

Wedding costs increased by a massive £12,000 in 5 years!

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Now that Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted and we're in the height of summer in the UK, the number of weddings taking place has skyrocketed.

Holly Andrews, Managing Director at KIS Finance (<https://www.kisbridgingloans.co.uk/>) and personal finance expert shares 8 clever ways to cut the price of your post lockdown wedding!

There has always been pressure to have the perfect wedding day. However, in recent years with the ever growing use of social media, particularly Instagram, the pressure to put on a good show seems to be higher than ever.

The average cost of a wedding in 2014 according to the National Wedding Survey was around £20,000. Fast forward five years to 2019, and the average cost grew to a massive £31,974!

Apparently 42% of people said they felt pressured to have an Instagram worthy day.

Thanks to the Coronavirus pandemic, many weddings were cancelled so it is unclear what the average figure would have been more recently. As we start to return to normal, many engaged couples will be eager to tie the knot, having been unable to for so long.

Here are some ways to slash the most expensive costs:

1. The venue

Usually between 40-50% of the total cost of a wedding is spent on just the venue. To help keep the cost down, consider non traditional wedding venues, as typical wedding venues will be looking to make a big profit. Most places can look romantic if you decorate them and have flowers.

If the venue is important to you, check out the prices for mid-week weddings and also at all different times of the year. Weekend prices will usually be higher, so opting to get married during the week might help you to afford the venue if your dreams.

2. Catering and drinks

If you want to do a sit down meal for the guests attending the wedding ceremony and then a buffet later for the reception, then the catering costs could take up a lot of your budget.

If you are looking to cut costs on the food and drink, you could have a later ceremony so that there is

no need to do food twice. Or if you do want something in the evening, maybe do 'cake and cocktails' at the reception, serving wedding cake and cocktails (which makes the fizz go further!)

An obvious way to cut costs would be to do the catering yourself, ideally with help from friends or family. If you do this, try to make as much as you can in advance as things can often take longer than you think to make, and a last minute rush is likely to add unwanted stress to the day! Things like pretty cupcakes could be frozen in advance. Have a look online at wedding blogs for some fun ideas!

3. Bridal wear

Couples can spend thousands just on the wedding dress! However this is not necessary, as even ASOS are now selling wedding dresses for under £100. Be sure to check out eBay as most second hand dresses will look new having only been worn once before.

Don't be put off looking at designers as some will also sell on their dresses second hand or have sales. The place where I bought my dress buys back their worn dresses, redyes them and sells them on for £400, which is less than a quarter of the full price of £2,000.

If you have talented friends or family who can do your hair or makeup, ask for them to do this for you on the day instead of buying a wedding present. Most of us already live with our partners prior to getting married so don't really need all the traditional new home gifts anyway.

Don't forget your something borrowed – go for a nice piece of expensive jewellery so you don't need to spend money on any new bling.

4. Photographer

Hiring a photographer can take up 10-15% of the whole budget on average, and you may struggle to find one for less than £1,000. The best way to cut this cost is to not have a photographer to take your photos!

Most of us have smart phones with decent cameras – ask the guests to all take a few photos each and send them to you afterwards. Asking several guests takes the pressure off one person and you'll get a better range of photographs. Personally, these photos would mean more to me as they would be taken by loved ones.

If you would like to see your wedding from the kids perspective, you could give them a disposable camera each and ask them to give it back at the end of the wedding.

To cut the photograph costs even further, ask for things like picture frames as wedding gifts.

5. Flowers

If you can grow your own, swap paying hundreds for flowers and instead buy some seeds!

Another option is to swap the idea of fresh flowers for silk ones. This means the arrangements can be made up in advance, so it is one less thing to worry about last minute. They would also make lovely keepsakes after the wedding in your home.

You don't need to put flowers everywhere – consider other ways to decorate that you may find easier to do yourself. For example, candles are great for creating a romantic atmosphere. Buy tealights in bulk and place them in old jam jars with ribbon tied around for really cheap but pretty table decorations. Check out wedding blogs and DIY ideas on pinterest for loads of ideas!

6. Music

Hiring a DJ tends to be cheaper than hiring a band – or cheaper still, you can create your own playlist on Spotify – another thing that can be done far in advance!

7. Transport

Do any of your guests have a posh car they'd be willing to drive you to the venue in? This would be a great alternative to a wedding gift and save you and your guest money.

If you are keen to hire transport, consider a bigger vehicle to carry everyone instead of more than one. Particularly a good idea if parking spaces are limited.

8. Stationary and favours

Couples can spend hundreds buying fancy stationary (wedding invites, acceptance cards and place cards) whereas you could easily make your own. If you're not an arty type, take a nice photograph of the two of you to use as a starting point.

Instead of having place cards at the table, write the name of the guests on their favours and use those to show them where to sit.

It can be hard choosing favours that appeal to all guests, but edible ones are usually well received!

Search pinterest and wedding blogs for ideas, there are some really creative ideas around. Try making jam or fudge, and save mini jars and ribbons in advance to package them up.

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