

Blooming BEAUTIFUL

Words by Helen Grant

What's a wedding without flowers? Kick off your quest for beautiful blooms with our tips and trends.



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One of the best things about planning a wedding is putting your stamp on the day, and that includes your flowers. But with shops bursting with seasonal blooms and a seemingly endless choice of combinations and scents, from sweet lily of the valley to spicy chrysanthemum, where do you start? It's easy to drown in a sea of choices.

Essential flowers to consider are the bride's bouquet (the most spectacular of the day!) groom's and groomsmen's buttonholes (lily of the valley is a good choice), bridesmaids' posies (traditionally a smaller version of the bride's flowers), corsages for mother-of-the-bride, mother-of-the-groom and other special relatives

(roses, orchids, camellias and gardenias in white or cream are popular), table centerpieces, thank-you bouquets, ceremony and reception decoration.

If you're marrying in church, flowers secured to pew ends, on the altar, steps and windowsills ooze creative flair, and archway garlands look fabulously feminine.

For flower girls, consider flower or petal filled baskets sprayed white or pastel, a piece of ribbon tied around the flower girl's wrist with a spray of flowers attached, or a floral bracelet.

You could ask your flower girl or youngest bridesmaid to scatter petals down the aisle, providing it's okay with the venue. A carpet of fresh petals provides a romantic touch for an outdoor wedding too.

Cut pictures from magazines and books of flowers that you like, to show your florist.

Borrow gardening books from the library and note the names of flowers that catch your eye. Take a trip to your garden centre or botanical garden to get a feel for how flowers appear in reality. Learning the meanings of flowers may help you decide too. Google 'flower meanings' on the Internet for inspiration.

If modern is your thing, most florists rent out glassware for table arrangements, freestanding trees and floral

structures coordinated to your theme.

Consider an eye-catching bouquet made of steel grass with flowers wired and glued on, or one or two luxury orchids or calla lilies for your focal point, mixed with seasonal flowers, sourced locally for quality.



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You don't need many lilies to make a 'wow' statement. An elegant line bouquet or a small posy, hand-tied with ribbon, is a pretty choice to coordinate with a slim-fitting gown. Gerberas are fun and contemporary too, available in a variety of colours.

Consider your height and dress style. As a rule, if the bodice is detailed, keep your bouquet simple and hand-tied to avoid it overshadowing your dress. Opt for a clustered posy or a trailing bouquet carried over one arm. A long train worn by a tall bride looks lovely with a trailing shower

bouquet. For smaller brides, an elegant teardrop bouquet will add height. Large flowers such as roses or peonies can be loosely arranged with foliage and tied with ribbon.

White is traditionally a popular colour for bridal bouquets, but pastels and rich, vibrant colours work too. Choose snow-white flowers (rose, sweet pea, camellia, narcissus, gardenia, orchid, lily of the valley, jasmine and gypsophila to name a few) with a dusting of sparkle and diamante detail for dazzling effect. Wide, satin ribbon provides a rich, luxurious finishing touch.



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▶ Shades of blue are a sophisticated summer choice. Hydrangeas, freesias and roses in creamy whites and pale blues make delightful bouquets, posies and hair bands for flower girls.

For sheer prettiness, indulge in a palette of pastels, with muted shades of pink, blue, cream and peach, or a rose-tinted, lemon, lavender or pale green and white bouquet. Sweet peas, carnations, tulips, lavender, lilac, iris, delphinium and hydrangea are pretty choices.

Exotic flowers in juicy shades with tropical foliage add a playful touch. Be bold with bird of paradise bursts of yellow (daffodil, sunflower, tulip) and green with a twist of hot pink.

Red is incredibly passionate, don't you think? From deep red to raspberry and blush pink, it's the colour of romance, renowned for bringing luck in some countries.



Personalise your bouquet by adding a piece of jewellery such as a string of pearls or a crystal brooch, butterflies or diamanté initials, especially poignant if the jewellery has

sentimental value. Organza ribbon can be used to create bows and streamers. For a special touch, include a single flower that reminds you of your childhood.

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By Deborah Morris

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