BEGONE, BRIDEZILLA!

Ensure the weeks before you get hitched go without a hitch

BY **LISA ABDELLAH**

The final weeks before you say 'I do' are a unique blend of anticipation, emotion and pressure. Excitement peaks, but so does physical and emotional stress. If you can't sleep, your blood sugar is fluctuating, your digestion is nosediving and your nerves are running high, now's not the time for an overhaul, but to lean into small habits that ensure you're calm, energised, comfortable and present on your big day.

PLANNING

The Expert:

REBECCA GLEN, the founder of The Wedding Fairy (*theweddingfairy.co.za*)

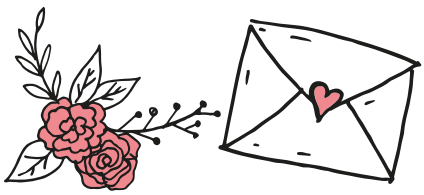


❤ Send a final draft of your timeline to suppliers two weeks ahead, so everyone has the same information.

❤ Ensure the bridal party and groomsmen know where they need to be and when, and the tasks you have assigned them. You may want to meet with your wedding planner and host a rehearsal dinner.

❤ Do you need to update your seating plan before printing it? Account for potential cancellations from guests who may be unable to attend.

❤ If your ceremony is outdoors, have an alternative venue in case of inclement weather.



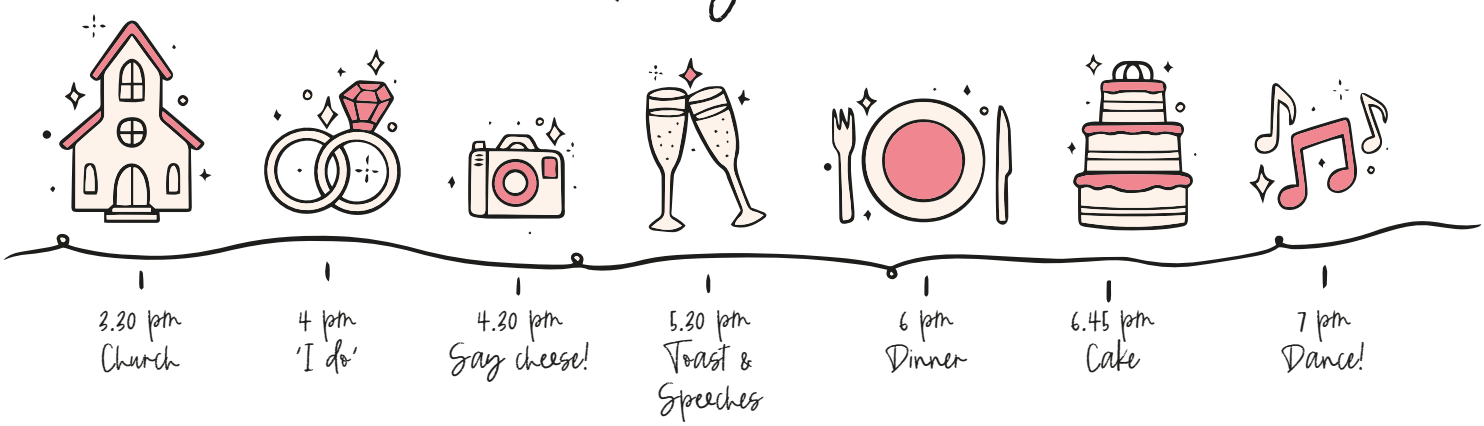
❤ Scrub up. Have your rings cleaned. For the bride, a spray tan, a facial at least three days before, and for the groom, a shave and haircut at least two days before.

❤ Write your vows and speeches, and keep them in a safe place.

❤ Start packing a week before, so you don't forget anything important.

❤ Sign legal papers and take ID photos for signing the registry during the ceremony.

Wedding timeline



MIND

The Expert:

Psychiatrist **DR FELICITY MARCUS**, who works in private practice (*drmarcus.co.za*)



❤ Aim for a meaningful day, not a perfect one. Don't get so caught up in the details that you forget about the bigger picture: you're marrying the person you love.

❤ Set emotional boundaries, and don't be afraid to say no. It's *your* special day, so *you* make the decisions.

❤ Collaborate with your partner to plan your wedding, ensuring it's a memorable day for both of you.

OVERCOME OVERWHELM

❤ It's normal to feel mixed emotions before your wedding. Excited and grateful, yet nervous. Try this two-to-three-minute breathing reset when it gets too much: Inhale for four seconds, hold for two seconds, exhale for six seconds. Repeat five times. Still feel anxious? Talk to a trusted loved one, a counsellor or a mental health professional.



STRESS BUSTERS

❤ Write a done list, not a to-do list. Seeing progress reduces mental load.

❤ Delegate clearly (even small things). People *want* to help, so let them.

❤ Have a Plan B sentence for worries: 'If X goes wrong, we'll do Y and move on.'

PROTECT YOUR MENTAL SPACE

❤ Mute group chats for parts of the day.

❤ Avoid comparing your wedding to those of others.

❤ Don't make last-minute changes unless necessary. Decisions drain emotional energy.

BODY

The Expert:

Registered Dietician
YOLANDÉ VAN DER RIET
(yolsi.vanderriet)





NUTRITION

❤ Every meal in the weeks before your wedding should be balanced and blood-sugar-friendly, including slow carbohydrates (such as oats, sweet potato and fruit), lean proteins (like eggs, low-fat dairy, lean meat, oily fish, legumes and pulses), and healthy fats (like nuts, avocado and olive oil). This prevents glucose spikes – anxiety increases when glucose levels dip – stabilises mood and appetite hormones, and helps you concentrate.

❤ Even mild dehydration (1–2%) can impair mood, energy and concentration and even cause headaches. Hydrate with electrolytes, not just water.

❤ Reduce caffeine after midday, as it has a half-life of five to six hours, meaning a late-afternoon latte will linger in your system at night, disrupting sleep. Switch to rooibos tea, herbal infusions or matcha after 12 pm to protect your sleep cycle and avoid an evening crash.

❤ Support your nervous system with magnesium, especially magnesium glycinate in the evening, as this helps muscles relax, aids sleep and improves stress resilience. Consider adaptogens in the short term. Provided your liver and kidneys are in peak condition, those such as ashwagandha and Rhodiola have evidence supporting reduced fatigue and improved stress resilience. Probiotics, such as plain low-fat yoghurt and kefir, or probiotic supplements, help keep your digestive system in tip-top shape.

MOVEMENT

❤ Walking for 20–30 minutes daily reduces cortisol and clears the mind, improves lymphatic drainage (reducing puffiness), enhances mood and lowers stress hormones.

❤ Pilates and mobility work can improve posture, while stretching enhances core activation without inflammation. You will feel taller, breathe easier and move more gracefully on your wedding day.

❤ Low-intensity exercise is linked to improved sleep quality, which in turn can reduce bloating, cravings and anxiety. Additionally, it promotes emotional regulation by increasing serotonin and endorphin levels without overloading the nervous system – ideal for calming nerves during wedding week.

❤ Exercise also aids digestion and promotes gut motility, which refers to the muscle contractions that facilitate proper digestion and waste elimination. This helps prevent bloating and discomfort that stress can cause. ❤

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