

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO PLANNING YOUR WEDDING



BY JAKE TIMMS PHOTOGRAPHY

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Hi There

Meet Me, Jake

I'm an Elopement & Wedding
Photographer based in Cornwall,
Travelling World Wide!

Are you ready to plan the best day of your life ... your wedding. Get ready to plan a day that not only you will love but your friends and family will not be able to stop talking about.

Having photographed lots and lots of weddings I'm in a unique position to help you create an epic wedding experience. I've seen the highs and lows, so let's make sure your wedding is one to remember for all the right reasons.

Let's get down to business. Trying to plan a wedding isn't an easy task and doesn't just happen with a click of the fingers. It requires research and lots of planning. But this is where I come in.



This is the ultimate wedding planning guide that will help you not waste time and make sure that your wedding runs like clockwork.



DECIDE WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU

First things first. Step one. We have to start with the basics and figure out what is the most important aspect of your wedding to you. Everyone is unique and has a different opinion about what is most important for them. For instance one couples priority could be the party where as another couples priority might be the location. Don't try and dive into the world of social media here to help you (you're here to plan your wedding). Get out a nice bit of paper (maybe a bit old fashioned), sit down together and write down your most important parts of your wedding. After all you want a wedding that reflects your personalities.

Questions you might like to ask yourselves:

1. Is food always on your mind? Your wedding meal could be one of the highlights of your guests' wedding experience.
2. Do you prefer a quieter, more relaxed life and you really treasure intimacy? You might want to consider having an unplugged intimate wedding ceremony.
3. Do you both enjoy adventure, or jetting off to exotic and warm places to bask in the sun? A destination wedding could be the best way to celebrate your day.



Why though? Overwhelm could set in if you try to juggle too much of an information overload from the likes of Pinterest, Instagram or Google if you go straight there and not concentrate on what you want. You're here to live your dream wedding not a Pinterest wedding.

To sum up here - don't get swayed looking at someone else's dream wedding. Start by identifying what you both really want so you can plan a wedding that matches your style and your personalities.

WORK OUT WHAT MOST EXCITES YOU

Let your imagination run wild. Your wedding adventure awaits. So what excites you two the most? Is it adventure? Is it spending time with your close friends and family? Having a five course Michelin-star wedding meal? An endless supply of the finest liquor? A location that allows you to reconnect with nature? The list is endless really, I could carry on this guide with possibilities but you might get bored.

Figure out what would make your day feel really special and the next steps will come easy.





LIST YOUR NON-NEGOTIABLES

Now you've figured out what gets you excited about having your wedding day, you can now think about what you want set in stone - those non-negotiables.

So this is the part where you have to decide the wedding bits you can not live without on your wedding day. Let's say you could only have five non-negotiables on your wedding day, what are those? Does your list include a grand six tier cake expertly decorated with your favourite things? How about a wedding dress that is practical - ready for you to drop some shapes as well as having pockets? Or would it be arriving to your venue in a horse drawn carriage?

No matter what decision you've just made (I'm excited to hear all of them), it is important you know what the most important aspects of your day are. This will help you from getting overwhelmed by a massive to-do list. Just one step at a time and you'll have your wedding planned in no time.

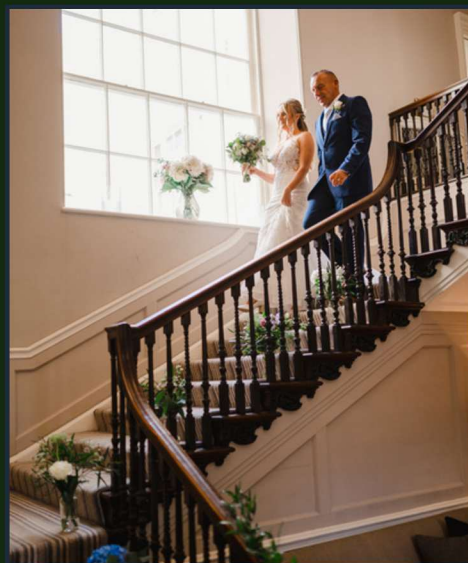


BUDGETING

Crafting Your Wedding Budget

Money is not a subject we like to talk about that much. But knowing your wedding budget is key so you can make sure you can get everything you want to have on your special day.

Whilst having a wedding budget might sound boring and restrictive, it's actually one of the first things to plan and think about when starting to plan your wedding. Many couples will spend more than 2 years rent on their wedding day and whilst the majority of them will have a budget at the beginning of their wedding planning adventure, according to hitched a massive 45% of couples will blow the budget. This is why it's really important that you have some sort of budget otherwise your costs can quickly spiral out of control.



BUDGETING

However, a budget alone will not stop you from overspending or from just not realising how much you are spending. In order to understand and avoid out of control costs you need to be keeping track of all of your expenses and logging them against your budget so that you can see exactly where your money is going. That will then in turn tell you if you need to adjust your budget up or down in different areas to compensate for anything that is costing more, or less, than anticipated.

Lots of people ask what a realistic budget is for a wedding and, in all honesty, there is no one answer, your budget could be as little as £1000 or as much as £80,000, it really depends on the size of your wedding, how extravagant you want it to be, the number of guests you want to have, and of course the money at your disposal.

Breaking down your wedding budget.

So how can you reign in any overspending on what will be the happiest day ever? You already know the basics (keep the guest list in check, don't get married on a Saturday) but how do you ensure that you still have an epic wedding day and don't start married life in loads and loads of debt?



BUDGETING

One way to look at your budget is to start by thinking about what is most important to you, what are the things you **MUST** have, if you are somebody who has always dreamed of getting married in a church and arriving by horse drawn carriage and this is important to you then ensure you factor this in.

Similarly if your groom to be has always wanted a bespoke suit made for the wedding day then you need to figure out the likely costs for these. Next, look at the things you would **LIKE** to have and again figure out the potential costs – do the two-combined fall within your means? If not then you will need to revisit and remove a few things or look for cheaper alternatives, if on the other hand you think you have money to spare then you could look at what would be nice **EXTRA's** to include that will enhance your day further.

This can form the basis of your budget planning, which includes a breakdown of the **MUST** have's and **LIKE** to have's which you can then log actual costs against so you can easily keep track of where your money is going and keep a look out for any adjustments you need to make along the way.

Many couples struggle to work out how much money you should allocate for each one of their suppliers. This is where good old-fashioned research comes in. Once you have a rough idea of the time of year you'd like to be married, talk to wedding suppliers who look as though they match your theme and price point. Many of their websites will give you an idea of what their prices start at. This will give you a good indication of what to include on your budget.

A good idea for keeping within your budget is to plan for a contingency too and setting aside around 10-15% more than you planned to spend. This will ensure any missed costs can be taken care of without too much stress and if you don't end up spending it, you can always put it towards wedding day gifts or a honeymoon experience!



FINDING INSPIRATION





FINDING INSPIRATION

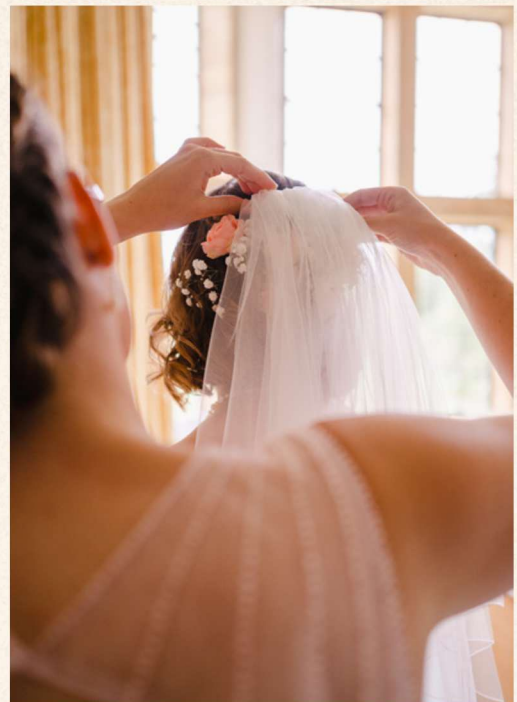
DECIDE ON YOUR THEME

Let the fun part commence ... your time to go wild and get creative.

Time to seek that creative wedding inspiration you need (while sticking to your vision and budget of course). Hold up, I can hear you asking why are we only now doing this and not whilst we were crafting our vision and setting the all important budget? There's one reason major reason for this. Now you know what you want and how much you want to spend will help you in searching for realistic wedding inspiration.

CREATE A MOODBOARD

I don't know about you but I love a good mood board. It enables everyone to share the same artistic vision. There is one app that rules them all when it comes to creating a mood board and that's Pinterest. If you haven't heard of Pinterest before you need it for wedding planning. It's an app where you can easily create a wedding mood board and then save images to it that reflects your creative vision for your wedding. Plus it allows you to share your vision with your fantastic suppliers, friends and family. If you're not familiar with the term, a mood board is a visual representation of a concept, project or style using images, text, colour palettes, textures, etc.



TARGET YOUR SEARCH

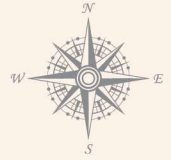
Now that you've created a creative vision masterpiece and found out what is really important to you. You can get rid of the generic Google or Pinterest searches and be a little more specific. This will help get you suppliers that match your wedding vision. For instance instead of typing “best wedding venues” (which will come back with millions of results) try typing “best intimate wedding venues in Cornwall.” Or how about instead of “UK wedding photographers” try “intimate wedding photographers based in Cornwall.” So much easier ... am I right?



CHOOSING A VENUE



CHOOSING A VENUE



Your wedding venue creates the scene for your epic wedding and ultimately enables me to craft your amazing wedding photos. Each wedding venue is brilliantly unique and has the ability to effect how your wedding photos turn out and how much you'll enjoy your day.

If you chose a wedding venue that's intimate, is set in the most gorgeous location and filled with beautiful natural light, we'll be able to create something magical together through my bright and natural style.

Keeping in mind all venues are unique and different. The wedding venue you choose may suit an alternative style to mine so finding the right wedding photographer that shares your vision is really important.

You need to be able to ask the right questions to make the right decision and book the right wedding venue for you.



CHOOSING A VENUE

Your wedding venue is the setting for the most amazing day of your life. I'm ready to help you make your day unforgettable.

Lighting is everything, and plays a major role in creating your desired atmosphere and aesthetic for your wedding. This can impact the general feel of your celebration and in-turn the overall look of the photos. Venues filled with gorgeous natural light will look amazing for someone who wants a deep connection with the outdoors and if you're wanting the venues decor to be packed full of neutral tones. Whereas a darker venue (a venue that uses more ambient than natural light) suits you if you're after more dramatic, contrasting vibe and photos. Have you got a particular photography style that you are drawn too? If yes go for a venue that suits the look you want in your wedding photos.

Windows ... and yes the bigger the better. Windows that let in a greater amount of natural light will make for more flattering portraits and preparation photos. Think neutral - go for rooms with plain walls. This can bring a sense of elegance and will help from having too many distractions in the photos. Not every room are going to have these features but the biggest thing to takeaway is the amount of natural light these rooms have - the more the better.



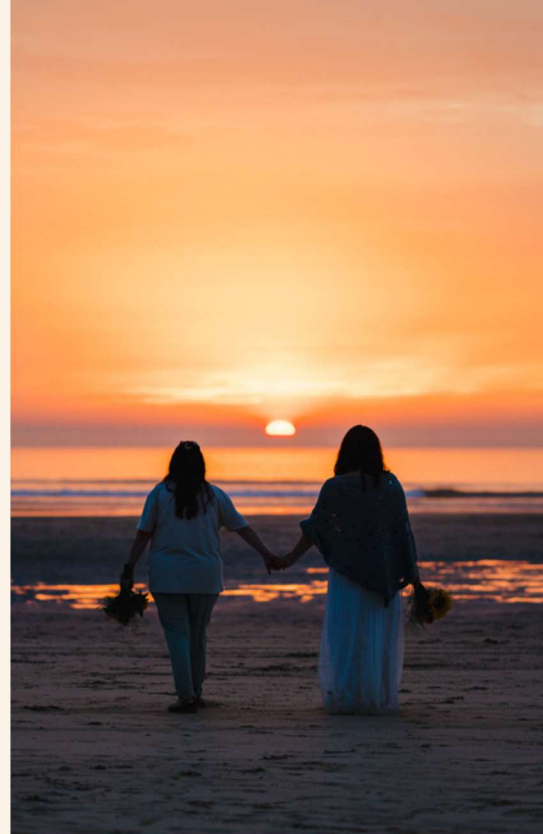
And finally, if you're planning an outdoor wedding or eloping...

Make sure that you have a backup indoor venue especially if the weather can be temperamental and unpredictable in that particular location. It pays to always be prepared!



BOOKING YOUR SUPPLIERS





BOOKING YOUR SUPPLIERS

It's difficult to achieve a visually stunning wedding if you don't involve the right kind of suppliers. They are the ones who will help bring your vision to life. They can make or break your wedding aesthetics so you need to choose well. Go for suppliers who can work with you to achieve the style you're going for. And most importantly, go for suppliers who will make your wedding day a breeze.

Top tips

Here are some of my top tips for booking your suppliers if you want a visually stunning wedding:

- Personal touch or a professional. Your wedding is unique and you might want to add some personal touches and involve your friends and family. But try to not rely on friends and family to do too much as they're there to celebrate you two. Hiring a professional can help reduce the feeling of overwhelm, knowing you are in good hands. For instance hiring a professional photographer is important so you can cherish these special memories for years to come.
- Choose a supplier based on their portfolio on their website or social media. This will give you a good idea of what they are capable of and will also help you decide if they're the right match for you. Hint - look at supplier reviews!
- If you don't have the luxury of time to do research on the right kind of suppliers, consider hiring a stylist or a planner. If you want to retain control of the wedding planning but you're particular about the aesthetics, then hiring a stylist will do wonders for your wedding aesthetics. A stylist will be able to help you create a certain look, source styling props and identify suppliers who can meet your brief.



CREATING A TIMELINE

Why You Should Create a Wedding Timeline:

Most of us aren't event planners, so it's understandable that figuring out how to organise every little aspect of your wedding day can be a little daunting. Especially when you have to try and keep all aspects in order to make sure that it runs smoothly without a little speed bump.

We are here in this together, so I'll make sure you leave here feeling all refreshed. We'll plan out a solid wedding day timeline for your big day ahead of time so that you can keep the creeping anxiety of "it's my wedding day, I have no idea what is going on...and why are the caterers coming at dawn when we've planned a sit-down dinner at eight?!" well and truly at bay.

A timeline for your wedding is not only helpful for you, but it's also really helpful for any staff or suppliers that are working together to pull off your event. Having everyone on the same page can be a lifesaver (and a timesaver!).

In my experience, the more planning a couple does before the big day, the more their wedding runs like clockwork. The best part of doing some major planning ahead of time? Your only job during the ceremony and reception will be to enjoy yourself and soak in every moment.

One tip: Try to be realistic when allocating time to each specific section – you don't want to feel rushed in completing any step. It's much better to have a little bit of extra time than to stress over a task not being completed.



CREATING A TIMELINE

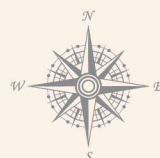
Example Wedding Day Timeline with a 1pm Ceremony -

Start your wedding day timeline by writing down all of the non-negotiable details you have already agreed upon, such as your ceremony start time, ceremony finish time, reception start time, and reception finish time.

This could include the time you have the venue reserved and the deadline for taking everything down at the end of the evening. These essential components on your timetable will provide you with a framework for your day, which you can then work around.

Now you know when food will be served, when the bar opens and closes, when you may get your hair and makeup done, and when guests can arrive for the ceremony and the evening festivities.

I always make sure to study my couples' wedding day timeline as a wedding photographer and videographer so I can capture the important details naturally.



CREATING YOUR TIMELINE

Of course, every wedding is unique, but your wedding may flow something like this, assuming you have a 1pm ceremony:

- Bride prep photos - 10:00
- Groom prep photos - 11:00
- Guest arrival at the ceremony - 12:30
- Bride arrival at the ceremony - 12:45
- Ceremony commences - 1pm
- Ceremony concludes - 1:45
- Group photos - 2pm
- Family photos - 2:30
- Bridal party photos - 2:45
- Couple portraits - 3pm
- Guests to be seated at the reception - 4pm
- Bride and groom to enter the reception - 4:15
- Food Is Served - 4:30
- Speeches - 6:30pm
- Cutting the cake - 7:45
- The first dance - 7:50pm
- Father/daughter dance - 8pm
- Sunset portraits - 8pm
- Evening Snacks- 8:30
- Dancing - 9pm
- Exit



ADDITIONAL THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CREATING YOUR WEDDING DAY TIMELINE, INCLUDE...

Getting Ready -

This step can sometimes be a long process if you have a larger bridal party or if everyone is getting their makeup and hair done. If you're getting married in the afternoon and you hate waking up early, consider hiring more than one makeup artist and hairdresser – this can make the process more streamlined.

If you want photos taken of you getting ready, it's best to get your makeup and hair done last so that you'll still look fresh when it's time for the ceremony.

Make sure to coordinate a time with your photographer so they can also capture the groomsmen getting ready. When planning out your wedding day timeline ahead of the wedding, communicate with your makeup and hair artists and work out an estimate of how much time they'll need to complete their work on your whole wedding party. Then add in a little spare time so that getting ready can be stress-free.



CRAFTING YOUR TIMELINE

During The Ceremony-

When thinking through the timing for your ceremony, it's important for you to consider what time of year you're getting married since this will determine when the sun will set. For a summer wedding, I recommend having your ceremony later in the afternoon (especially for outdoor ceremonies), as this will give you the best lighting opportunities for your photos.

Plus, you won't want your guests to be uncomfortable in the hot sun, which can happen if your ceremony is booked for midday.

Getting married in winter? I think it's best to have the ceremony much earlier in the day than you would for a summer wedding so that you don't lose all the light for your photos. If all of your wedding events are happening indoors or at night, you don't need to be concerned about when the sun sets (unless the venue has a lot of glass, this can lead it to getting hot inside).

Also, when planning your wedding day timeline, it's a good idea to leave about one and a half to two hours in between your ceremony and the reception. You don't want to leave your guests hanging around for too long before the party actually starts.

If you're not sure of how much time to allow for the ceremony itself, talk to your wedding planner or whoever is in charge of events at the venue. They can help give you an idea of how much time your ceremony will take so that you can be prepared.



CRAFTING YOUR TIMELINE

Taking Portraits -

Don't forget to include portrait-taking time in your schedule. I like to allot 10-15 minutes for a group photo (more if you have a large bridal party), 10-15 minutes for any family photos, and 45 minutes for portraits of the bride and groom (don't worry this can be split up into chunks if you wish to stay at the venue).

Some photographers can get photos done quicker than 45 minutes, but I'd say this is a good general estimate to ensure you have plenty of time.

If you want your photos taken outside, the later in the day the better. I have to point out that it's crucial for you to plan travel time on your timeline too. Try to think through the little details of what your day will be like – for example, you're not going to want to take portraits after you've been stuck in traffic for hours.

Also, I recommend planning ahead and Googling any special events that might be on your route to the venue. You definitely don't want to run into any pesky roadworks on your way! Trust me with this tip – I've been caught in heavy traffic due to massive events on my way to venues. Plus, if you're getting married in a more built-up area, you should add an extra 15 minutes to your drive to account for traffic.

If you're interested in taking portraits at an offsite location, you should factor in driving time (with traffic), time to park, and the time it might take to find an uncrowded spot to shoot within your wedding day timeline.



CRAFTING YOUR TIMELINE

During The Reception -

To make sure everyone is on the same page, include as many details for your reception on your wedding day timeline as possible. I like to have my bride and groom take 10 minutes out of their reception to snap a few portraits when the sun is setting (golden hour), so find out exactly when the sun will set on your big day and schedule the time in.

None of my clients has ever regretted taking those 10 minutes for an amazing portrait framed by the sunset. Also, since you might not know exactly when your reception will end (who knows how long the dancing will go on?), consider having the photographer get all of the formalities done at the start of the night.

This can be a great option if you paid for a smaller package or if you don't need the photographer to stick around all night. I love doing 'sparkler exits' or 'confetti exits' before the night is over – if you plan when this will happen ahead of time, your photographer will know exactly when they can leave the event without missing any important moments



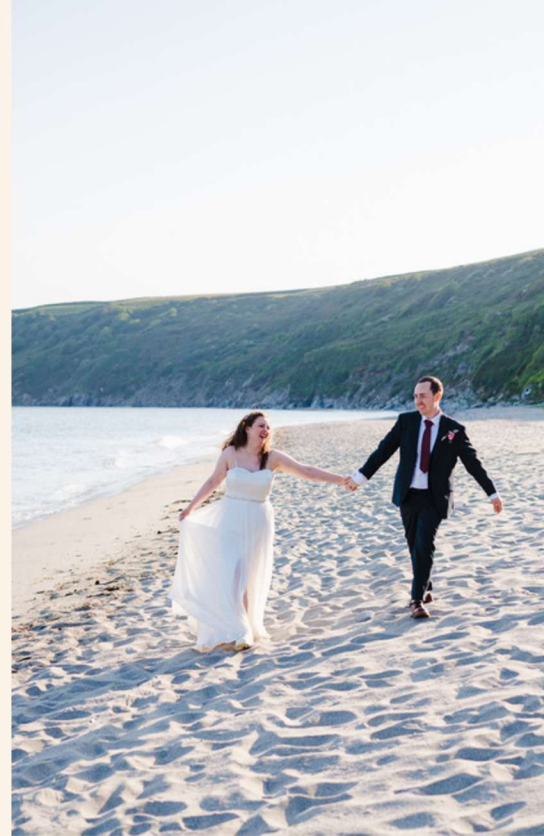
CRAFTING YOUR TIMELINE

Don't freak out if everything doesn't go exactly planned on your wedding day (you can't control the weather, right?). It's totally okay to be flexible. In fact, sometimes those improvised moments can turn into the best parts of your celebration.

We can always make things work in the end; just be sure to keep talking with your photographer and the rest of the staff so everyone can make last-minute changes if required. Leave yourself plenty of spare time throughout your schedule, so that you have time to sip Champagne and have cuddles with your family.

With your wedding day timeline in hand, you'll be able to sit back, relax, and get the very most out of your special day!





Planning a wedding is so much fun when you know what you're doing and you have someone there to guide you along your wedding adventure. You've got a few big tasks to sort and I'm happy I could help you.

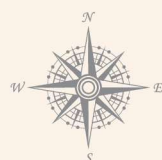
There's one task you might not of ticked off your list, and that's finding your wedding photographer. Finding the right wedding photographer that you trust with capturing your special moments, in my mind, is the most important you need to do. They enable you to look back over beautiful moments, hold them in your hands and share them with the world.

It will be an honour if you wanted me to photograph your wedding. From stunning candid to amazing photos of you two, no special moment will be missed.

Let's start your wedding adventure together.

Thank you and speak soon,

Jake



TESTIMONIAL



Jake photographed our wedding and did the best job! It was an absolute delight having him around and he got the balance perfectly of taking us off for pics / a quiet moment, and mingling with friends. He communicated well before the day and was really unobtrusive during the ceremony etc. Absolutely love all the action shots and the emotion in the photos - it really feels like he captured the day so well and listened to our requests with editing pics etc. He was so quick at getting some of our photos back to us (within 2 days) and created the most lovely video slideshow of our photos. Thanks again- really can't recommend enough.

Rosss & Lauren



THANK YOU

YOUR WEDDING ADVENTURE IS JUST BEGINNING



IF YOU WANT MORE HEAD OVER TO MY WEBSITE
WHERE YOU'LL FIND LOTS OF USEFUL INFORMATION.
FROM VENUE CHECKLISTS, BUDGET PLANNERS AND TOP
TIPS BLOGS



WWW.JAKETIMMS.COM

HELLO@JAKETIMMS.COM