



Your wedding planner

Countdown to the big day

NSPCC   
Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.



## Your wedding planner

Thank you for supporting the NSPCC through your wedding. Your generosity will support our work with children and young people. As a thank you, we want to make your big day as special as possible.

Celebrity wedding planner **George Watts** – also known as **The Wedding Fairy** – has put together this wedding planning guide exclusively for Celebrate and Give couples. We hope his amazing insider knowledge and top tips will give you heaps of inspiration.



### The Wedding Fairy

#### George Watts

This is it girls! The countdown to the biggest day of your life has just begun and what a day it will be! Even from this early stage, suck up every moment and enjoy the planning process as much as the day itself. Of course, anyone who has been there will tell you how stressful it can be at times but I promise, if you are prepared and organised every second (well, nearly every second) will be a pleasure!

Gx

Find out more about George and what he is up to on his website  
**[www.theweddingfairy.tv](http://www.theweddingfairy.tv)**  
Follow the UK's leading wedding blog at  
**[www.theweddinggirl.co.uk](http://www.theweddinggirl.co.uk)**



#### The budget

So, where do we start? With the budget of course! I cannot emphasise how important it is to seriously work out how much dosh you can splash on your big day. I meet so many couples that don't do this and it can end in hideous disaster with the wedding being more of a financial headache than anything else.

- Remember, a fairytale does not have to cost a fortune. Utilise every talent available via your circle of family and friends.
- Make sure you tell anyone who will listen that you are tying the knot because someone somewhere will know a photographer, a hairdresser, a DJ or indeed anyone connected to the wedding industry.
- And finally, barter, barter and barter some more! You will be surprised how far you can stretch your cash simply by asking.

#### The master plan

Right girls, down to the nitty gritty, make sure you get out that laptop and start the all-important spreadsheet, otherwise known as 'your big day bible'. Month by month I want to know what is going on and when it is happening!

- At this stage, the date and venue is top priority. Once this is set everything else can fall into place. If you have a dream venue in mind, go visit the wedding coordinator and ask what can be achieved with your budget. Don't be afraid to ask!
- If you are not sure on a venue pick out five in your local area and go from there. Even if you don't like any of them hopefully they will spark some ideas.
- At this stage, be adventurous. Think about a day that reflects you both as a couple. If you love the ocean why not go nautical or maybe a medieval banquet is more your thing?

When planning "your big day bible" please also consider some "you" time for rest and relaxation. Organise some non-wedding activities to do with your partner each week in the months leading up to the big day.

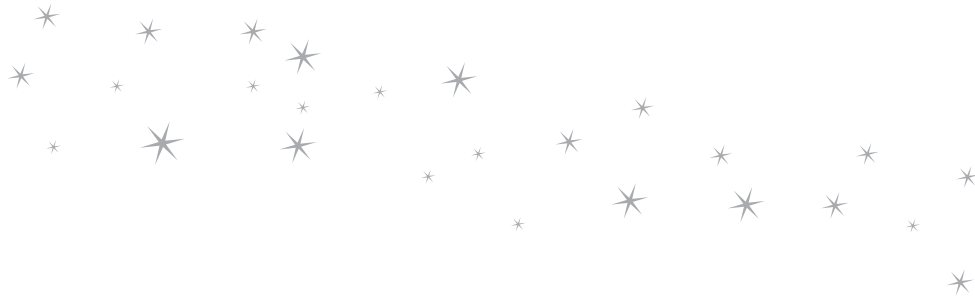




## 12 months

### 12 months checklist

- Start researching dresses, shoes, and accessories, make a scrapbook of ideas and pictures that you like.
- Discuss with family who will be paying for what. It's important to sort this out at the very beginning.
- Choose a venue for the ceremony and reception.
- Arrange a meeting with your priest, minister, rabbi or registrar to discuss dates and plans for the wedding.
- Finalise your wedding date and book the venues.
- Choose members of your wedding party.
- Pick out or design your save-the-date cards, invites and thank you cards.
- Make a decision about how many guests to invite to the ceremony and the reception and begin making a guest list.
- Send save-the-date cards if your wedding is in peak time or abroad.



## Nine months

Ok, nine months is all about research, planning and booking. The bridesmaid outfits and your dress are priority numero uno. It's time to start thinking about your look for the day because Cinderella will go to the ball (past midnight hopefully) and look a billion dollars regardless of her budget! Grab a ton of wedding dress images and stick them in a scrapbook for inspiration then take this along to your chosen dressmaker or store. Make sure you have a dressing up day and try on lots of dresses you might not even like the look of – sometimes a girl can be surprised. Whatever you do, just remember that magical line: "Fashions fade, style is eternal" – Yves Saint Laurent. What a God!

### Nine months checklist

- Book wedding insurance if required.
- Start researching dresses, shoes, and accessories, make a scrapbook of ideas and pictures that you like.
- Order invites and thank-you cards.
- Finalise your guest list.
- Research local accommodation for out of town guests.
- Put together a wedding website to keep guests up-to-date.
- Plan the honeymoon and consider booking now if you are honeymooning in peak time (don't forget to book time off work).
- Make a final decision on your dress and shoes and place your order.
- Pick out and order bridesmaids' dresses.
- Put together your gift list if you're having one (remember to include gifts to suit all budgets). You can incorporate NSPCC donations as part of your gift list if you wish. To find out how, please call the NSPCC Celebrate and Give team on 0207 825 2814.
- Send out invites if your wedding is in peak season or to those who are coming from abroad.

Remember to put an RSVP date to save last minute chasing. Include gift list details your wedding website link.



## Six months

Ok, this is it! Only six months to go, you need to stop researching and start making some decisions quick sharp! The past few months have been spent starting the preparation for your dream day and now you have to start making it a reality. Live by your “big day bible” and start spending!

When it comes to suppliers, make sure you always have a final two in mind, just in case one lets you down for whatever the reason. Ensure you discuss payment procedures with any potential supplier in advance of booking. Some might have better deals than others, which may make your final decision a little easier! Make sure you get all agreements in writing.

**In a few months time, everything is going to slot into place  
– I am hysterical just writing about it!**

### Six months checklist

- Start researching and book your photographers, caterers, florists, etc.
- Start the process of changing your name on legal documents – get together all necessary paperwork.
- You need to allow plenty of time if you want to change your name on your passport for your honeymoon. You also need to get your minister or registrar to sign the passport form.
- Your fiancé should start looking at outfits for him and his attendants.
- Sit down with bridesmaids to delegate jobs.
- Make sure your fiancé orders his wedding day outfit.
- Book your honeymoon if you haven't already.
- Confirm the order for the ceremony and decide on plans for the service, readings and music. If you are getting married in church you will need to talk to the minister and organist about the music.
- Choose and order your cake.



## Three months

Well girls, the last nine months of planning and research all comes into play right now as you lay down your cards and splash the last of your cash. This is the time when the day should start to really take shape.

**It's exciting times – wedding rings, entertainment, menus – the list is endless!**

This month has the potential to be rather hectic so make sure you set aside some quality rest and relaxation time to prevent any potential stress attack! Keep calm and follow the plan that you have worked so hard on in the early stages. If at this point you are not armed with your personal “big day bible” then make sure you act post haste to build one! Every bride-to-be needs an A-Z of what to do and when. Luckily you won't have to work too hard as you can use this nifty countdown to guide your every move.

Keep sight of the big day itself and everything will be dandy! The aisle is in sight now, I promise.

### Three months checklist

- Send out invites now if your wedding is not in peak season. Remember to put an RSVP date to save last minute chasing and include gift list details.
- Book your first night hotel.
- Fiancé should order his attendants' outfits.
- Pick out your wedding rings.
- Go back for a dress fitting.
- Book in your wedding rehearsal for a few days before the actual day.
- Book your accommodation for the wedding night.
- Decide on music – book a band or DJ.
- Book wedding day transport.
- Finalise your menu with the caterers.
- Book a make-up artist and hairdresser if you are not doing your own. Have a trial run to figure out a look you are happy with. If you are doing your own start experimenting with looks now.
- Run through everything with your fiancé to make sure he has organised everything he was supposed to, such as his and his attendant's outfits, gifts, rings, etc.
- Find out if you need visas or inoculations for your honeymoon.
- Discuss hen and stag nights with the maid of honour and best man.



With just two months to go it's time to have some fun! Hopefully the nitty gritty details are now all under control and you can start thinking sexy undies and shopping with the girls! This is a time for you and your partner to really start enjoying the build-up. Practice your vows in bed, rehearse the wedding ceremony and wash it all down with a bottle or two of vino! The latter will definitely help with pre-day nerves – but don't binge drink. Think of your skin!

At this stage, I would also just check over your "big day bible" and our fabulous 12-month plan to make sure all the key elements have been checked off and are under control, just for peace of mind of course.

#### Two months checklist

- Chase any guests who have not returned their RSVP.
- Start writing vows and speeches.
- Buy gifts for the wedding party.
- Buy favours. Celebrate and Give favours are a lovely way of sharing your support for the NSPCC with your guests. Call **020 7825 2814** to order favours to support the NSPCC.
- Shop for decorations.
- Pick out bridal underwear.
- Give your caterers and venue a final number of guests.
- Decide on a seating plan if you are having one.
- Best man and chief bridesmaid to organise and book stag and hen parties and to notify all hens and stags of arrangements and date.
- Buy your honeymoon outfits and essentials.



It is not unusual for anxiety to start kicking in now as the big day is just around the corner and is almost a reality. This is the time when both of you have to be there to support each other. Keep sight of how you felt 11 months ago and how magical you will feel on the big day. If you start tensing up over minor details, just stop and imagine how incredible it's going to feel when you say, "I do". That special moment will help keep things in perspective.

**Grab that box of tissues girls, I feel a ceremony coming on!**

#### One month checklist

- Have a final trial run with the person doing your hair and makeup or if you are doing your own, make sure you are happy with the look you have decided on.
- Go back for a final dress fitting and try on the entire outfit: dress, shoes, underwear, veil/tiara, etc.
- Decide on a seating plan and prepare place cards and menus for the tables.
- Start wearing in your shoes at home (only on carpet so as not to ruin them).
- Make sure your fiancé has finished his vows/speeches, etc.
- Buy a guest book.
- Pick a going away outfit, if required.
- Make sure you have your something old, new, borrowed and blue.





## One week

One week to go...STAY CALM. There may be a last minute crisis but if you remember everything from the last 12 months, you will be fine. Where there is a will there is a way! Truest saying my mother ever taught me.

### One week checklist

- Pick up your dress.
- Pack for your honeymoon (don't forget to pack your passport).
- Make sure you have got your holiday insurance and currency.
- Speak with venues, caterers, florist and band to re-confirm everything so you are not panicking the day before.
- Have a rehearsal diner.
- Make sure your fiancé has an appointment to have his hair cut or tidied.
- Have your hen and stag nights.



## One day to go

Just soak up every moment now because the day is all yours. Go with the flow and let everything fall into place. Enjoy a champers breakfast and make sure your nearest and dearest pamper you big time. Good luck for tomorrow!

**Enjoy every second girls!**

### One day to go checklist

- Go for manicure and pedicure.
- Have a big glass of wine and relax!



## The week after the wedding

Post honeymoon, return to your "big day bible", ensuring all the loose ends have been tied up. Make sure suppliers are paid as agreed and anything hired has been returned without problem. Send out all your thank you cards (including suppliers) and organise a wedding night for all the key members of your big day to enjoy drinks, the wedding video and a few honeymoon snaps!

If you haven't already changed all your legal documents you should start that process now.

**Right, that's it! All I can say now is best of luck and enjoy every second of your new beginning.**

**G x**

