

~ Blissful Affair ~

Weddings | Events | Consulting

**This complimentary guide will help
make your wedding day easier.**

Your wedding with style - choose *Blissful Affair*



TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL WEDDING

We at Blissful Affair spend many, many hours being involved in weddings and events. We also spend a great deal of time researching many resources to ensure that our weddings are “cutting edge and fresh!”

We love to be involved in Weddings, however appreciate that not everyone will engage us to take the journey with them. As a culmination of our experience and research, we at Blissful Affair offer a complimentary gift to you. Our “Tips to a Successful Wedding” is full of great ideas and hints which we believe will assist you with the planning of your big day.

And if you would like the team at Blissful Affair to make your big day easier, remember, we're just a phone call or click away!

INVITATION

There are so many different types, different wordings, different print types, colour options, bow options, envelope options not to mention the cards or correspondence that gets included. Your invitation style should be selected based on the type of wedding you are having and what mood, or style, you want to set for your big day. The invitation will also present who is hosting.

First, let's see what style of invitation you want to choose:

- Formal invitation
- Semi-formal invitation
- Hand written invitation
- Photographic invitation
- Religious invitation

The difference between the styles can be determined by the paper weight, colour, wording, typeface and print method, just to name a few variables.

FORMAL INVITATIONS are nearly always based on a white colour. It could be an ivory, cream, white, or a different shade near white. Formal invitations will also use an exquisite print method like engraving or thermography. Formal invitations often use an antique Roman type-face; you do not want to use fonts that are too fancy and not easily read. The invitations will also have a clean design, no graphics like flowers or rings, maybe a family crest or coat of arms if you have one. The coat of arms will usually be that of the bride's family.

SEMI-FORMAL INVITATIONS are probably the most popular. The style can vary greatly and you can customize these with colour, bows and graphics. Semi-formal invitations are usually printed at a specialty invitation shop by lithography. They can also be printed at home with a laser printer. They will often use a lighter weight paper and have ornaments of either ribbon or a bow. Some will make use of vellum overlays and others will be a single sheet or a folded invitation.

HAND WRITTEN INVITATIONS are often used for small intimate weddings, or for casual weddings and weddings not set in a traditional fashion. Hand written invitations can be very personal and can be used to convey the creativity of the couple. These invitations can be hand written by the couple, or by a professional calligrapher.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INVITATIONS make for a great keepsake. Engaged couples can have their own engagement photo placed right on the front of the invitation. The photo is often printed in one colour, usually that of the font being used on the inside. This is a creative and memorable option that loved ones will be sure to keep. Ask your printer if they offer this option.

RELIGIOUS INVITATIONS are very meaningful to those who want to incorporate their faith into their wedding. The invitations will often be folded with the front of the invitation offering an applicable bible verse on love. Graphics often include a cross, doves or design by typography.

DECORATIONS

Today almost all wedding ceremonies are either recorded on photographs or video films. This is to capture the memories of the occasion. So when we want to capture these moments we want it to look the best possible. And so decoration of the wedding venue becomes important. The decoration depends on the venue as well as the type of wedding. Let's look at some broader issues to be taken care of in wedding decoration.

SPACE

The decoration may look good but if it hinders the movement of the guests then it never serves the purpose. The decorations should be so made that there is enough space for the guests to move around freely and mingle with each other. The line of sight of the guests to the bride and groom should not be hindered. Everyone who has come for the wedding wants to see the wedding ceremony so it's very important that they have a clear view of the proceedings.

CONSULTATION

Consult with your photographer and video person as how your planned decoration would look on photos. Something may look very good in reality but on screen it may not live up to the expectation. The professionals have a good knowledge of what looks better on a video and in a photo. So it's imperative that their suggestions are given importance.

THE THEME SHOULD NOT OVERSHADOW THE MEANING OF THE WEDDING DAY

This is very important as what is more important is the wedding and not the theme. The theme should add uniqueness to the event. Care should be taken that the theme fits in with the customs and procedures of the wedding ceremony. Decoration should be made to enhance the wedding ceremony by blending the theme with the ceremony. One should not compromise with the spirit of the event just to make the decoration better.

TAKE PROFESSIONAL HELP

Arrange for a wedding coordinator. Give your personal time to make sure everyone has got the picture clear. It's important that the vision you have in your mind is communicated properly to the organizing people. Professionals have a very good idea about these things and can be of great help when it comes to decision making and budget planning for the event.

THE LOOK

The color scheme, materials used and costumes should all be in sync with the theme and also should not take the centre stage. While the theme should be reflected well in the decoration it should only compliment the wedding. You want the theme to add a surprise element to the event and not a shock.

It doesn't matter what kind of a wedding you are planning for, decoration does give colour to the event. If proper planning and execution is achieved the event can be memorable for not only the bride and the groom but also for everyone involved.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Most of us are not paid to be dressed up and photographed day in day out. So when you have the opportunity to do so on your wedding, not only do you want to look your best but also to capture the essence of your amazing day with creativeness and flair.

Photographers should add fun to the day not detract! Whilst recommendations from family and friends are fantastic, make sure you are satisfied with the photographers work.

HERE'S A LIST OF QUESTIONS WE RECOMMEND YOU ASK:

EXPERIENCE LEVEL

Has this person photographed other weddings? Does he/she do this for a living or for fun?

PHOTOGRAPHIC STYLE

Do you like the images that you are shown? There are "buzz" words flying about everywhere about photojournalism, formal, classic candid, and so on.

TRUTH IN ADVERTISING

Is this the photographer that will be photographing your wedding or will they send in who ever is available. Don't be shocked, this happens more often than you can imagine. Be certain that you know which photographer is going to be there and that you see HIS/HER work and meet with that individually face to face.

PERSONALITY

Is the photographer that you meet someone that you can get along with? Is the "chemistry" there?

PRICE RANGE

Although, the last thing you want to do is shop by price, is this person within your budget? If not, is he or she worth the price difference? Make sure you understand what everything costs, including reprints and albums.

DELIVERY

How long does it take to get your proofs back, thank you cards, your finished album, your bridal portrait, etc.?

OFFERING

Whether it's a la carte or a package, do you understand what you are getting? Is there any room for changes and will it cost to do so? Sometimes the packages are fixed, sometimes they can be customized, in any case, ask. How much time will he/she spend with you on the day? What if you need more time? Make sure that you know what's coming.

CONTRACT

Do you understand the contract. Is it fair? Is everything spelled out? When it comes down to going to court, only what is WRITTEN really counts, not what was promised. Make sure that you have no doubts before signing. Read it ALL

PHOTOGRAPHY

WHAT ABOUT DEPOSITS AND PAYMENTS?

What does it say about cancellations and the photographer not being there? If the photographer protests, ask him why? This is one area NOT to take lightly. You could be disappointed for a long time.

REFERENCES

A personal reference is always the best and people love to talk. Get a list of references from the photographer and check them out personally. A photographer who doesn't have references or is afraid to give them to you may not be the person that you need to hire.

OTHER QUESTIONS

- Have you photographed at my wedding and reception location before?
- Do you have an assistant?
- Do you have backup equipment and is it the same quality as the primary equipment?
- What time will you begin and how long will you stay?
- Do we get to keep the proofs?
- Do you mark your proofs?
- Where and how are your proofs marked?
- How much extra for unmarked proofs?
- Do we get to keep our negatives?
- How long do you keep the negatives and will you sell them to us?
- Do you use high speed film to expose natural light?
- Do you have tele-photo and wide-angle lenses?
- Do you work well with the other vendors? i.e.: coordinators, caterers, videographers.
- Can you work from a photo checklist that we create?
- Do you process and develop your own film and prints?

WHAT GOES ON THE ALL IMPORTANT CONTRACT?

- The name of your photographer
- The time that he/she arrives and leaves
- The number of proofs you will view in order to pick your enlargements and/or keep
- The description of the package you ordered
- A list of guaranteed prices for enlargements. If they have a brochure, get the photographer to write down the prices on the brochure that they will charge.
- The cut-off date for these brochure prices
- All additional charges, services, taxes, travel, etc... Get the exact cost on the contract
- An explanation of what happens if your photographer doesn't show up
- The date and deposit amount and how much is still owing
- Your name, address and phone number. The names and addresses of the ceremony and reception locations

FAVOUR/BOMBONIERE

There are a variety of wedding favours, or bomboniere to give your guests from the traditional sugared almond in net to personalised gift boxes and candles.

Wedding favours or bomboniere is the traditional way to thank guests for coming to celebrate your wedding. This European custom has become increasingly popular in Australia as couples discover the pleasure of giving guests a small memento of their day.

When choosing your wedding favours, there are a few things to remember and ask yourself before deciding:

- What time of the year is the wedding taking place? During the summer or winter?
- Are you interested in having edible favours or not?
- What is the theme of your wedding?
- Depending on your theme, do you want a favour that is theme related?
- Are you on a fixed budget or can you splurge a bit when sending your guests home with a gift to remember your day?
- Do you want to save money and DIY or order from an online company?
- Are you more of the elegant type or more of a casual bride?
- Be sure to purchase your favours at least 3 months prior to your wedding. That way you will not need to worry about ordering them last minute and you will also avoid any problems that may occur.
- Always order one per person, not one per couple.
- Always order at least 10 more than those planning to attend
- If ordering candy or food favours, make sure no-one is allergic to ingredients in favors.

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE DRESS RETAILER

1. How long will it take for the dress to be ready?

It usually takes four to eight months from the order date. If you get an answer that specifies a longer period of time and you're on a tight deadline, consider going with another retailer.

2. How many fittings will I need?

The average is three. (You will probably require more if a pattern is being created for you from scratch.) At the first fitting, the seamstress and you figure out what needs to be done: Is the hem too long or too short? Is the dress puckering anywhere? At the second fitting, you'll determine whether those initial goals were achieved, see if the dress is fitting as it should, and decide if any fine-tuning is required. By the third fitting, the dress is supposed to look just as it should on your wedding day. Ask a bridesmaid or a friend to tag along for a crash course in need-to-knows, like how to bustle the train.

3. Are fittings included in the cost of the dress?

Some stores offer a set number of fittings (usually three), which are included in the price, and they will charge an additional fee for more. (When it comes to couture gowns, unlimited fittings are usually included.) Some retailers do not provide any complimentary alterations but recommend that you use the in-house seamstress for fittings.

4. Can I customize anything on this dress?

This answer will vary, depending on the designer and the retailer. Some offer unlimited options. (Different neckline? Sure! Another colour? Why not?) Others won't change a thing. If the answer is a flat no, you can take the gown elsewhere for customization, such as additional beadwork or a lace overlay.

5. How far in advance do I need to book fittings?

Depending on the popularity of the store or the seamstress, you may have to plan way ahead to get the dates and the times you want. (The alteration process usually begins about six weeks from the wedding day.)

6. What happens if I gain or lose weight after the final fitting?

Seamstresses are used to dealing with fluctuations, as long as the changes are not too dramatic. So last-minute adjustments can probably be made without a big fuss. (If you think that gaining or losing a substantial amount of weight is in the cards, give your seamstress a heads-up as early as possible. That way, she'll be able to take needed measures, such as leaving extra fabric around the seams.) Check before-hand to see what those final tweaks will cost.

7. What are your refund and exchange policies?

Bridal shops are notorious for a tough-as-nails return policy—particularly if alterations have been made. It's a good idea to learn the rules upfront.

8. Will the dress have a built-in corset?

Built-in corsets tend to provide the best silhouettes, but if one is not available for your dress, ask the retailer what type to buy and if he or she can recommend a particular brand. (If the gown is made of a clingy, whisper-thin fabric, you may choose to forgo a corset, since its lines could be visible.)

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE DRESS RETAILER

9. What undergarments will I need?

If the dress has a built-in corset, you may not need additional undergarments. However, some women choose to wear their own lingerie under their corsets. If that's your plan, bring the goods along to every fitting.

10. Can I order extra fabric to have a wrap or a headpiece made?

When ordering additional fabric, make sure to specify that it comes from the exact same dye lot as that used for the dress; otherwise there could be variations in shade or tone that will prevent a perfect match.

11. What will the back of the dress look like when it's bustled?

You'll spend the majority of your day with the dress bustled, so you want to be comfortable (a longer train can translate into a cumbersome bustle) and love the look of the silhouette.

12. Can I have a written contract confirming all of the agreed-upon details, including the date my dress will be ready?

Reputable stores should be able to provide you with a binding contract that spells out the final price, any customization details, and an approximate date of arrival.

13. Do I have to pay a deposit?

The industry standard is to pay 60 percent of the total cost of the dress upon placing the order. If the retailer is asking for any more or less, it may be a red flag.

14. Will the dress I get look exactly like the one I tried on?

Since you're probably going to try on a sample that's not your exact size, the retailer should explain how the real thing is going to fit. Also, confirm that the fabric and the colour on the store model are precisely what the manufacturer will ship out.

15. What will the final cost of the dress be?

Find out if alterations or any customizations are included in the price you're quoted.

16. Will the dress be cleaned, pressed, and ready to wear when I pick it up?

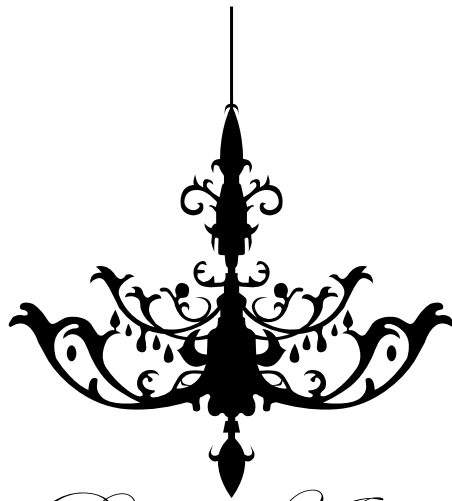
Unless you're buying a dress in as-is condition—say, at a sample sale or from an outlet—receiving it in wedding-ready condition should be part of the deal. Dry-cleaning a wedding dress isn't cheap. Prices start at around \$100 and go well beyond that. So if you buy a gown that does need cleaning, build that expense into your budget.

17. How much will it cost to have the dress packed for storage after the wedding?

Bridal salons often have a dry cleaner they will recommend to clean and preserve the gown. (Once it has been cleaned, the dress should be wrapped in acid-free tissue and put into an acid-free box.) The cost will vary, based on the type of fabric and the quantity of it. (For example, cleaning and storing a simple sheath is less complicated than doing the same with a voluminous ball gown.) Depending on the cleaner you go with, prepare to spend anywhere from \$130 to \$1,000 for the preservation process. Be careful to protect your investment, and check the dry cleaner's credentials.

18. Can I hold on to the fabric that is cut from the dress during alterations?

The answer should be yes! Those precious scraps can be big money savers: Wrap the material around the base of your bouquet, or have it turned into a small evening bag.



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