

Civil Wedding Checklist

Checklist · 31 items · 13 sections

Plan a civil ceremony from start to finish, legal requirements, venue, and personal touches.

Open the editable, AI-powered version online:

<https://genechecklist.com/checklist/civil-wedding-checklist>

FOUNDATIONS

- Set your total budget
HIGH
- Decide on civil ceremony type: register office, licensed civil venue, or outdoor ceremony with celebrant
HIGH

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- Research legal requirements in your country or state for a civil marriage
HIGH
- Book a registrar through your local register office (UK) or confirm celebrant registration (AU/NZ/US)
HIGH
- Give legal notice of intended marriage at required time (28 days in UK, 1 month in AU)
HIGH
- Gather and submit all required documents (birth certificates, ID, divorce decree if applicable)
HIGH
- Pay legal marriage licence or notice fee
HIGH

VENUE

- If at a venue: confirm it holds an approved premises licence for civil ceremonies
HIGH
- Book your ceremony venue: hotel, estate, garden, winery, or outdoor location
HIGH
- If outdoor: check if a permit is required for the location
- Book a separate or combined reception venue
HIGH

CEREMONY REQUIREMENTS

- Confirm two witnesses are arranged (requirement for all civil marriages)

HIGH

CEREMONY PLANNING

- Meet with your celebrant to discuss ceremony personalisation
- Write your own personalised vows: a key advantage of a civil ceremony
- Plan ceremony readings: poems, song lyrics, prose, or personal writing
- Plan ceremony structure: welcome, readings, vows, ring exchange, pronouncement, signing
- Plan any symbolic rituals: unity candle, sand ceremony, ring warming, hand-fasting

HIGH

HIGH

HIGH

MUSIC

- Choose processional music (any song: civil ceremonies are not restricted to religious music)
- Choose recessional, signing, and reception music
- Book ceremony musician, DJ, or create a Spotify playlist for the ceremony

HIGH

IMPORTANT RULES

- Note: civil ceremonies must not include religious content: check with your officiant

HIGH

VENDORS

- Book photographer experienced with civil ceremonies
- Book caterer for reception
- Book florist for ceremony and reception

HIGH

HIGH

GUEST COMMUNICATION

- Send save-the-dates and invitations
- Confirm RSVPs and headcount

HIGH

HIGH

CEREMONY DÉCOR

- Plan ceremony decorations: arch, flowers, aisle, seating décor

WEEK OF

- Conduct ceremony rehearsal with full bridal party and celebrant

HIGH

WEDDING DAY

- Sign the marriage register or certificate with witnesses at the ceremony

HIGH

AFTER WEDDING

- Collect certified marriage certificate from registrar or BDM registry after wedding

HIGH

- Update name on all legal documents if desired