

# Wedding day bliss

Organising a wedding requires a superhuman effort and a good survival plan to help you get the most out of one of the biggest events of your life.

Anyone who thinks a big wedding can be organised without frustration, cross words or feelings of being overwhelmed needs a reality check.

There are bound to be hiccups. The bride's mother fancies the big white wedding with six bridesmaids; the groom's people want to book St Paul's Cathedral and have 300 guests. But the couple wants a simple wedding for close friends and family in Aunty Flo's gorgeous cottage garden.

How can the bride and groom minimise the hassles and still keep the peace and relationships intact?

Parents' feelings need to be considered because a wedding is a symbol that their job of parenting has had a successful conclusion – that their son and daughter are starting new lives together in the presence of friends and family.

There will be different opinions about what sort of wedding they should have, which relatives make the invitation list, how many of the couple's friends can be included and how many (and who) will be in the wedding party.

The key to managing these issues is to encourage a range of opinions and listen to them all. This isn't the same as agreeing with everyone's point of view, but family members will feel less aggrieved if their views have been considered and final decisions explained.

Finalising the guest list can be fraught. Work out a list of nearest and dearest to be invited, and a list of those you are unable to accommodate.

Advise the latter you would love to have them at the official reception, but finances and numbers make it impossible. Consider asking them to join you at a separate celebratory function, such as a barbecue, before the big day. Usually they will understand.

Of course, if your family members refuse to listen to anything other than their own opinions, you will just have to try your best, then plan what you both want. It is your day, after all.

Thankfully though, most couples get to the wedding day with everyone wanting it to be a success for the most important people: the bride and groom.

## Survival tips

- **Allow everyone to express an opinion, so they know their ideas have been taken into account.**
- **Remember that listening to someone's opinion is not the same as agreeing with them. You won't be able to please everyone and in the end will have to make your own decisions.**
- **If you can't have everyone you would like to the wedding, then consider an additional function to celebrate with them.**