

Step-by-Step Guide to Wedding Planning from
The Cotswold Wedding Planner

Whether you have a month or a year to plan your wedding, by taking a structured approach you can avoid unnecessary stress and pitfalls. Here is my step-by-step guide to ensure you plan your perfect day!

1. Get organised, whether you use an excel spreadsheet or a file and paper and pen; make sure you keep everything in one place so you are always in control of the process.
2. Write your guest list and finalise your budget. Do not leave this step till later! Without knowing the size of your wedding and your budget you may risk spending more than you can afford.
3. Sit down with your fiancé and decide on how you want to allocate your budget and what you both want from your wedding. If you don't have a shared vision, discuss how you can compromise.
4. Purchase wedding insurance! This is essential before you pay any deposits as otherwise you may not be covered.
5. Shortlist and view suitable venues. Before you pay a deposit ensure that you negotiate to get the best deal possible. Once money changes hands it will be difficult to negotiate aspects such as corkage. Also, check that the registrar, local church or celebrant is free on your chosen date and book at the same time so you secure the date. Follow their guidance regarding legal requirements.
6. Once your venue is chosen, look at the décor to help determine your style and colour palette. The most beautiful weddings are those that maximise the backdrop as part of their scheme rather than working against it.
7. Send out save the dates.
8. Order your dress. Many boutiques insist on a six month lead time. If your wedding is less than six months away, ensure your boutique is comfortable that they can supply the dress and complete fittings in time. Once you have your dress you can select bridesmaid dresses that compliment the bridal dress and fit in with your overall scheme.
9. Write your itinerary for the day. Always remember that it takes longer than you would anticipate for large number of guests to move from one place to another!
10. Order outfits for the groom and best men. Arrange who will be responsible for collecting and distributing them on the day.
11. Select suppliers, ideally through recommendations. Always check their previous work and, where possible, obtain references. Negotiate to get the best deal and read the small print in contracts carefully. An inspiration board can help you to communicate your style and colour palette.
12. Design and order your wedding stationery
13. Complete the legal requirements for your license. If you are using a celebrant finalise your wedding script.
14. Finalise your order of service / order of the day.
15. Wedding invitations are traditionally sent out 6-8 weeks before the wedding however many couples choose to send theirs earlier to allow guests more time to arrange transport and accommodation. Ensure they are with guests a minimum of 6 weeks before.
16. Communicate your play list to your DJ and provide your photographer with a list of required shots
17. Write your seating plan and ensure the caterers are aware of any dietary requirements as well as final numbers.
18. One week before the wedding reconfirm arrangements with all suppliers and resolve any discrepancies.

The Cotswold Wedding Planner, Rachel Brierley-Jones, creates stunning and unique weddings, ensuring your perfect day and a stress free planning process. Through full or partial planning and styling services, Rachel will create a bespoke solution to provide you with unrivalled expertise and support to suit your individual needs and vision for your wedding day.

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