

Florists

Harrelle

Our top tip:

Take as much information as you can when you meet a florist. Pictures of flowers you love, photographs of your venue, magazine cut outs of displays or bouquets you like and possibly even swatches of your dress material will all help your florist really understand what you are looking for.

What does the florist need?

All of the information provided above is a bonus but not a necessity. Ideally you should give the florist an idea of your budget and you should definitely provide the florist with your wedding date so they will know what flowers are in season.

What should you ask the florist?

Make sure you arm yourself with a notepad and don't be scared to ask the florist anything that comes to your mind. Here are some suggestions:

Business questions:

- Trade – are weddings a speciality for the florist?
- How many weddings do they do each year?
- How many weddings will they cater for on one day?
- How many staff will put together your arrangements?
- Do they have back up plans in case something goes really wrong e.g. all the staff get very ill
- Have they got any photographs or testimonials from other weddings they have worked on which you could see?
- What are their payment arrangements?

Getting your flowers right:

- Can they give expert advice on what flowers are in season?
- Do they come up with a few other alternatives very similar to what you like so you can see other ideas and make a final choice based both on appearance and cost? (How good are they at suggesting ways for you to reduce your costs?)
- Will you be able to see a mock-up of the table centres before you book?
- Do they hire out vases, candelabras or anything else you are after?

Practical questions

- Will they deliver where you need them to?
- Can flowers be delivered the day before if necessary?
- Will they just deliver or will they set the flowers up at the venue?
- Have they ever prepared flowers for your venue before?

Possible extras to think about:

- Can they preserve your bouquet for you afterwards?
- Do they hire out any other items you might like to use in your reception room design e.g. candles?

Recognising a good florist

Even if you've got a clear picture of what you want remember a good florist should be able to take your ideas and your budget and give you some suggestions which fit the style of everything you are telling them. Allow them to be a bit creative so you see a variety of ideas – even if you come full circle back to what you always thought you wanted at least you'll be certain you've made the right choice as you will have explored all of the alternatives. However be cautious if they keep encouraging you to spend more money.

Making sure they are right for you

Make sure you feel comfortable around your florist. You need to be confident they understand your ideas and really listen to you. It's important you feel assured that you can trust them so they don't give you something extra to get stressed about in the run up to your big day.

Booking

Don't jump at the first florist you meet but if you think you've found someone your happy with don't be afraid to make your booking.

Remember that even if you book way in advance you will most likely meet your florist to finalise your flower choices about three months before your wedding.