

## **To help you with your choices Our suggestions from A to Z**

**Advertisements.** This is one way to look for your wedding transport. For a large range of wedding information visit <http://www.brideonline.com.au/> or pick up the Complete Melbourne Wedding Guide from newsagents. You can also check the Yellow Pages, but take care when selecting an operator that only has a PO Box address. Ask for recommendations from your family and friends who have been married recently or in a bridal party. If you feel comfortable with them you could even ask for recommendations from professionals you have booked for your day, for example photographers, videographers, reception centres. Spend time looking and discussing any questions that you have with the operator. Take the time; make the effort and BE FUSSY.

**Book your wedding car(s).** It is a strong suggestion that after you do your research for your wedding transport, you physically see the car(s) and the operator. Try to avoid booking the first operator you see, unless you are TOTALLY HAPPY and that ALL OF YOUR REQUIREMENTS ARE MET. Don't be afraid to leave a contact number and ask the operator to temporarily hold the car(s). This will give you the opportunity to see other car(s), but you must inform the operator of your decision either way within a reasonable time. If you leave your details, the operator can contact you if another Bride and Groom are interested in your car for the same date. Try to visit at least 3 car operators before you decide.

**Caring and not so caring operators** work in the hire car industry. There are many caring operators but unfortunately there those who are not so caring. The best way to judge this is by your gut feeling. Ask questions. "Do you enjoy driving on the wedding day?" Look at the quality and tidiness of the surroundings. Do you feel that you are a burden to them? Do they give you the time you need to discuss your questions? Do they reply to your inquiries promptly? You are the best judge. Remember that the wedding transport and operator will play an important role in your special day. You will be surprised by the differing standards. Take the time to do your homework and select wisely – you will be happy you did. On your wedding day.

**Deposits.** So you have decided on a hire car professional? You will be asked to leave a deposit for each car. This could range between \$50 and \$100 depending on the policy of the operator. Make sure the receipt states the deposit amount, the booking date, and which cars you have booked. You should find out what happens if you need to change or cancel the booking as each operator has his or her own policy for deposits. Keep all receipts in case of a discrepancy and find out whether G.S.T. is included in the price.

**End of the reception?** How will you be getting to your next destination? 80% of newly married couples leave the reception 15 to 30 minutes later than they anticipated, as this is a very special and emotional time. If you are thinking about leaving the reception in a taxi, keep in mind that often the meter starts running when the taxi arrives. Also there are many locations, which taxi drivers do not like to go to as they set a minimum fare - you could be waiting, waiting, waiting. Ask your reception manager about the availability and reliability of taxis. You could drive yourselves afterwards or ask a friend or family member to drive but by the end of the night you will be extremely tired and been up for close to 20 hours. You've just had the biggest day of your lives so ensure that you arrive to your destination safely and let your hire car professional take you away in style.

**Final Payment.** You need to confirm the details one week before the wedding day. Find out the balance and payment options. Do they accept cheques, bankcard, visa or cash? Some operators insist on cash only. Also find out what time overtime commences. You don't want any embarrassing situations with the driver expecting cash, as most car companies will insist on that extra payment. You don't want financial concerns on your wedding day delegate financial responsibilities to the best man or a family member; Try to arrive at your reception on time.

**Geography.** There is nothing worse than the driver getting lost, or a driver losing the second or third car! Worse still if the driver arrives at the wrong entrance or drives straight past the entrance while your guests are awaiting your arrival. This can and does happen! Check that your hire car professional knows the locations. Can you provide your car hire professional a map? Will the limo be able to negotiate that corner? If you have decided to use family cars or a relative is giving you a classic car, check 2 weeks before the wedding date that all is well with their commitment. Ensure the drivers have NO ALCOHOL on the wedding day. It is their responsibility to keep you and your bridal party safe. The driver(s) should do a practise run from your leaving location, to the ceremony, from the ceremony to photo location(s) and they should know the location of your reception.

**Hey Fella's!** One day before the wedding you should write yourself a note. DON'T FORGET THE WEDDING RINGS. Place the note on the front door so you don't forget them in the rush of things to do. You'll be very surprised to know that 4 out of 10 people forget the rings. If we pick you up first we always remind you.

**I**mportantly keep in contact with the car operator. You have booked the wedding transport 6 to 12 months in advance. You have given your phone number, address and times, but for some reason your pick up time has changed from 3pm to 1pm. You need to inform your car hire professional, as they may be booked for a morning wedding. Call them every few months just to check all is in place for your big day. Also remember to inform your hire car professional if your phone number or address changes.

**Just some helpful tips.**

Try to have a good breakfast as you may not have time or the inclination to have lunch. Remember you will be busy with the hairdresser, make-up and photographer. Your first meal might be dinner.

Keep your dress away from the car tyres. It is very easy to brush past the cars tyres and they will definitely dirty your wedding dress. When your photographer asks you to lean on the side of the car for a photo keep your dress away.

You will be wearing new shoes for your wedding – do yourself a favour and wear them in. So many times we have seen our brides extremely uncomfortable. Take caution when walking up steps, as it is very easy to step on the front of your dress. Remember to lift the front of your dress.

Nerves will set in just before you walk down the aisle. You'll have butterflies in your stomach, your body will be shaking, you'll be light headed and there will be people all around you. Just stop. Block everything out of your mind for a minute. Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out, then focus on the special person anxiously

waiting you at the alter. Open your eyes and when you are ready, go. Don't forget to breathe – the rest is fun, fun and more fun.

**Kids in the bridal party** can be great or can be a handful. The bride and groom should decide. If you decide to have children in the bridal party, great, but remember kids can and will be kids. Don't be disappointed if they don't do what you had your heart set on. Also take into consideration that many vintage cars don't have restraints. The parents may be apprehensive about letting the kids travel in the car(s). If you have your heart set on having the children in the bridal car when you arrive at the ceremony, ask the children's parents to keep the children in their cars following behind the bridal cars. A quick "changeover" stop a few streets away, allow the children to enter the car(s) and make a grand entrance, arriving in style with you at the ceremony.

**Licensed operators.** The State government has regulatory control over the wedding car hire industry. It is illegal to use a non-licensed car(s) if you are paying for their hire. Officers from the Victorian taxi director patrol Melbourne and issue fines to operator and driver. They have the right to physically stop you from travelling any further in the car on your wedding day, so always ask for proof. This proof can be a sticker on the front and back of the car(s). It is very important that you safeguard yourselves. Contact the Victorian Taxi Directorate on (03) 9320-4376 to check that the vehicles are licensed.

**Mechanical set backs.** Good operators always maintain and check their vehicles to ensure they have no mechanical set backs on the day. Unfortunately something can still happen. At Fleetwood we have a Priority Response turn around call with the RACV. We never book out our entire fleet on any one-day and we have two spare limousines as a safe guard, just in case. When researching your hire car, ask the operator if they have a plan. If they do not have a plan or you feel unsure about them, steer away from them. Rather be safe than sorry.

**Notify and exchange mobile phone numbers of your hired professionals.** We highly recommend this practice as the photographer or videographers can lose site of the bridal car(s) or not know the exact photo locations. This can easily happen as the videographer or photographer will be last in their cars, as they will be photographing your departure from the ceremony. You don't want to lose precious time waiting for lost photographers, so arrange to exchange their mobile and office numbers. Another tip is to give the reception co-ordinator the driver's mobile number (and vice versa), in case they need to contact one another. This is useful if the finishing time at the reception has been extended, therefore the hire car(s) need to arrive later. Ensure your reception centre is willing to contact the hire car if the reception runs over time. If the driver arrives when they were due but are kept waiting they could charge you for the extra time.

**Organise refreshments and beverages in the car(s).** Consuming liquor in the hire vehicle(s) is against the law. You could be fined. Discuss this with the individual operator. We suggest that you organise refreshments or light food. Look at your day, the length of time that you will be spending on the road or in photo location(s). Consider what refreshments you want on the day. Champagne, lemonade, water or beer are fine but keep away from coloured drinks such as red wine or coloured soft drinks, as if split, the colours will stain garments. Also discuss with the operator regarding esky's as many classical and vintage cars have small or no boot space.

**Punctuality.** You should try to arrive at your ceremony location very close to the time you are getting married. If you intend to arrive 15 to 30 minutes late, consider it takes around 15 minutes to step out of the car, ensure everything is in place and do that final check. Also your photographer will want to take photos before your ceremony. Priests, ministers, and marriage celebrants will not let you compose yourself. You don't want to be rushed into the ceremony – the most important part of the day. So allow time to be prepared and relaxed. Marriage celebrants and ministers encourage you inform your guests to arrive 15 minutes early.

**Questions.** Don't be afraid to ask to ask questions, such as "Can we see the motor or inside the boot? Have the seats been painted recently?" If so, ask if the dye from the paint has caused problems with the brides' dress. Look at the channels of the doors. Many operators use grease on the hinges, which is very bad for a bridal gown. Do the cars have umbrellas? If so, how many and what colour are they? Are the boots big enough to fit a picnic basket and esky? If it's going to be cold does the heater work or do you have blankets? BE FUSSY with the car(s) you have chosen. If you choose a professional operator you will have a sensational day.

**Reception Centres.** You need to consider the time you are scheduled to arrive at the reception centre. Time and time again, couples underestimate the time taken for after-ceremony photography. Delays have a flow-on effect and will throw out the entire evening's schedule, not to mention causing you additional costs for reception, photography and car hire overtime. By arriving at the reception centre on time you will have more time to enjoy the evening. After all it is the largest cost of your evening and you want to enjoy it. Try to be 15 minutes early to your reception to RELAX and FRESHEN UP before hand.

**Styles.** There is a car style to suit every character. There are classical, vintage, stretch, hot rods, bikes and horse-drawn carriages. You can choose black, cream, white, blue, pink, red or two tones seating 4 to 10 or 12 passengers. Try to choose your bridal transport taking into consideration the place of the ceremony, photo locations, and reception as well as the style of your wedding itself. Discuss the style of the bridal transport with your photographer, as you and your photographer will probably want photos with the cars. Whatever you decide, ensure your photos are not forgotten, as often photographers leave these photos to the last minute.

**Timing** on the wedding day is extremely important. When selecting a car operator, ensure that the car(s) arrive 15 minutes before you are due to leave for the ceremony. It takes approximately 5 to 15 minutes for the bride and bridal party to be seated in the vehicles. You will be surprised how long it takes to check everything. You're flowers, make-up bags, rings, garter, overnight bags, throwaway bouquet, and any medication. Not to mention letting the dog/cat out, checking that the front and back doors are locked. Write yourself a checklist and ask some one in your bridal party to be responsible for it before you leave. Remember to visit the ladies room!

**Utilise** the car(s) to be best of your ability. If the bride's location is within 15minutes of the place of ceremony, the car can pick up the groom and groomsmen first, as they should be at the place of the ceremony around 30 minutes before the service. This will allow enough time for the car(s) to be back at the brides' location. Again if the location of the ceremony is not too far away, you can give a close family member a ride to the place of ceremony. If you have hired a car for your hotel transfer, if the distance is within 15 minutes, the car could return to the reception and take the

family home. This is a great thankyou or surprise for them. You should discuss these options with your car hire company. Also remember to organise someone to collect your presents.

**Verify** with the operator. What do we get if we book you? It's one thing to hire a wedding car and another to hire a professional wedding car specialist with service. Do we get red carpet? Do all the chauffers wear the same uniform, name badges, chauffers hat, gloves and ties? Do we get ribbons and tulle on the back window? Do we get love bears? Do the chauffers assist us on the day? Do they open the car doors for us? Do we receive anything else like nibbles and drinks? Do the drivers just stand around? Is it a problem if we have booked the car until 6pm, but want to extend it until 7pm? Do you have to be at another location after ours? Many operators do not allow for extra time. You don't want to be left stranded. As you can see there are many details to consider. So don't just decide based on the price.

**Weather** plays a big part on your day. You could have a fine day, hot day or (touch wood) a rainy day. Ask your hire company if they supply umbrellas, how many and what colour. Irrespective of the weather you will have the best day of your lives, but it's better to have them and not need them than to need them and not have them.

**Xzzz** it's hot. One important question to ask is whether the car(s) have air conditioning and whether they use it on very hot days. The truth is many operators do not use their air conditioning on a 40-degree day. This type of heat places a higher amount of stress on the motor. In summer the RACV receives over 5,500 breakdown calls due to overworked air conditioning. Many vintage and classic car(s), were never built with air conditioning, unless the operator has placed a conventional motor in the car(s). If you want air-conditioned cars we suggest you hire a modern car(s), which can handle this type of heat. There are many professional ways to keep you comfortable on your special day.

**You** will be asked to complete a confirmation of booking sheet once you have decided to hire and book your car(s). Details such as day, date, place and time of pick up locations, ceremony, photo locations and receptions are recorded as well as type(s) of car(s), the bride and grooms names, contact numbers and addresses. Refer to Fleetwood Chauffeured Limousines confirmation of booking sheet to assist you.

**Zero** problems. By taking the above recommendations, investing your time in researching and planning and choosing the right operator, you will HAVE A SENSATIONAL DAY.