



Church Weddings

How old do you have to be?

- You can marry in a church from the age of 16 in the UK.
- If you are aged 16 or 17, you will need your parents' approval in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, but not in Scotland, where it is legal without consent providing there are two witnesses.

When you can get married

- Ceremonies must take place between 8am and 6pm and be witnessed by at least two people.
- Some churches won't perform a wedding ceremony during special holidays such as Lent.

Banns

- In a church wedding banns are required to be read before the marriage takes place as it signifies your intention to marry.
- Banns will be read out in the parish where you both live as well as in the church you're planning to be married in for three Sundays during the three months leading up to the wedding.
- If you plan to marry in a Catholic church but one of you isn't Catholic you will need a dispensation to marry. If you require a dispensation, you don't have to have the banns read out beforehand.

Giving notice at your local register office

- If you don't have time to have the banns read you can instead apply for a common licence.
- If you are getting married in a church that IS NOT Church of England or Church in Wales then you must give 28 days notice to your local Register Office. You can find your local Register Office [here](#).
- You can only give notice at a register office if you have lived in the registration district for at least the past 7 days.
- You must get married within one year.
- You may also need a licence if you are not a British citizen or you live outside of the UK.

Scotland

- In Scotland, you are required to give 15 days' notice with the local registrar.
- You must get married within 3 months of giving notice.
- You do not have to have lived in the registration district at all to give notice.



Your must have a connection to the church you want to marry in

- You can get married in a Church of England either in the town where you live, if either of the couple are on the churches electoral roll or you have a connection to the church. A connection can be:
 - Either of you lived in the church's parish for six months or more
 - One of your parents lived in the parish or regularly attended worship there for six months or more in their child's lifetime
 - Your parents or grandparents were married in the parish
 - Either of you were baptised or received confirmation in the parish
 - One of you regularly attended worship in that parish for six months or more

Divorcees

- There are special guidelines on marriage in the church if you are divorced. It's best to speak to your vicar to discuss your situation and they will discuss the best way forward.

Documents you may need

- You may be asked to provide proof of nationality such as passport.
- If either of you are divorced the vicar will need to see your decree evidence of your connection to the church.
- You will also be asked to provide evidence of your connection to the church such as utility bills which show you live in the parish or your parents' marriage certificate if they were married there.

If you are not sure of anything then your vicar, priest or registrar can answer any questions you have.

You can find more information on marrying in a Church of England on their wedding site

<https://www.yourchurchwedding.org/article/legal-requirements/>

If you are planning on marrying in a Catholic church you can find more information here

<http://rcdow.org.uk/att/files/m%20f%20l/marriage%20in%20catholic%20church%20basic%20guide%20%28marriage%20care%29.pdf>

Find your local Register Office here <https://www.gov.uk/register-offices>