

How to Have the Perfect Eco-Friendly Wedding

Sustainable wedding tips that save you money

The wedding industry is hard on the environment, but you can reduce the carbon footprint of your special day with a little planning. Follow these tips for a wedding that's kinder on Mother Nature, and on your wallet.

Invites

- The fastest way to reduce the carbon footprint of your wedding is to keep it small. Forego the posted 'save the date' messages and just send your invites out early.
- Choose recycled paper invites and envelopes. Some recycled paper comes with seeds and will produce flowers when the invites are planted. You can make your own recycled seed paper invites using the tutorial [here](#).
- Even greener than recycled invites are email invites. Whether you go online for your 'save the date' and 'RSVP' options only or for the invites too, you will be saving paper and the carbon footprint associated with snail mail.

Décor

- Avoid disposable decorations and pick items that can be reused. You can [make your own fabric bunting](#) for a beautiful touch that is perfectly matched to your colour scheme. This bunting can be reused whenever you have a special occasion.
- LED and solar lights add a whimsical touch and can also be reused.
- Repurpose [tin cans](#) or [mason jars](#) for candle holders.

Flowers

- Wedding flowers come with a hefty carbon footprint as they are transported long distances. They are often grown in countries which allow the use of [pesticides banned in Canada](#). Either buy organically-grown local flowers or pick some wild flowers yourself.
- Ask your guests to bring flowers from their gardens for a spontaneous arrangement.
- Are you an avid gardener? Grow your own wedding flowers!
- Ask your guests to donate old brooches which you can turn into an upcycled bouquet. See the tutorial [here](#).
- Make your bouquets and centre pieces out of recycled paper. Get the tutorial [here](#).

Tableware

- Use real glasses, cutlery and crockery as disposable items have an enormous impact on the earth.
- Americans consume [500 million drinking straws every day](#). Each straw takes 200 years to decompose. Stick to drinks that don't need straws or find biodegradable ones.
- Canadians use about [700,000 tonnes of disposable paper products](#) each year including serviettes, toilet paper and paper towels. Use fabric serviettes and wash cloths and always buy toilet paper made from recycled materials.

Dress

- Vintage dresses are so popular right now and are certainly eco-friendly.
- If you want to have a new dress, go for organic fabrics and ethical clothing manufacturers.

Registry

- Most couples have already furnished their homes so consider asking guests to donate to your favorite environmental charity, [adopt an endangered animal](#) or [buy a tree](#). If all your guests bought a tree, your wedding would result in a tiny forest.

Travel

- Open a public online chat where guests can share rides and encourage online [rideshare](#).
- Offer information on public transport or biking routes to reduce the travel carbon footprint of your event.

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