



THE HAC



# *The Ultimate Wedding Planning Guide*

A step-by-step checklist for a  
stress-free wedding

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Planning a wedding is a significant undertaking, requiring careful organisation and attention to detail. This guide provides a structured approach, covering each stage of the process from budgeting to final preparations. With practical advice and a comprehensive checklist, it will support you in creating a well-organised and memorable occasion.

For those yet to secure their perfect venue, The HAC offers a stunning blend of historic elegance and modern luxury in the heart of London. With versatile event spaces, exceptional catering, and a dedicated team to bring your vision to life, The HAC provides the ideal setting for a truly unforgettable wedding.

**Start planning your wedding at The HAC today**

# 12+ --- Months Before

Getting started

52+ weeks  
to go



The initial stages of wedding planning set the foundation for a well-organised and seamless event. At this stage, key decisions should be made to establish the budget, guest list, and overall vision for the day.

1.

### Set your budget

Determining a budget early in the planning process will guide all subsequent decisions. Consider all major expenses, including venue hire, catering, attire, photography, and entertainment. It is also advisable to allocate a contingency fund for unforeseen costs.

☐
2.

### Draft your guest list

Creating a preliminary guest list will influence the choice of venue and overall budget. Couples should consider factors such as family expectations, venue capacity, and the type of atmosphere they wish to create.

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3.

### Choose a wedding date

Selecting a date involves balancing availability, seasonal considerations, and any personal or cultural preferences. It is beneficial to have some flexibility to accommodate venue availability and guest convenience.

☐
4.

### Find and book a venue

The venue plays a significant role in shaping the wedding experience. When visiting potential locations, factors such as capacity, accessibility, catering options, and ambiance should be taken into account. Booking early increases the likelihood of securing the preferred date.

☐
5.

### Consider hiring a wedding planner

For couples seeking professional guidance, a wedding planner can assist with logistics, supplier coordination, and ensuring the overall vision is executed effectively. Those planning without a professional should establish an organised system for managing tasks and timelines.

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# 9-12 *Months Before*

The big decisions

*40 weeks  
to go*



With the foundational aspects in place, this stage focuses on securing key suppliers and shaping the overall style of the wedding. Decisions made during this period will influence the finer details in the months to come.



# 1. Define your wedding style and theme

Establishing a clear vision will help guide decisions on décor, attire, and venue styling. Whether opting for a formal, rustic, modern, or destination wedding, couples should consider colour schemes, floral arrangements, and overall ambiance.



## Book key suppliers

**Securing essential suppliers early ensures availability and allows time for planning:**

- **Photographer and Videographer** – Research portfolios and schedule consultations to find a style that aligns with personal preferences.
- **Caterer** – If not included with the venue, selecting a catering service should factor in menu options, dietary requirements, and tasting sessions.
- **Entertainment** – Whether hiring a band, DJ, or other performers, availability may be limited for popular dates.
- **Florist** – Early consultations help determine floral choices in line with the season and budget.



# 3. Begin dress shopping

Wedding attire often requires multiple fittings, particularly for custom or tailored gowns. Brides should begin the search early to allow time for alterations, while grooms and wedding parties can explore formalwear options suited to the theme.



# 4. Send save-the-dates

For destination weddings or peak-season events, early notification helps guests plan ahead. While formal invitations will be sent later, save-the-dates ensure availability and travel arrangements can be made in advance.



# 6-9 *Months Before*

The details take shape

*24 weeks  
to go*



At this stage, the broader elements of the wedding begin to take form, with attention shifting towards styling, logistics, and guest arrangements. Securing remaining suppliers and finalising details will help ensure a smooth planning process in the months ahead.



- # 1.

## select wedding party attire

With the wedding theme and colour scheme established, now is the time to decide on bridesmaid dresses, groomsmen suits, and other wedding party attire. Allow time for fittings and potential alterations to ensure a coordinated look.

☐
- # 2.

## Book accommodation for guests

If many guests are travelling for the wedding, reserving a block of rooms at nearby hotels can be beneficial. Negotiating group rates and providing accommodation options on the wedding website will assist guests in making arrangements.

☐
- # 3.

## Plan wedding décor

Whether hiring a professional stylist or managing it personally, this stage involves selecting centrepieces, floral arrangements, table settings, and venue enhancements in line with the overall aesthetic.

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- # 4.

## Confirm catering and menu choices

Tasting sessions should now take place to finalise the menu. Consideration should be given to dietary requirements, seasonal ingredients, and presentation. If an open bar is planned, decisions should also be made.

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- # 5.

## Arrange transport and logistics

If transport is required for the couple, wedding party, or guests, securing vehicles in advance will ensure availability. Coordinating arrival times and travel arrangements will help the day run smoothly.

☐
- # 6.

## Plan the ceremony and reception schedule

The structure of the ceremony and reception should now be outlined, covering key moments such as the vows, speeches, meal service, and first dance. Timings should be coordinated with the venue and suppliers to avoid delays.

☐
- # 7.

## Book the honeymoon

For those planning a honeymoon immediately after the wedding, now is the time to confirm bookings and arrange travel documentation. Early reservations help secure better rates and availability, particularly for peak travel periods.

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# 4-6 *Months Before*

The personal touches



*16 weeks  
to go*

With the major arrangements in place, this stage focuses on refining the details that will personalise the wedding. From invitations to entertainment, these elements will help create a seamless and memorable experience for both the couple and their guests.

- |    |  |                          |
|----|--|--------------------------|
| 1. | <h3>Send out invitations</h3> <p>Formal invitations should now be sent to guests, providing essential details such as the venue location, start times, dress code, and RSVP instructions. Including a response deadline will assist with final guest count and seating arrangements.</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | <h3>Finalise the menu and wedding cake</h3> <p>Menu selections should be confirmed with the caterer, ensuring all dietary requirements are accommodated. The wedding cake design, flavour, and size should also be finalised, with a tasting session if necessary.</p>                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | <h3>Confirm hair and makeup</h3> <p>Brides and bridal parties should book hair and makeup artists, scheduling trial sessions to test different styles. It is also advisable to coordinate a timeline for preparations on the wedding day.</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | <h3>Arrange guest entertainment</h3> <p>In addition to music, couples may wish to provide additional entertainment such as photo booths, live performers, or interactive experiences to enhance the guest experience. Any necessary bookings should be made at this stage.</p>             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | <h3>Organise wedding favours and stationery</h3> <p>If providing wedding favours, now is the time to select and order them. Printed materials such as menus, place cards, and ceremony programs should also be designed and ordered.</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | <h3>Plan guest transport and seating arrangements</h3> <p>If transport has been arranged for guests, details should now be confirmed and communicated. Seating plans should also be drafted, considering relationships and dynamics between guests to create a comfortable atmosphere.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



# 2-4 *Months Before*

Finalising everything



*8 weeks  
to go*



With the wedding approaching, this stage is dedicated to confirming arrangements and ensuring all details are in place. This period also allows time for final adjustments before the schedule is set.

- |    |   |                          |
|----|---|--------------------------|
| 1. | <h3>Final dress fitting</h3> <p>Brides should attend their final dress fitting to ensure a perfect fit. Any necessary alterations should be completed at this stage, allowing time for adjustments if needed. Grooms and wedding party members should also finalise their attire and accessories.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | <h3>Create a wedding day timeline</h3> <p>A detailed schedule should be established, outlining the sequence of events from morning preparations to the end of the reception. This should be shared with the wedding party and key suppliers to ensure a coordinated approach.</p>                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | <h3>Confirm details with suppliers</h3> <p>Each supplier should be contacted to confirm final details, including arrival times, setup requirements, and any outstanding balances. A point of contact should be designated for the day to manage communications and logistics.</p>                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | <h3>Write vows and speeches</h3> <p>If writing personal vows, this is the ideal time to refine and practise them. Those delivering speeches should also prepare their remarks and rehearse in advance.</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | <h3>Plan for unexpected weather</h3> <p>If any part of the wedding is taking place outdoors, contingency plans should be put in place in case of adverse weather. This may include securing alternative indoor spaces or arranging suitable coverings.</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | <h3>Arrange wedding licence and legal requirements</h3> <p>Any necessary legal paperwork, such as marriage licences, should be obtained within the required timeframe. Couples should also check any location-specific regulations to ensure compliance.</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

# One \_\_\_\_\_ Month Before

The final countdown



*4 weeks  
to go*



As the wedding day approaches, final preparations should be completed to ensure everything is in place. This period is dedicated to reviewing details, confirming logistics, and making any last-minute adjustments.



1.

### Confirm final guest numbers

All RSVP responses should now be collected, with final numbers provided to the venue and caterer. Seating arrangements should be finalised, and any last-minute changes accommodated where possible.

☐
2.

### Check supplier confirmations

A final check-in with all suppliers should be conducted to reconfirm schedules, delivery times, and outstanding details. It is helpful to provide each supplier with the wedding day timeline to ensure alignment.

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3.

### Prepare an emergency kit

A wedding day emergency kit should be assembled, including essentials such as sewing supplies, stain remover, pain relief, plasters, and beauty touch-up items.

☐
4.

### Break in wedding shoes

To avoid discomfort on the day, wedding shoes should be worn around the house to soften them. Grooms and wedding party members should also ensure their footwear is comfortable.

☐
5.

### Organise payments and gratuities

Any outstanding supplier payments should be arranged in advance. If gratuities are being given, envelopes should be prepared and handed to a trusted individual for distribution on the day.

☐
6.


### Pack for the honeymoon

If leaving for the honeymoon shortly after the wedding, packing should be completed in advance to avoid last-minute stress. Any necessary travel documents should also be checked and prepared.

☐

# *The* \_\_\_\_\_ *Wedding Week*

Last-minute prep



*One week  
to go*



With only days to go, the focus should be on final checks, personal preparation, and ensuring everything is set for a smooth and enjoyable wedding day.

- # 1.

## Confirm rsmps and final seating plan

Any last-minute guest changes should be addressed, and the final seating plan should be printed or shared with the venue. Place cards and table arrangements should also be finalised.

☐
- # 2.

## Rehearse the ceremony

If a rehearsal is planned, it should be attended by the wedding party to ensure everyone is comfortable with their roles. This is also an opportunity to clarify any last-minute details with the officiant.

☐
- # 3.

## Prepare wedding attire

Wedding outfits should be steamed or pressed and laid out for easy access on the day. Shoes, accessories, and any additional items should also be organised.

☐
- # 4.

## Deliver décor and essentials to the venue

Any personal décor, signage, or wedding favours being set up at the venue should be delivered in advance to avoid last-minute transport issues.

☐
- # 5.

## Check the weather forecast

If outdoor elements are involved, the latest forecast should be checked, and contingency plans put in place if necessary. Umbrellas, alternative footwear, or additional coverings may be required.

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- # 6.

## Delegate responsibilities

Assigning key tasks to trusted friends, family members, or the wedding coordinator will help ensure everything runs smoothly. This may include managing gifts, handling supplier arrivals, or overseeing transport arrangements.

☐
- # 7.

## Take time to relax

With preparations complete, it is important to take time to rest and enjoy the final moments before the wedding. Scheduling downtime, getting enough sleep, and staying hydrated will help ensure a calm and enjoyable experience on the day.

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# *The Wedding Day*

Stress-free execution



*Today is  
the day*


With all the planning complete, the wedding day should be focused on enjoying the occasion. A well-structured schedule and clear delegation of tasks will ensure everything runs smoothly.



- # 1.


## Start the day calmly

Allow sufficient time for morning preparations, including hair, makeup, and dressing. A well-paced schedule will prevent unnecessary stress. Eating a light meal and staying hydrated will also help maintain energy throughout the day.


- # 2.


## Follow the timeline

A clear timeline should be in place, outlining key moments such as the ceremony, reception, speeches, and first dance. This should be shared with the wedding party and suppliers to keep everything on track.


- # 3.


## Ensure all key items are ready

The rings, vows, marriage licence, and any personal items should be accounted for before leaving for the ceremony. A trusted member of the wedding party can be assigned to oversee these essentials.


- # 4.


## Allow time for photography

Group and couple photographs should be factored into the schedule without feeling rushed. The photographer should have a list of key shots to ensure no important moments are missed.


- # 5.


## Be present and enjoy the moment

The day will move quickly, so it is important to take moments to pause and take everything in. Spending a few private moments together as a couple can provide a chance to reflect and appreciate the occasion.


- # 6.

## Trust the planning and let others handle the details

Unexpected situations may arise, but with a strong support team in place, any issues can be managed without disrupting the day. Delegating responsibilities allows the couple to focus on celebrating with their guests.



# *After* ————— *The Wedding*

What comes next?

Once the celebrations are over, a few final tasks remain. Sending thank-you notes to guests and suppliers, organising photo selections with the photographer, and handling any legal name changes are common post-wedding responsibilities. Couples may also wish to preserve key keepsakes, such as the wedding dress or bouquet, as lasting memories of the day.





## Notes:

# THE HAC

**The HAC Enquiries:** 020 7382 1537

**Venue Hire Enquiries:** 020 7382 1533

**Regimental Enquiries:** 020 7448 0703