



DAVE WALKER/CO.UK

25  
insider tips  
for you!FIND  
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# EXPERT *advice!*

Wedding insiders share their top tips. Compiled by Philippa Richards

## 1 Doing your own calligraphy

"Calligraphy takes practice, but it will save you money! Visit your local library and borrow a beginners' calligraphy book. The Italic lettering style is the easiest for a novice to master. Rather than buying a 'calligraphy set' with a fountain pen, look in craft shops for a coloured calligraphy marker pen – these are easier to use and far

more interesting than a dull old fountain pen with a wide nib! Or you could ask a friend or relative to write your place cards – find out if any wedding guests have lovely handwriting (check the envelopes when your acceptance cards start coming in!) and ask them to

write your cards for you." Claire Gould from [weddingcalligrapher.co.uk](http://weddingcalligrapher.co.uk) or call 0161 477 0279.

## 2 Dressing the perfect reception table

"Always set up a mock table at home to try out all your ideas, since favours and decorations can look very different once they are all in

place. Doing a test run will give you peace of mind and allow time for any alterations. If you are not decorating the tables yourself, write a detailed brief and take a photo of your mocked-up table so there are no mistakes." Kaley Gardiner, [thelastdetail.co.uk](http://thelastdetail.co.uk)

## 4 Stay stress-free on the day

"You've spent so much time planning your wedding that you must simply relax and live the day. Pre-nominate a couple of people to keep an eye on the smooth running of the schedule. Alternatively, consider hiring a wedding planner, who will discreetly smooth any last-minute hiccups, leaving you, your family and friends to simply enjoy the day!" Trisha Dash O'Toole from [indigoskyevents.co.uk](http://indigoskyevents.co.uk)

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## 3 Save money on your cake

"Decorate three plain, shop-bought cakes in different sizes with summer fruits, like strawberries, raspberries, or even chocolate-dipped fruit, and tier with cake pillars." Laleh Afshar, [shootingstarweddings.co.uk](http://shootingstarweddings.co.uk)



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GREAT FOR A SHORTER BRIDESMAID, BUT TALL GIRLS MAY PREFER FLATS

# 5

## Perfect shoes for bridesmaids

“Think about heights and consider a selection of shoes – don’t get hung up on everyone wearing the same design. Tall bridesmaids may like ballet flats (like Rainbow’s chic ‘Bryony’), while a petite girl may prefer a heel like ‘Antonia’.” Diane Hassall, chief designer [rainbowclub.co.uk](http://rainbowclub.co.uk)

## 6 Keep your memories safe

“Save small items such as pieces of stationery, a favour, and a flower from your bouquet in a keepsake box, which will revive memories each time you open it. Also, ask the best man to take round a book for guests to write in – it’s a great talking point for your first anniversary.” Carol Richardson, wedding expert at [confetti.co.uk](http://confetti.co.uk)

## 7 Choosing the right tiara

“Different tiaras suit different face shapes, just like hairstyles. If you have a long face, opt for a tiara without extra height, like a headband style, or combs and pins. If you have a round face, elongate it with a peaked tiara and if your face is oval or heart-shaped you can take your pick!” Jenni Scott, [bespokenfor.co.uk](http://bespokenfor.co.uk)

## 8 Securing hair accessories

“To keep headdresses secure

in loose hair, lift the top section of your hair, and criss-cross plain kirby grips over each other. This gives you an anchor for a decorative pin or comb and stops it sliding out of your hair. Once secure, replace the top section of hair to cover the grips.” Clare Yarwood-White, [yarwood-white.com](http://yarwood-white.com)

## 9 Getting permission to print hymns in orders of service

“Some hymns are under copyright and need permission and a possible fee (between £10-£25) to be printed. You must pay this fee to the copyright owners. Some churches hold a Church Copyright Licence and therefore the fees may be

from the band or disco! It’s also a good idea to give guests a date to RSVP by and include a pre-addressed envelope for the return of the cards.” Nicola Mathew from [millieandme.net](http://millieandme.net)

## 12 Getting DIY stationery that looks professional!

“For stationery that looks ‘hand-crafted’ and not homemade, use good quality adhesives and pick the right one for each task. Use double-

**“Never accept a supplier’s first price – you might feel cheeky but they’re used to it!”**

sided tape for inserts and PVA glue for miniature flowers. Make up a sample card and post it to yourself to check everything stays in place.” Alison Wren from [weddingcrafter.co.uk](http://weddingcrafter.co.uk)



## 13 Negotiate the best deal

“Never accept a supplier’s first price – you might feel cheeky, but they’re used to it! Offer to provide a testimonial and snaps from your big day for their website, so potential clients can see how pleased you were.” Trisha Dash O’Toole, [indigoskyevents.co.uk](http://indigoskyevents.co.uk)

waived. Also, on some older hymns, the copyright won’t exist anymore. Show a draft copy of the order of service to whoever is holding your ceremony before the day so they can check if copyright permission is needed.” Dee Grismond from [cherrygorgeous.co.uk](http://cherrygorgeous.co.uk)

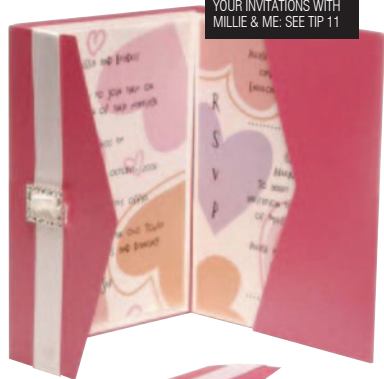
## 10 Save money on bridal make-up

“Book an appointment at a department store make-up counter. An experienced make-up artist will apply top quality products on your special day, and cost on average just £20-30.” Laleh Afshar from [shootingstarweddings.co.uk](http://shootingstarweddings.co.uk)

## 11 Get more from invites

“Include RSVP cards with your invitations, and use them to ask guests about any special dietary requirements or even their suggestions for songs

GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR INVITATIONS WITH MILLIE & ME. SEE TIP 11



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the bouquet – no-one will notice!” Gillian Poole, [daffogills.co.uk](http://daffogills.co.uk)

**21 Seating the top table** Traditionally, seating at the top table goes: chief bridesmaid, groom’s father, bride’s mother, groom, bride, bride’s father, groom’s mother, best man. Parents who are divorced or separated should sit on the top table with their partners seated as close to the table as possible or sat next to the chief bridesmaid or best man depending on their sex.” Dee Grismond, [cherrygorgeous.co.uk](http://cherrygorgeous.co.uk)

**22 Save cash on stationery** “Combine table cards with menus – the table number may be on the front and the menu on the back. It saves space on the table and is cheaper than buying separate items.” Sarah Perkins from [millbankandkent.co.uk](http://millbankandkent.co.uk)

**23 Planning your invitations** “You’ll only need one invite per family or couple. The total number of invitations will be less than the number of guests. But always allow for a few spare!” Rani Deshpande, [ranideshpande.com](http://ranideshpande.com)

**“Always allow for a few spare invitations when ordering – in case you make a mistake!”**

**24 Securing your tiara** “Ask your tiara maker to wire a few jump rings around the base so your hairdresser can put grips or pins through to secure it.” Louise Walrond, [walrond.me.uk](http://walrond.me.uk)

**25 Choosing a veil** “Veils work with most gowns, just echo the look of your dress, whether it’s vintage, elegant or show-stopping Cathedral style!” Michelle Hinds, [timelessbride.co.uk](http://timelessbride.co.uk)



## Achieving perfectly personalised stationery

“As well as the all-important facts about your big day, add famous quotes or poetry to give your stationery a more individual touch and sum up your wedding style. Make them romantic, fun, whimsical – you could even try penning your own!” Tracee Finch from [stationeryville.com](http://stationeryville.com)

## 16 Fixing jewellery at the last minute

“Keep spare earring wires, earring backs and links from chains, plus good quality sewing thread in your bridal emergency kit. If a mishap occurs, you can fix earrings and strings of beads.” Fleur Soper from [tiarasbyfleur.com](http://tiarasbyfleur.com)

## 17 Use candles to create a magical atmosphere

“Place candle lanterns on tables at the entrance to your reception and ask guests to carry them to their table – it looks spectacular and can be used as centrepieces too.” Debbie Wren, [uniqueweddingfavours.co.uk](http://uniqueweddingfavours.co.uk)

## 18 Entertain young guests

“Many couples don’t realise that children, despite being renowned party animals with bags of enthusiasm and energy, don’t always know when to stop! Ensure

they have something to do when you need them to sit quietly. Event Smiles supply boxes of toys and activities to encourage quiet play.” Karen Evans, [eventsmiles.co.uk](http://eventsmiles.co.uk)

## 19 Matching wine and food

“When matching food and wine, follow your instinct and focus on the dominant flavour in the dish. Note the textures and any sweet or savoury elements. Complement subtle flavoured food, such as salmon, with a light-bodied wine like white Burgundy. Match stronger flavours with full-bodied wines, like a Rioja.” Nick James, [dishcatering.co.uk](http://dishcatering.co.uk)

## 20 Fix a broken stem in your bouquet

“If a rose snaps in your handied bouquet, just snip the rose off completely and make the gap where the stem was at the back of

## Tasting wine for your wedding

“The four steps for wine tasting are: first examine the colour and appearance. Next, swirl and sniff, taking in the aromas. Slurp! Suck air through a small amount of wine. Finally, decide to spit or swallow! Vinopolis offer wine-tasting packages to help brides and grooms select their perfect wines.” Rupert Ellwood, [vinopolis.co.uk](http://vinopolis.co.uk)

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