

Wedding COVID-19 risk mitigation advice:

A couples guide to holding safer weddings, civil partnership ceremonies, receptions and celebrations

- At Step 4, there are no longer any limits on the number of people who can attend weddings, civil partnerships, receptions and celebrations. Social distancing restrictions will no longer apply. This means that the number of people who can attend these events is not dependent on the capacity of the venue with social distancing. All other restrictions have also been lifted, which means there are no longer limits on singing or dancing, or a requirement to provide table service.
- Although most legal restrictions have been lifted at Step 4, the pandemic is far from over and the number of cases are rising. We have growing evidence that our vaccines significantly reduce the link between cases, hospitalisations, and deaths, they do not fully sever it.
- While no situation is COVID-19 risk-free, there are steps that couples and guests can take to mitigate the risks associated with weddings, civil partnership ceremonies, receptions and celebrations. This is alongside the steps that venues and suppliers will take to reduce the risk of transmission. The venue may implement additional measures to reduce risks.
- These mitigations and safer behaviours can help to minimise the risk of passing on or catching COVID-19 as a result of the event.
- This is a short guide on how to minimise transmission risks at weddings and civil partnerships at **Step 4** of the roadmap. The guidance for [weddings and civil partnership ceremonies, receptions and celebrations](#) sets out the full safety measures for these events, including the legal duties on venues to manage risks to those affected by their business. There is also further guidance on [how to stay safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19](#).

1. MINIMISING RISKS

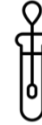
PRACTISE SAFE BEHAVIOURS



GET VACCINATED



GET TESTED



DO NOT ATTEND IF SHOWING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS OR IF TESTED AS COVID-19 POSITIVE



There are some key safe behaviours that you and your attendees can start to practise in the lead up to your event, that may help to reduce risks.

These include:

- consider if you can meet outdoors or, if you're indoors, think about how you can improve ventilation by letting fresh air in.
- let in plenty of fresh air before, during and after meeting people you do not live with indoors.
- consider minimising the number, proximity and duration of social contacts with people you don't live with.
- continue to wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day.
- continue to use the NHS COVID-19 app.
- isolate if you test positive or when contacted by NHS Test and Trace.

You should encourage your guests to take both doses of the vaccine when eligible, and receive two doses yourselves.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines are safe and effective and give you the best protection against COVID-19.

It usually takes around two to three weeks for an antibody response to develop. You need two doses of the vaccine for maximum protection against COVID-19.

However, even if you have been fully vaccinated, you could still get COVID-19 and get sick. You can also still spread COVID-19 to others.

For further information or to book your vaccine, see [NHS COVID-19 vaccines](#)

In the build up to the event, you could encourage your guests to get tested, even if they don't have symptoms.

Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not have any symptoms. This means they could be spreading the virus without knowing it. People may wish to use rapid lateral flow testing to help manage their risk level, for example around close contact in a higher-risk environment, such as a wedding.

Tests remain available free of charge, and you can get them from pharmacies or online. [Find out more about how to get rapid lateral flow tests.](#)

It is crucial that anyone attending or working at the event is not showing any symptoms of COVID-19, or has tested positive, or is self-isolating. It is against the law to leave your place of self-isolation and you should not attend a wedding, civil partnership, reception or celebration.

If you develop [COVID-19 symptoms](#), self-isolate immediately and [get a PCR test](#), even if your symptoms are mild. You should self-isolate at home while you book the test and wait for the results. You must self-isolate if you test positive. Your isolation period includes the day your symptoms started (or the day your test was taken if you do not have symptoms), and the next 10 full days. This is [the law](#).

If you or your guests have had close recent contact with someone who has COVID-19, you must self-isolate if NHS Test and Trace advises you to do so. Please see [NHS Test and Trace: what to do if you are contacted](#).

For testing and how to book a test, please see [NHS Get tested for COVID-19](#)

2. PLANNING THE EVENT

PRE-WEDDING EVENTS



GO OUTSIDE OR LET FRESH AIR IN



CONSIDER COMMONLY USED AREAS



TRAVEL



Pre-wedding events (such as stag and hen dos) can take place and there are no restrictions on the number of people who can attend.

However, to reduce risks you should continue to practise the key safe behaviours, including:

- consider meeting outdoors and let in plenty of fresh air when meeting people you do not live with indoors.
- consider minimising the number, proximity and duration of social contacts with people you don't live with.
- wash your hands with soap and water, and use hand sanitiser regularly.
- you could encourage your guests to get tested, even if they don't have symptoms.

You may also want to consider holding your pre-event well in advance, so that if there are any infections they can be picked up, which therefore also reduces the risk of people not being able to attend the big day.

Consider identifying elements of your event which can be held outside.

Where events take place inside or in other enclosed spaces, consider how the space can be continually well ventilated, before, during and after the event.

Letting fresh air into indoor spaces is important because when a person infected with COVID-19 coughs, talks or breathes, they release droplets and aerosols which can be inhaled by other people. The more fresh air there is to breathe, the less likely other people are to inhale infectious particles. Read the [guidance on ventilation of indoor spaces to stop the spread of COVID-19](#).

You may wish to hold your whole event outdoors to reduce risks further. Since 1 July, outdoor ceremonies (civil weddings and civil partnership ceremonies) can legally take place outside in England and Wales. For further information, see the [press release on outdoor ceremonies](#).

When planning your event, you may wish to consider how you or your venue manager will manage areas that are commonly used, that might become very busy or are narrow e.g. corridors and bathrooms.

You could consider or may wish to talk to your venue manager about the reasonable steps you could take to try and reduce the risks of transmission in these areas. This might be organising your spaces so that they allow your guests to social distance if they wish to. This may include:

- rearranging furniture, for example, to ensure tables are not too close together
- creating one-way systems to avoid people getting too close to one another
- limiting the number of people in certain areas at one time.

Busy and frequently used areas should be **cleaned frequently** as many people will touch the same surfaces. You should ensure there is **sufficient fresh air flow and ventilation** for these areas.

It is important to consider attendees who may wish to adopt a more cautious approach when sharing vehicles at your event.

Where guests do share transport, the government recommends **wearing a face covering** when travelling in a private vehicle with people you do not usually meet.

You and your guests may wish to consider taking further measures to reduce risk, such as **opening windows** and ensuring **cleaning** takes place before and after the journey.

More advice is available in the [safer travel guidance for passengers](#).

3. AT THE EVENT

FACE COVERINGS



Your guests may want to consider wearing a face covering when indoors in crowded areas of the venue.

The legal requirement to wear face coverings has been lifted at Step 4. However, the Government recommends that people wear face coverings in areas where they may come into close contact with people they would not usually meet, such as on public transport.

This could also apply to areas at your event where it is crowded, or areas that might become very busy.

It is important to consider other attendees and those working at events who may wish to adopt a more cautious approach and that some attendees may choose to wear a face covering, especially where they are likely to come into close contact with people they don't live with.

WASH HANDS AND CLEAN SURFACES



You may wish to facilitate guests to wash their hands or access hand sanitiser easily by, for example, putting up clear signs and providing hand sanitiser.

Washing hands and cleaning surfaces regularly helps to remove virus particles.

Have sufficient amounts of hand sanitiser available for guests to use.

Remind attendees to wash or sanitise their hands regularly.

CLOSE CONTACT AND PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE



Remember that some people are more vulnerable than others to being seriously ill from COVID-19.

You should always make space for other people to keep their distance if they want to, and remind guests that there may be vulnerable people in attendance.

Government guidance recommends that in order to minimise risk, guests should consider limiting the close contact they have with those they do not usually live with. This includes minimising the number, proximity and duration of social contacts.

It is important to consider the personal decisions of your guests and other people to wear a face covering or maintain social distancing measures.

The more people you are in close contact with - particularly if they are from different households - the higher the chances of you catching or passing on COVID-19. Longer periods of close contact increase the risk of transmission.

TEST AND TRACE



Providing up-to-date contact details to the venue for NHS Test and Trace will help in the eventuality that there is a COVID-19 outbreak.

You should include any suppliers who may attend prior to the event and on the day, as well as all guests attending.