hen Parties and Stag Parties should be organised and held.

1 week to go:

- Visit the beautician for your eyebrow, bikini, upper lip and leg waxes so that you do not have any redness or rashes on the day.

2 days to go:

- Pack your bags for your honeymoon.

The day before:

- Wash your hair and use a light conditioner on it.
- Focus on relaxing and pampering yourself. Take long baths and make sure that you feel as relaxed as possible.

On the day:

- Organise for someone to pick your flowers up from the florist and deliver them to the ceremony and reception venues, as well as to get your bouquets to you.