



21st Century Bride

Market Report 2006

Third Edition

August 2006

The National Magazine Company
The Wedding Group

Foreword

In May/June 2006 the National Magazine Company commissioned a detailed self completion survey placed in retail outlets, wedding shows and bridal magazines. This is the third in-depth Wedding Market Survey, the first of which took place in 2004.

As the largest publisher of wedding titles in the UK, our aim is to be the ultimate authority on the modern bridal market and to provide a unique industry insight.

This study will not replace the annual reader surveys produced by You & Your Wedding and Cosmopolitan Bride, but rather act as a benchmark for the industry.

The following report is based on over 1000 analysed questionnaires.

Wedding Market Summary

The average age of the bride is 29 (no change from 2005), whilst the groom is 31.

The average personal income of the bride is £23,500 (up £1.5k from 2005), whilst the average household income is £41,000 (down £1,000 from 2005).

The average cost of today's wedding is £17,000 (up £1,300 from 2005).

The average length of the bride's engagement is 20 months

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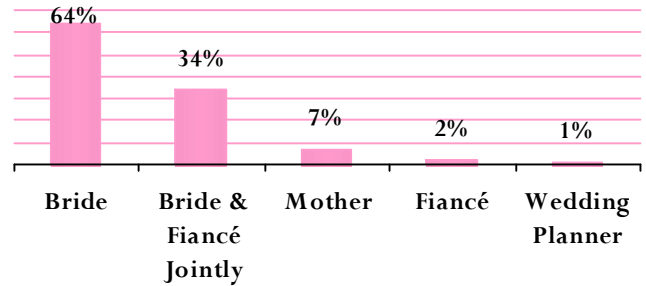
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Wedding Planning

Who is planning the wedding?

Two thirds of today's brides are planning their wedding alone (64% vs. 60% in 2005) and 34% are planning jointly with their fiancé (37% in 2005).

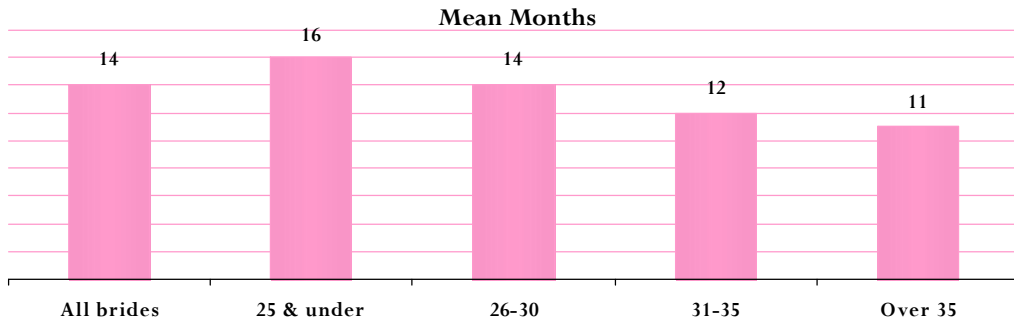
Younger brides are more likely to have help from their mother with planning their wedding (12%).



	All Brides	25 & under	26-30	31-35	Over 35
Bride	64%	66%	64%	61%	65%
Bride & fiancé jointly	34%	32%	36%	33%	33%
Mother	7%	12%	7%	6%	0%
Fiancé	2%	1%	2%	3%	1%
Wedding Planner	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

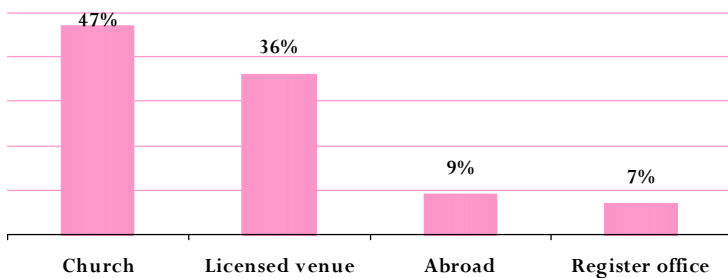
How long are they planning for?

Brides are spending longer on planning, an average of 14 months compared to 13 in 2005. Younger brides spend longer—under 25s spend 16 months on average and time spent planning decreases as the bride's age increases



Where will they be getting married?

Less than half of brides (47%) nowadays are getting married in a church. Over a third are marrying in a licensed venue.



Younger brides are more likely to get married in a church, with over half of under 30s choosing a religious ceremony.

Older brides are more likely than younger brides to get married in a licensed venue or register office.

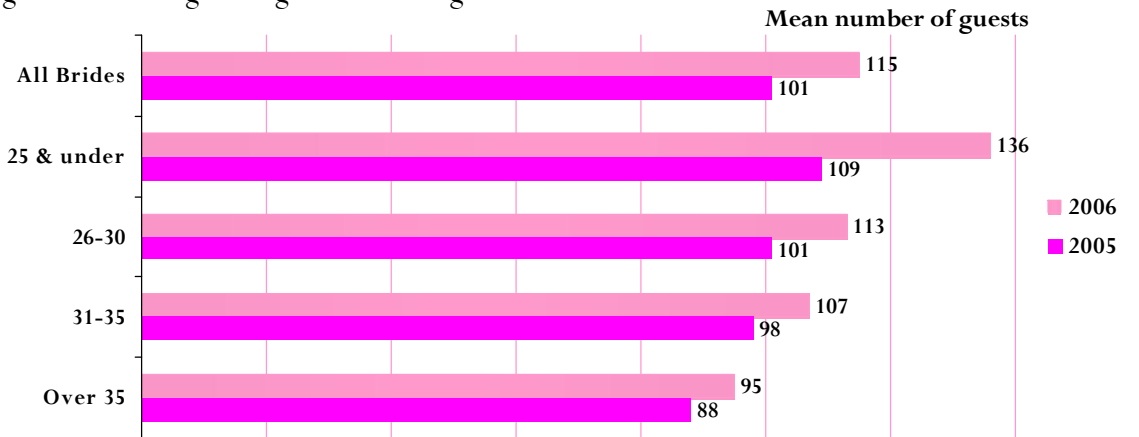
31 to 35 year olds are the most likely to marry abroad.

	All Brides	25 & under	26-30	31-35	Over 35
Church	47%	53%	51%	39%	31%
Licensed venue	36%	31%	36%	43%	42%
Abroad	9%	9%	8%	12%	7%
Register office	7%	5%	5%	7%	17%

Wedding Planning

How many people are going?

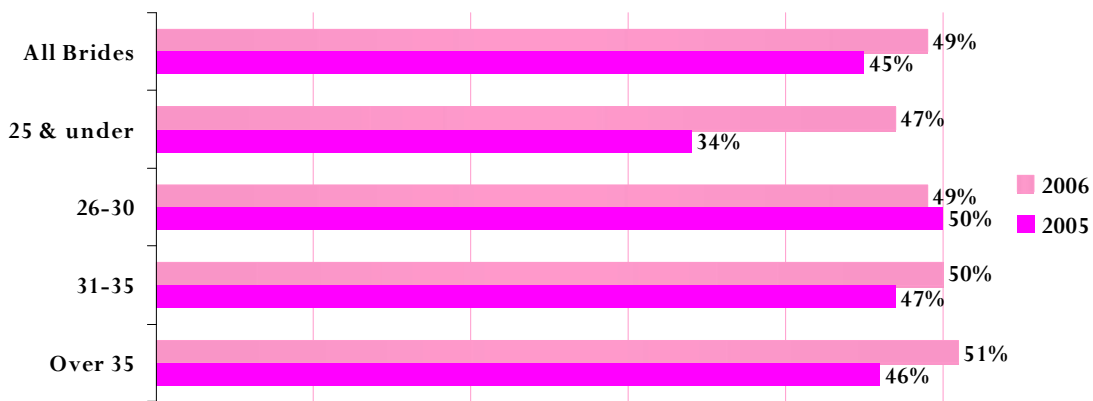
Weddings are getting bigger: on average, brides are having **115 wedding guests**, this has increased from 101 in 2005, with younger brides having more guests on average than older brides.



On average couples are having **3 bridesmaids** and **2 ushers**

Will they be getting married in a different place to where they live?

Almost half of the brides (**49%**) will be getting married in a different place to where they live, with older brides slightly more likely to wed away from home. The number of brides getting married away from home has increased, most dramatically within the 25 and under age group.



Where are couples going abroad?

10% of brides are going abroad to get married.

The top three destinations are

1. Caribbean
2. South Africa
3. USA

The Caribbean has replaced Italy as the most popular destination for overseas weddings followed by South Africa & the USA. European countries have decreased in popularity, with couples seeming to prefer more exotic long haul destinations.

1. Caribbean	17%
2. South Africa	16%
3. USA	12%
4. Cyprus	9%
5. Italy	8%
6. Australia	6%
7. Greece	4%
8. Mexico	2%
9. France	2%
10. Czech Republic	2%
11. New Zealand	2%
12. Thailand	2%

Paying for the wedding

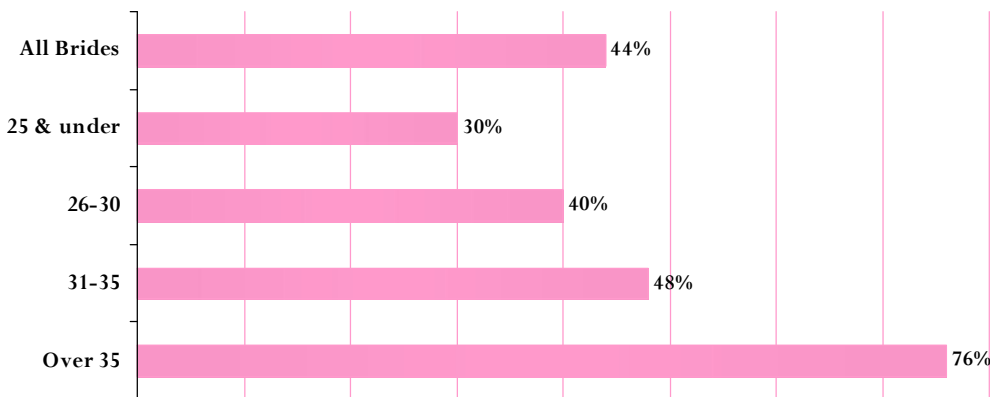
Who is paying for the wedding?

Almost half the couples are funding their weddings **entirely alone (44%)**. This is 4% more than in 2005.

46% have some financial help with everyone contributing and only **10%** have their weddings **paid for by parents**. This is down by 6% since 2004 (16%).

All contributing	46%
Bride & Groom	44%
Bride's Parents	10%
Groom's Parents	0%

Who is paying for their wedding alone?

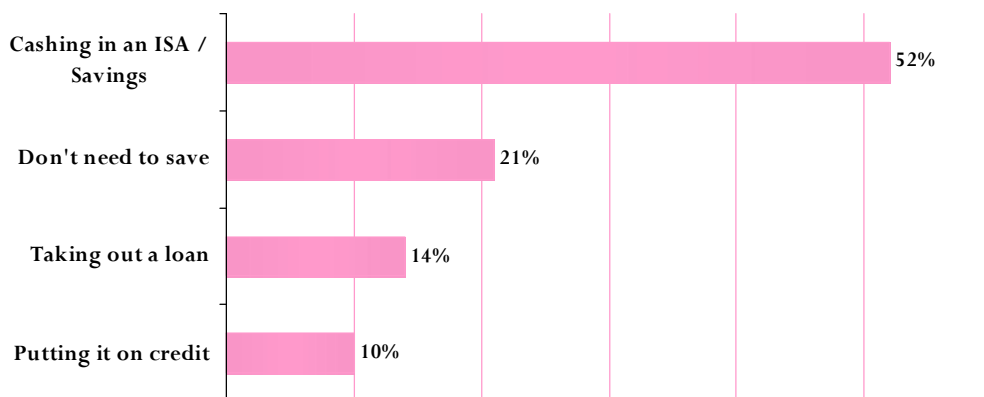


Older couples are more likely to pay for their wedding themselves with **76% of couples over 35** being self funded.

How are couples saving for their wedding?

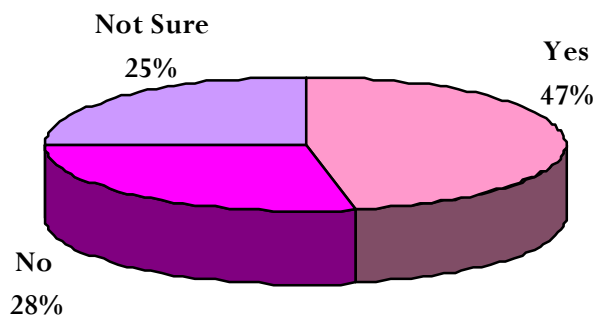
With over 40% of couples paying for their wedding themselves, saving is becoming increasingly more important.

Over **half of couples will be cashing in an ISA or savings** account to cover the costs and 24% will be using a loan or credit cards



Will they be taking out wedding insurance?

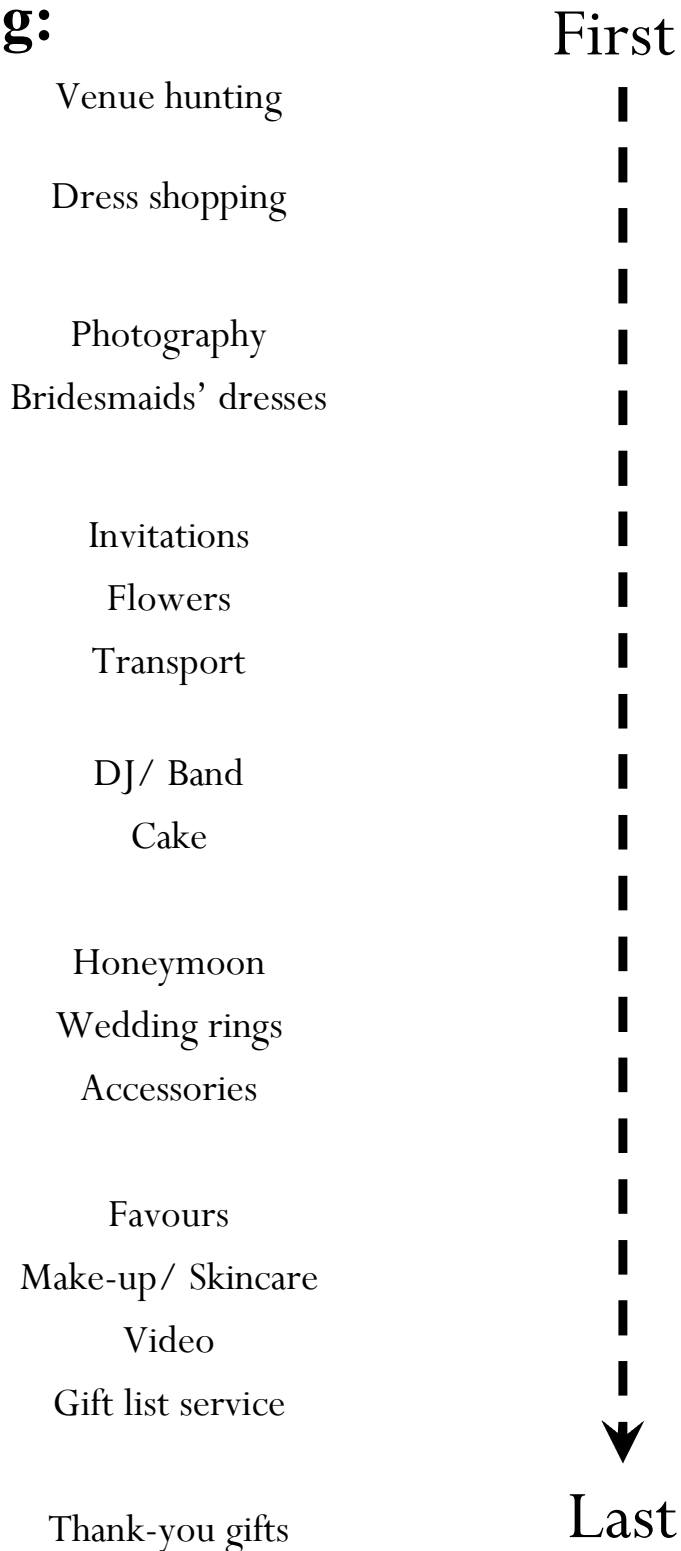
47% of couples are planning on **taking out wedding insurance** (up 13% since 2004) and a quarter are considering it.



Wedding Planning

The number one priority on the wedding list is sorting out the venue,
with 82% of brides saying they plan to organise this first

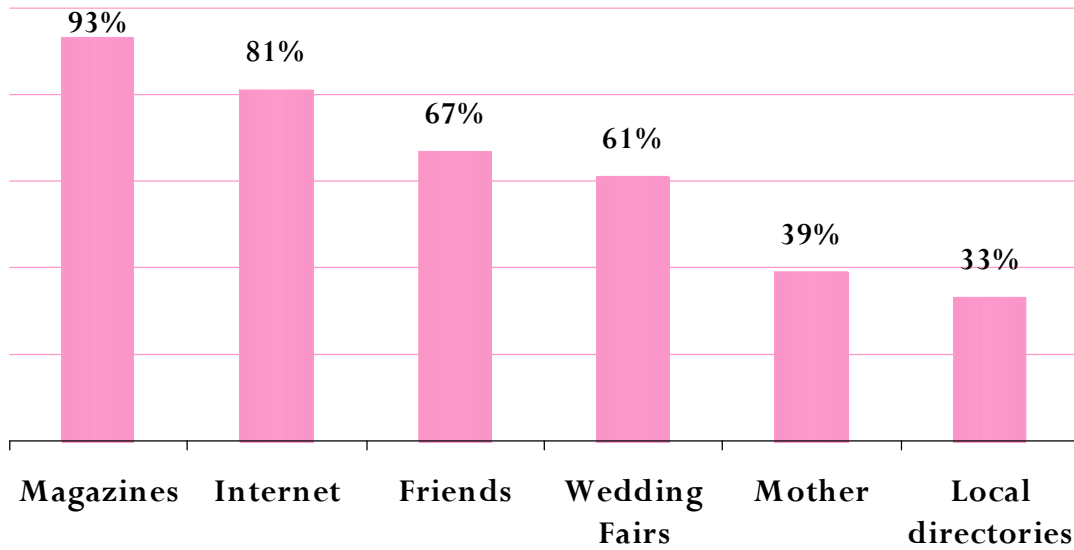
Order of planning:



Ideas and Inspiration

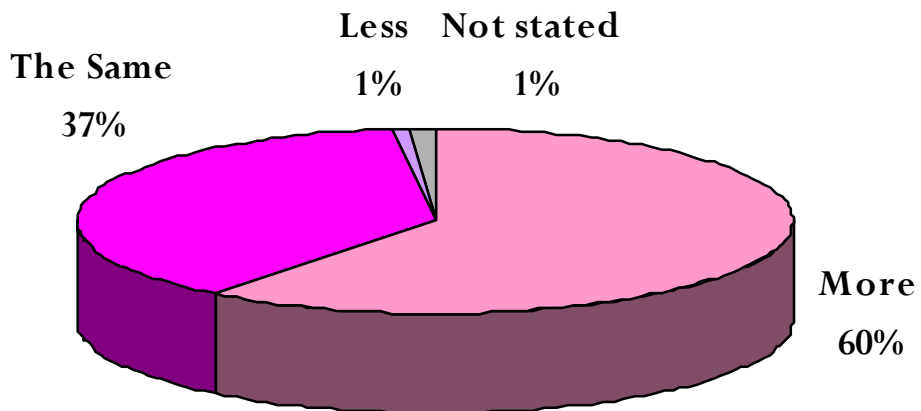
Where do brides source wedding information from?

Today's brides consider **magazines their number one source** of wedding information. The internet, friends and wedding fairs are their secondary sources. The internet is an increasingly important source, up 5% from last year.



Do brides access the internet more post engagement?

The internet is a key source of wedding information, with 60% of brides increasing their usage once they get engaged.



Trusted Sources

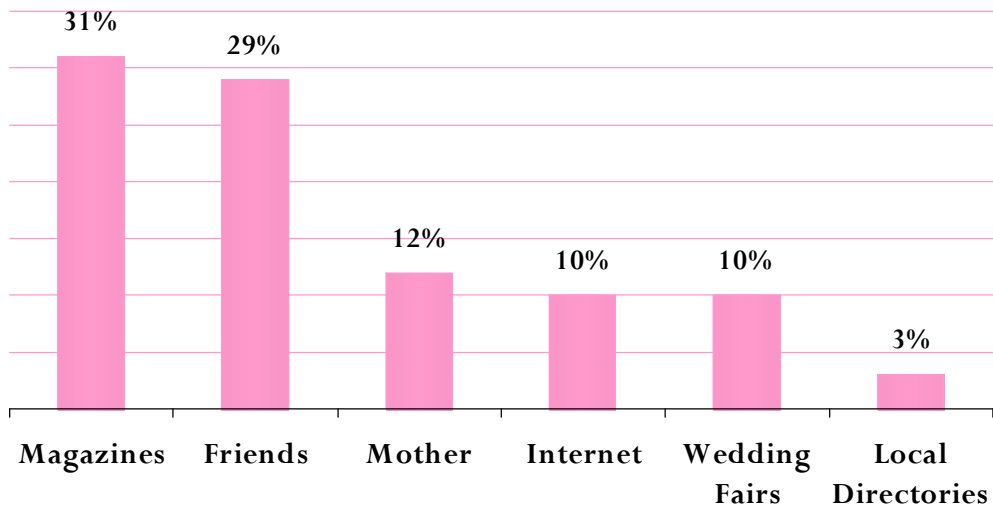
How much do brides trust their information sources?

Magazines are the number one source for wedding information and are also the **MOST** trusted.

Almost a third of brides consider magazines their **MOST** trusted information source.

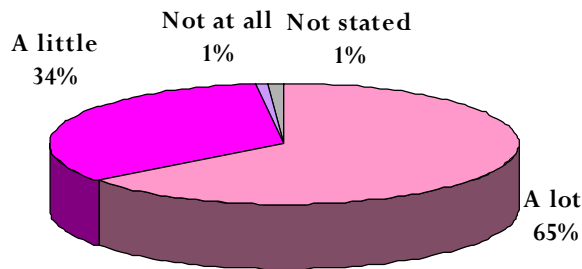
Magazines are trusted over brides' friends.

Despite being a very popular information source, there is very **little trust in the internet**.



How much do brides trust the information in bridal magazines?

99% of brides **trust** the information in bridal magazines and 65% **trust it A LOT**.

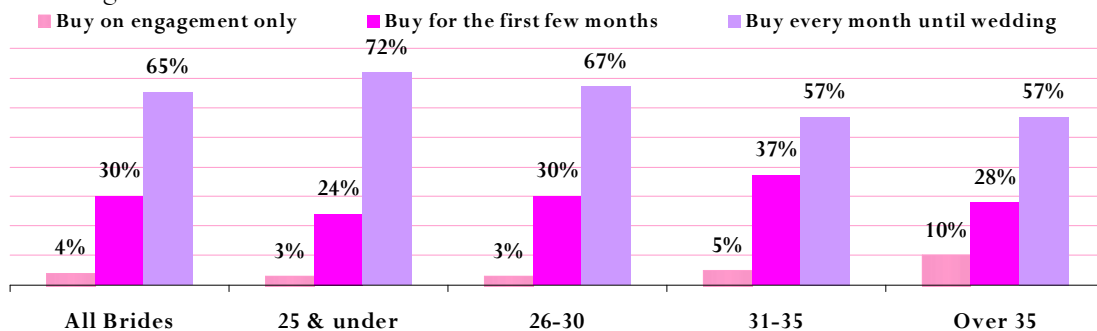


	All brides	25 & under	26-30	31-35	Over 35
Trust a lot	65%	67%	65%	64%	63%
Trust a little	34%	32%	34%	35%	35%

Bridal Magazines

When do brides start buying bridal magazines?

The majority of brides (65%) are buying a wedding magazine **EVERY** month up until their wedding and almost a third buy them for the first few months. Younger brides are buying wedding titles most regularly with **72%** of 25 & under buying every month until their wedding. **87%** of brides had an engagement ring before buying their first bridal magazine.



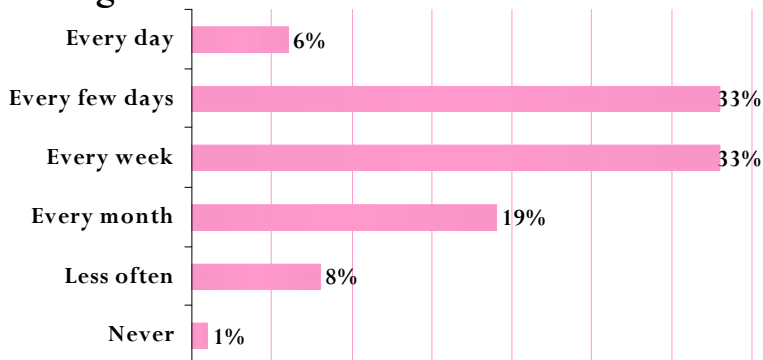
How many bridal titles are they buying each time?

On average, brides are buying **two wedding magazines** each month and 28% are buying three or more. In 2004, only 15% were buying three or more magazines.

0	3%
1	34%
2	34%
3	17%
4+	11%
MEAN	2

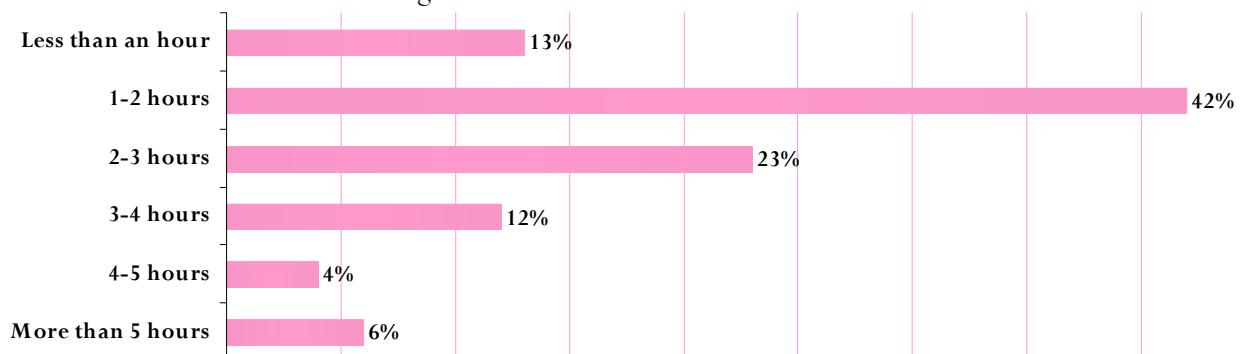
How often do brides refer to their bridal magazines?

The majority of brides are buying a bridal magazine every month up until their wedding. They are buying two on average each time and **72% are referring to them on at least a weekly basis**. **A third** of brides are referring to their bridal magazine **every few days** and **6%** are referring **every day**.



How long do brides spend with their bridal magazine each time?

Brides are spending a lot of time reading their bridal magazines – almost **90%** spend **more than an hour** and **45%** spend **more than 2 hours** with their magazine each time. Mean = 2.2 hours

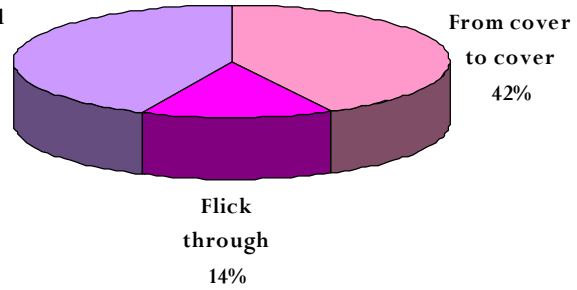


Bridal Magazines

How do brides read their bridal magazines?

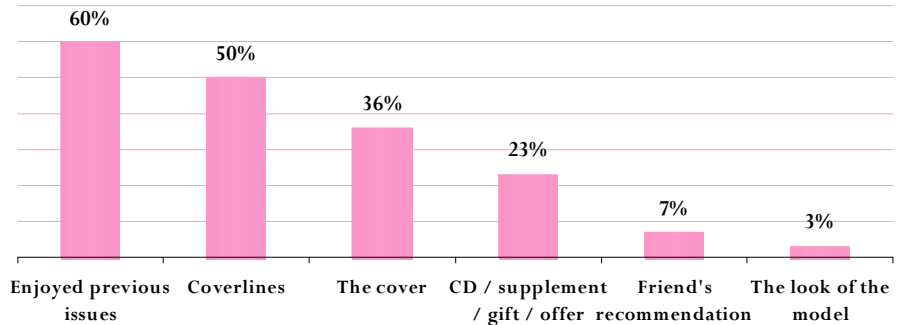
Most brides read their magazines thoroughly, either from cover to cover or at intervals.

Pick up and read at different intervals
43%

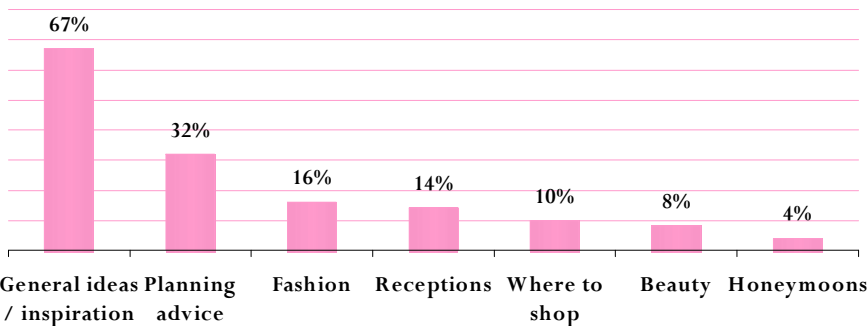


What attracts brides to bridal magazines on the newsstand?

Over half of brides are attracted to bridal magazines because they have enjoyed previous issues or are attracted by the cover-lines.



What do brides find bridal magazines most useful for?



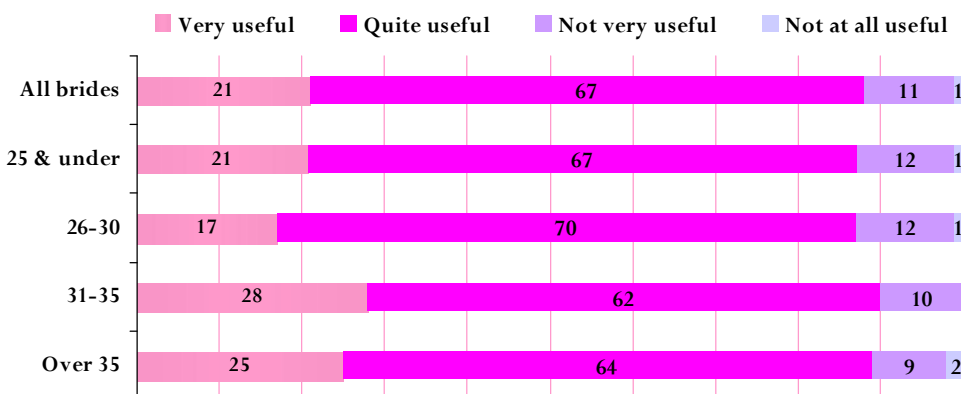
The number one reason brides are buying bridal magazines is for **inspiration and ideas**.

Planning advice is also seen as useful

Magazine Advertising

95% of brides notice the adverts in bridal magazines. 67% have made, or are planning to make a **purchase** as a result of seeing it **advertised in a bridal magazine**.

The majority of brides find advertisements in their bridal magazines useful (88%) with 21% finding them **VERY** useful.

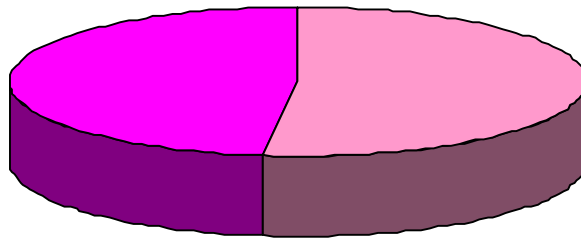


The Groom

Are fiancés reading brides' wedding magazines?

Over half of modern fiancés are reading wedding magazines.

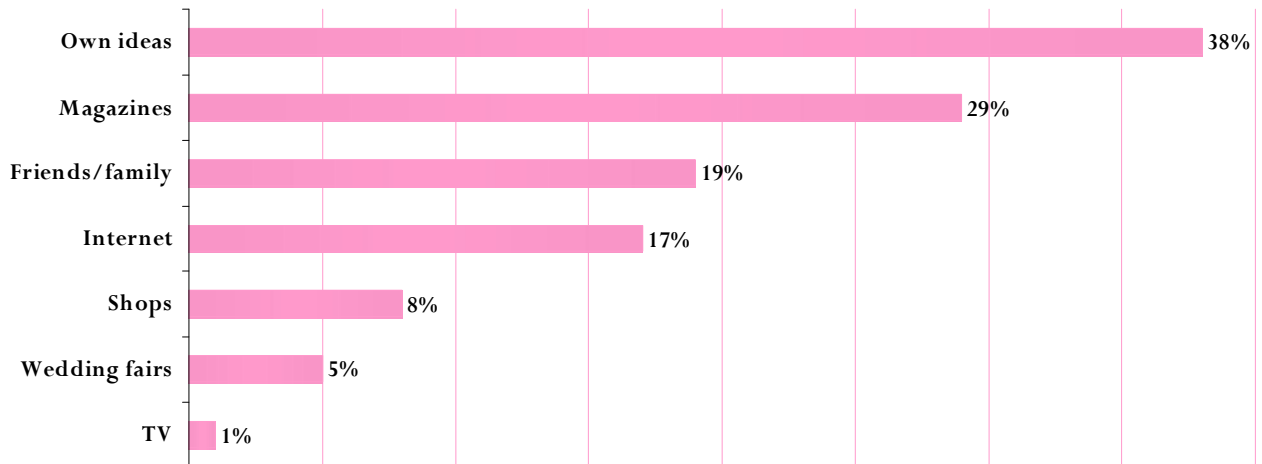
No - fiancé does not read bridal magazines
48%



Yes - fiancé reads bridal magazines
52%

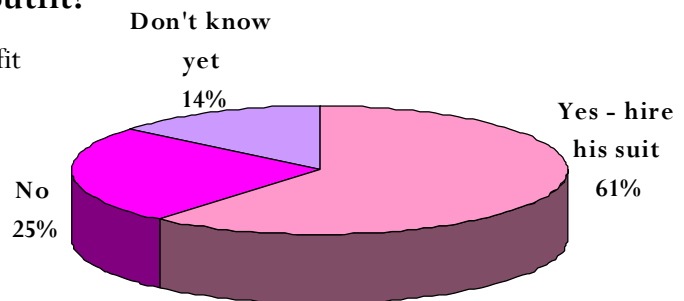
Where are fiancés getting ideas for gifts?

57% of brides know where their fiancé gets ideas for outfits, presents and rings. Of those brides who do know, over a third say it is the groom's own ideas, followed by magazines, friends or family and the internet



Will grooms be hiring their wedding outfit?

Almost two thirds of grooms will be hiring their outfit



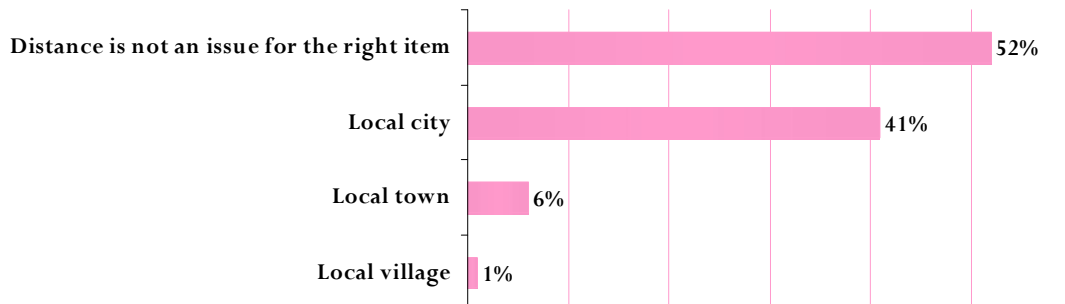
Where will they be hiring it from?

Moss Bros	18%
Local Hire Shop	18%
Pronuptia	5%
Youngs	4%
Debenhams	2%

Shopping

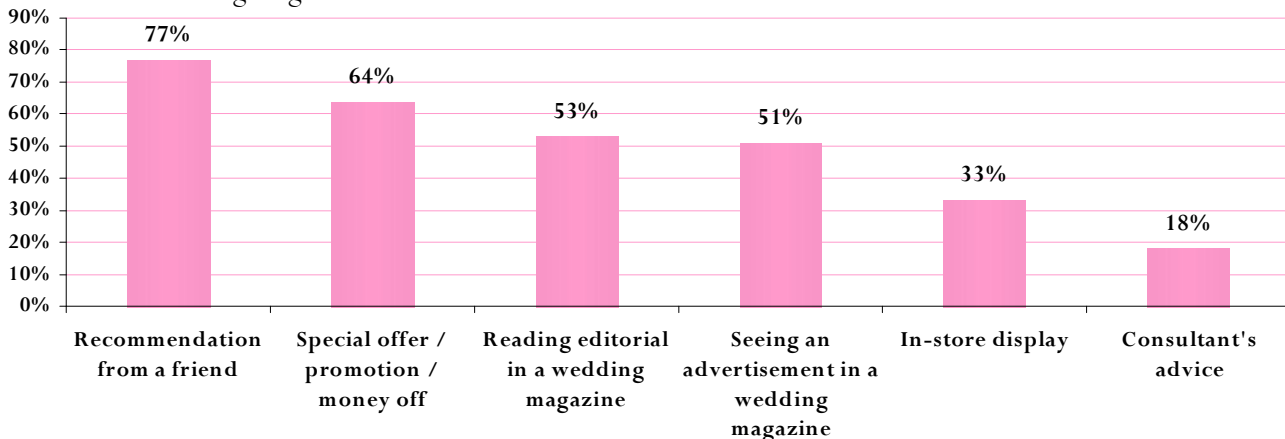
How far are brides prepared to travel to get the perfect wedding item?

Half of brides are prepared to travel **ANY DISTANCE** to get the perfect item for their wedding.



What tempts brides to buy products?

Over half of brides are tempted to buy a product after seeing an editorial or advertisement in a wedding magazine. Under 25s are less likely to be influenced by magazine editorials and over 35s are most likely to respond to advertisements in wedding magazines.

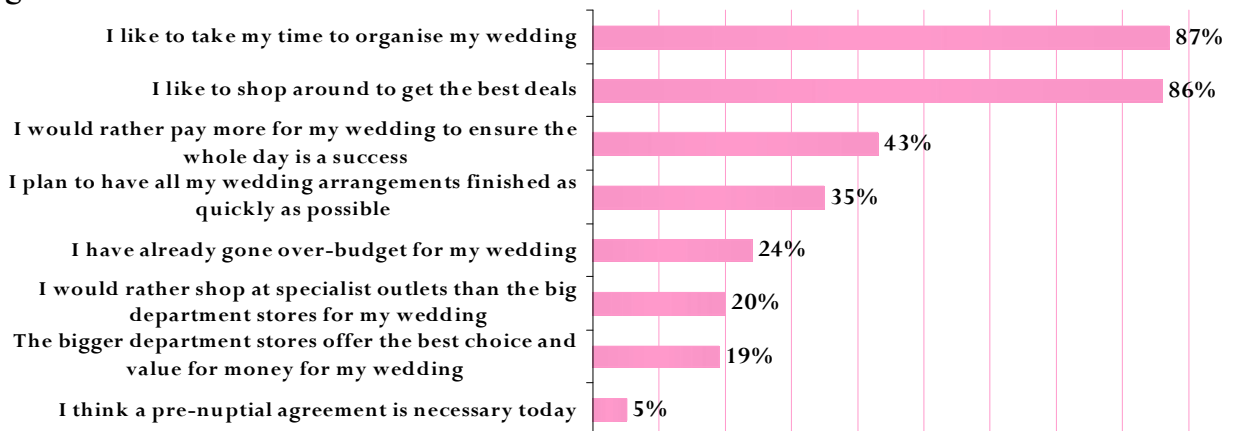


How strongly do brides feel?

On average brides are spending **14 months** planning their wedding and 87% of brides agree that they like to take their time to organise their wedding.

Half of brides are prepared to travel any distance to get the perfect item.

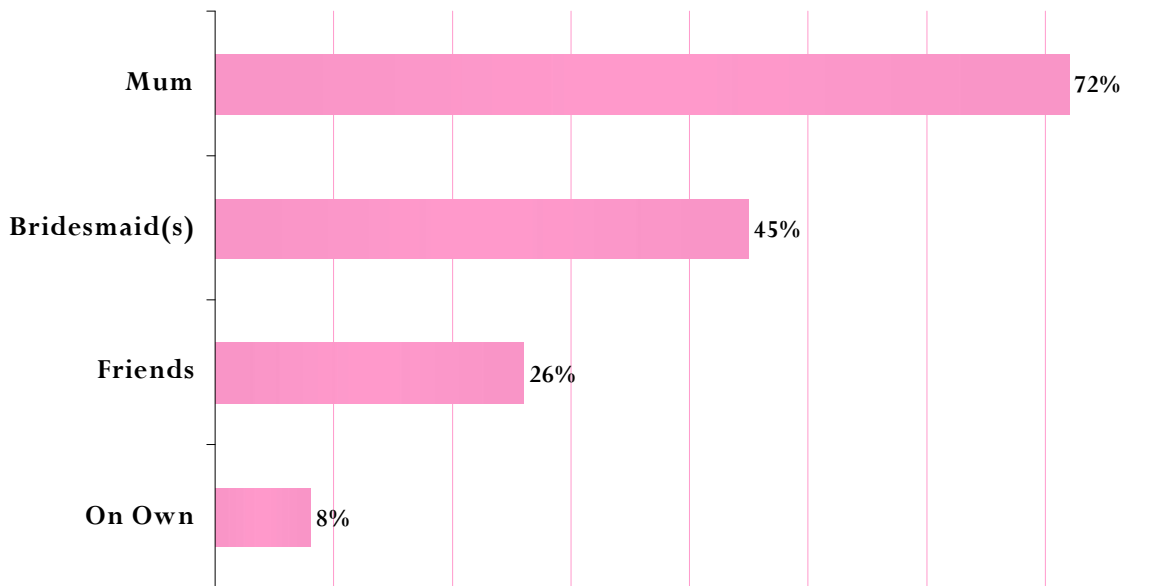
43% of brides would rather pay more to ensure their day is a success and almost a quarter have **already gone over budget**.



Fashion

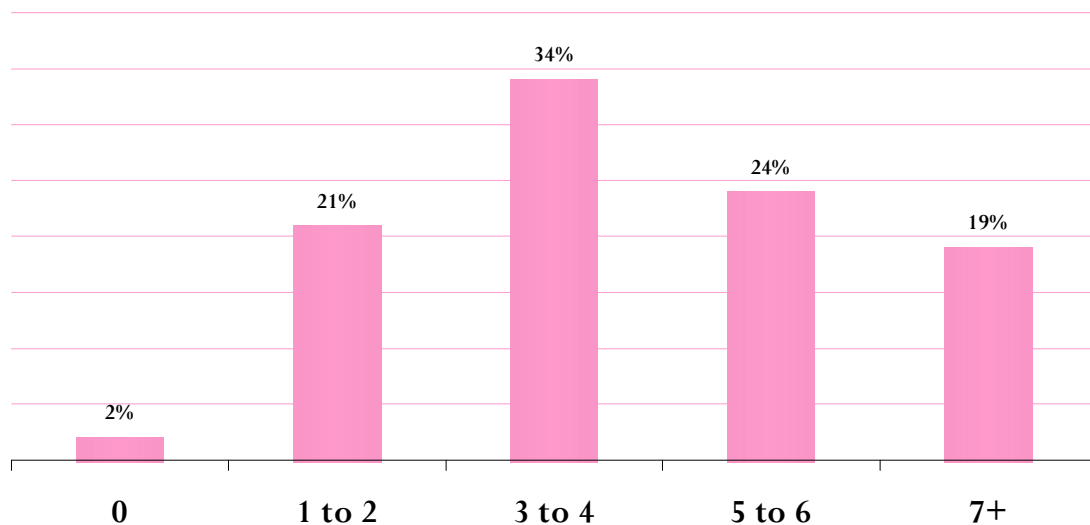
Who are brides taking with them to go wedding dress shopping?

Overall, the majority of brides are still going wedding dress shopping with their mums. There are considerable age differences, with younger women most likely to go with their mums and older women increasingly likely to shop alone



How many bridal shops will brides visit?

Before making a decision brides will visit 4 bridal shops on average. Almost half of brides aged 25-30 will visit 5 or more shops (47%), while brides over 35 are least likely to visit a lot of shops



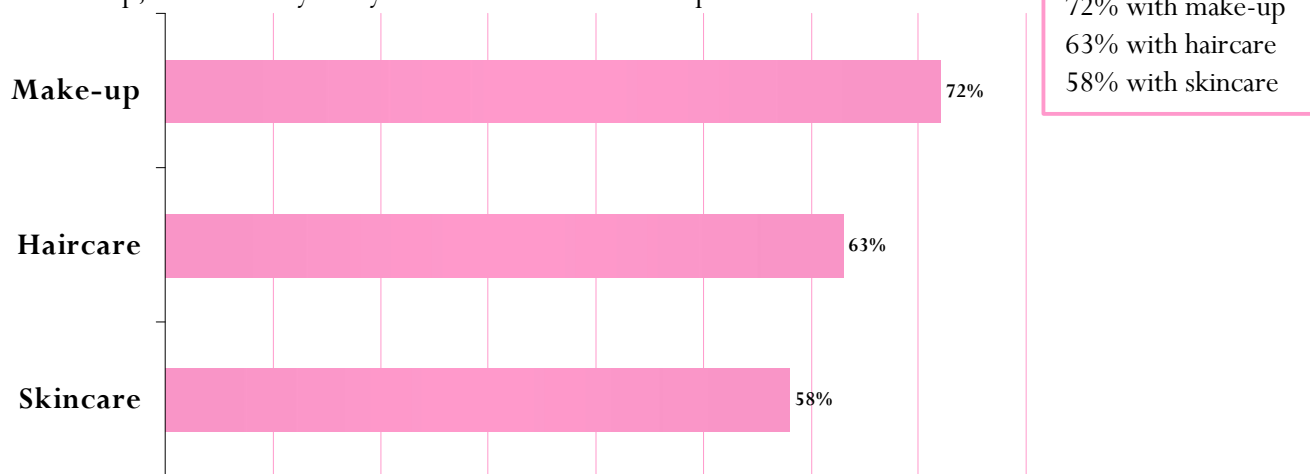
Beauty

Will brides be hiring a professional make-up artist for their wedding day?

52% of brides will be hiring a professional make-up artist for the day.

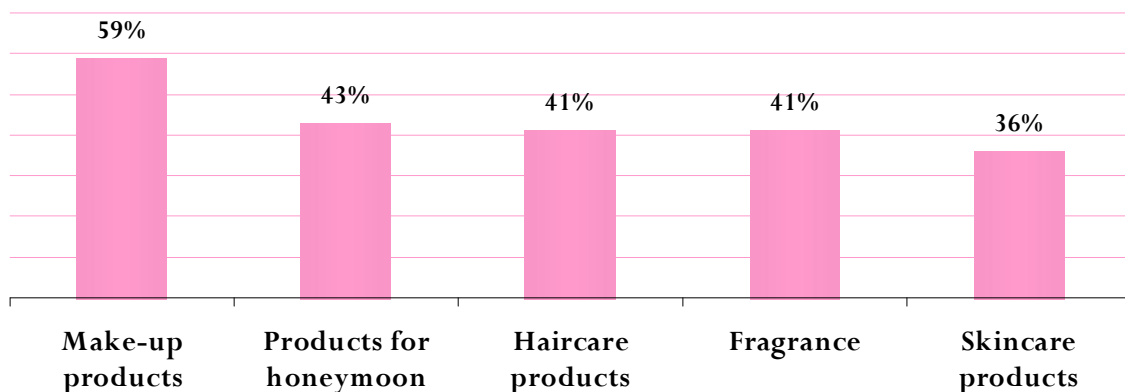
Will brides be experimenting with beauty products in the lead up to their wedding?

The majority of brides will be experimenting with beauty products. Older brides are most likely to experiment with new make-up, but less likely to try new haircare and skincare products.

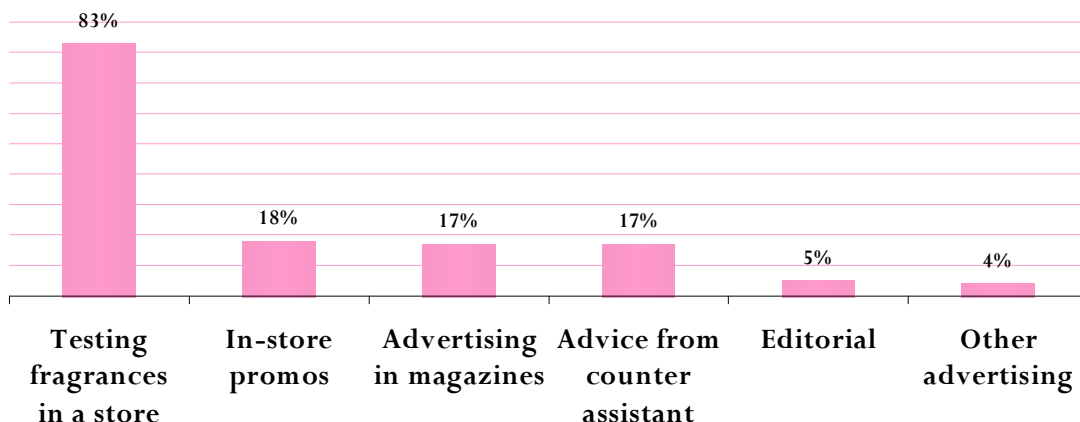


Will brides be buying new products or sticking to existing brands?

As well as brides being experimental with beauty, many will also purchase new beauty brands, with make-up being the most popular.



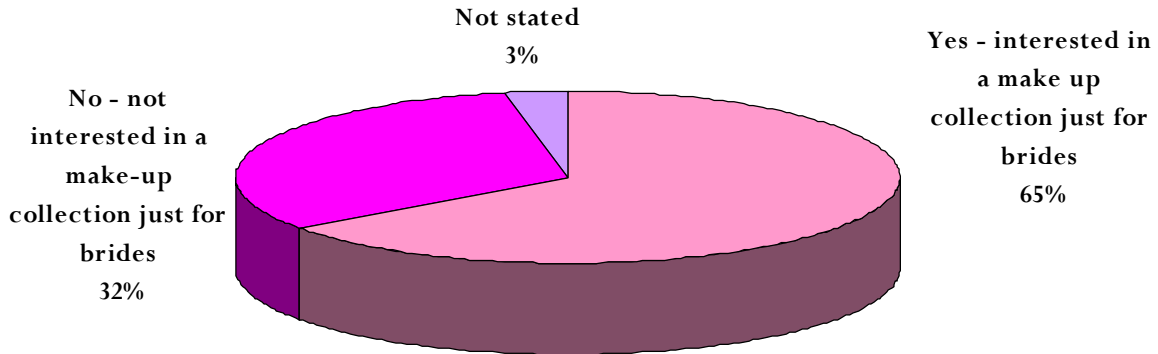
What influences choice of a new fragrance?



Beauty

Would brides be interested in a make-up collection specifically for them?

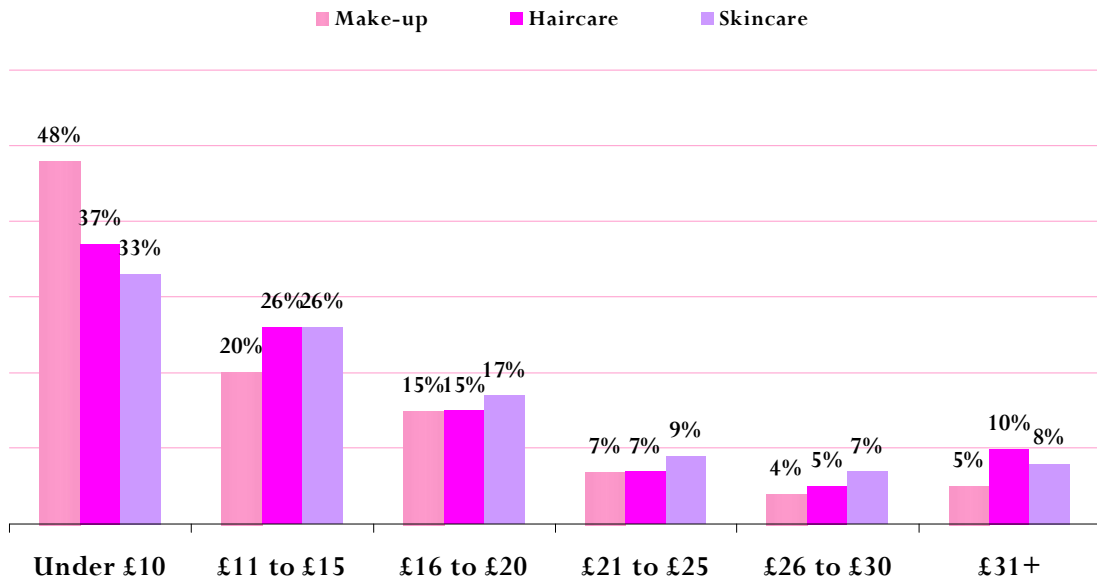
Over two thirds of brides would be interested.



How much do brides spend on make-up, skincare and haircare each month?

The average amount spent on make-up, skincare and haircare by brides is:

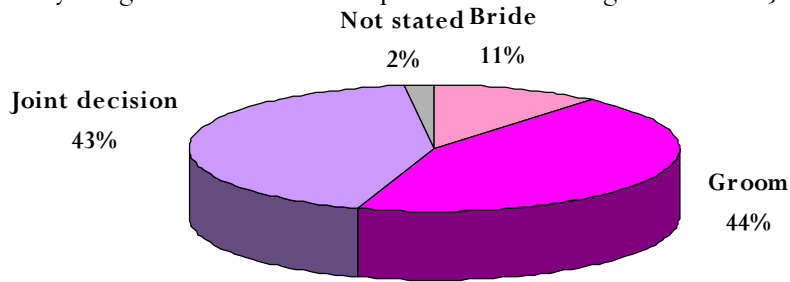
	Mean spend per month
Make-up	£12
Haircare	£15
Skincare	£15



Jewellery

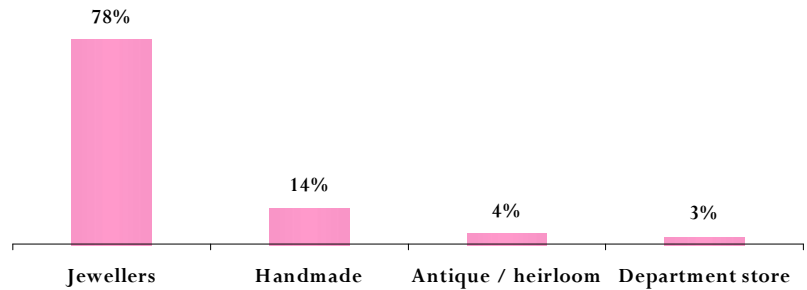
Who chooses the engagement ring?

44% of rings are still chosen by the groom but a lot of couples are now making the decision jointly



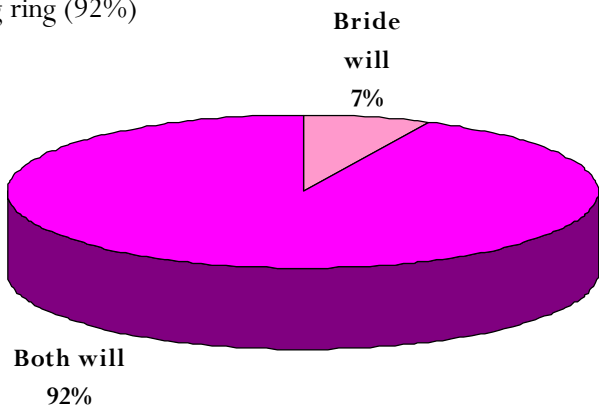
Where are they getting the ring from?

The majority of couples are buying their engagement ring at a jewellers.



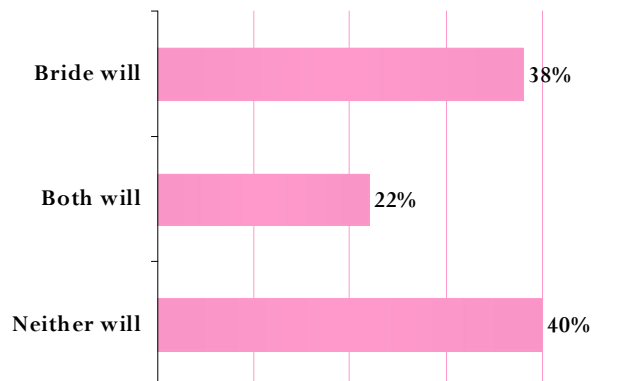
Will they both be wearing a wedding ring?

The majority of couples today will both wear a wedding ring (92%)



Would today's couples consider wearing a diamond wedding ring?

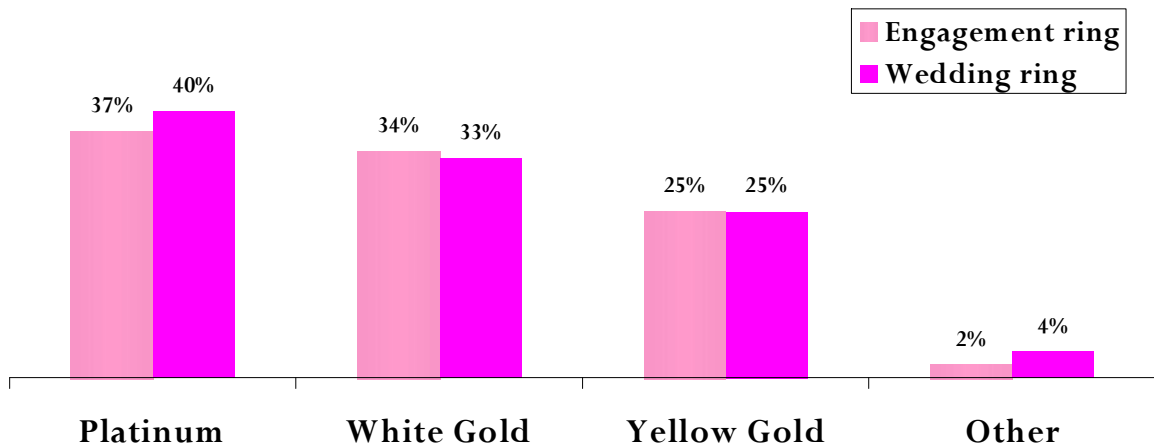
Almost two thirds of brides (60%) would consider wearing a diamond wedding ring and almost a quarter of grooms would do the same.



Jewellery

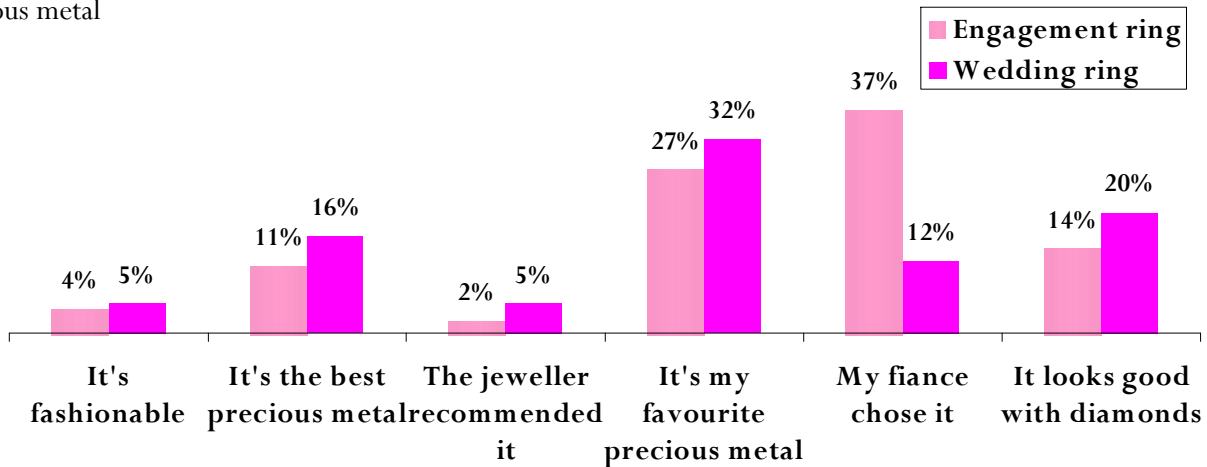
What type of ring setting would they like?

Yellow gold is the least popular choice for engagement and wedding ring settings



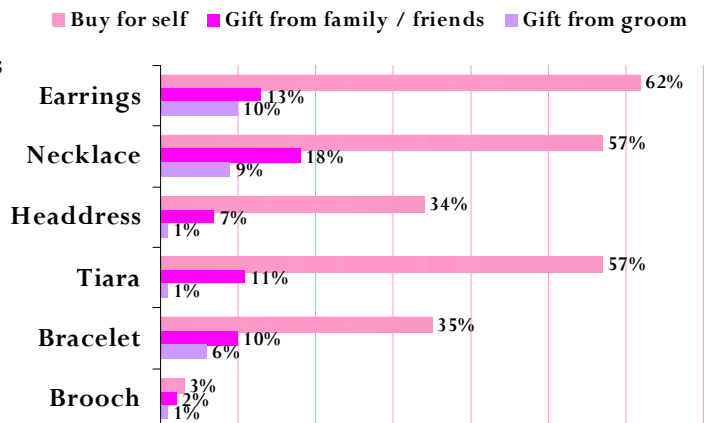
Most important reason for choice of ring setting?

Where the bride has chosen the ring herself, the most common reason for choice of setting was that it's their favourite precious metal



Which items of jewellery will brides buy?

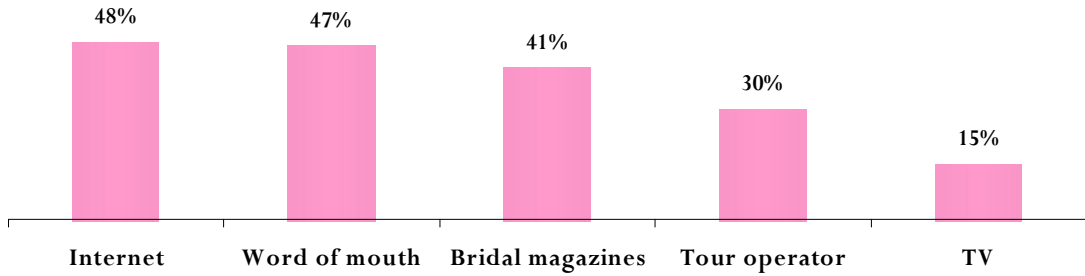
The number one gift brides plan to buy for themselves is earrings (62%). The item that the majority of brides plan to receive as a gift from friends is a necklace (18%) and from the groom earrings (10%).



Travel

Where do couples get ideas and inspiration for their honeymoon?

Almost half of brides get their honeymoon ideas via the internet and word of mouth. 41% get them from bridal magazines.

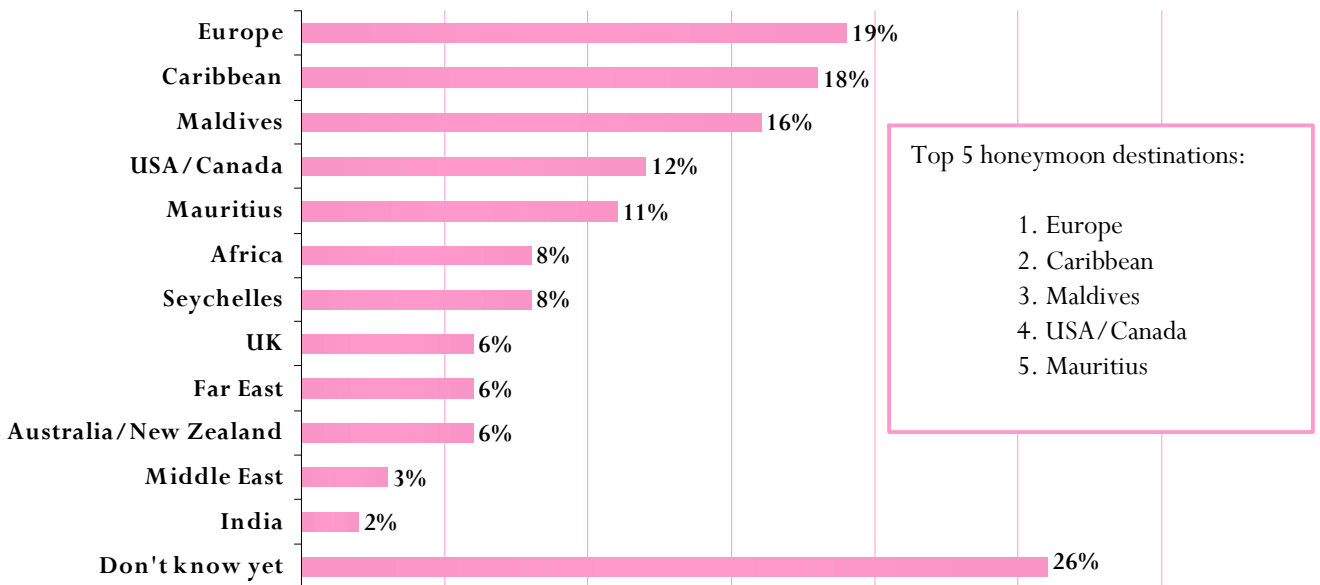


Who decides on the honeymoon destination?

The choice of honeymoon destination for the majority of couples is a joint decision (81%). Only 9% of grooms have control and 4% of brides.

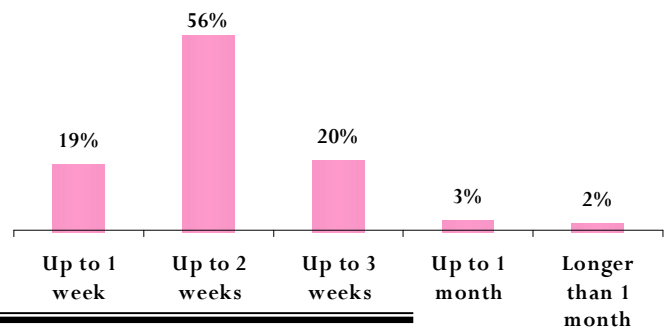
Where are couples planning on going for their honeymoon?

The majority of couples are planning to go abroad for their honeymoon, however, 26% were undecided on the destination. The Caribbean, Maldives & Mauritius are becoming increasingly popular as honeymoon destinations.



How long will they be going away for?

The majority of couples will take two weeks for their honeymoon, but a quarter will be going for longer than 2 weeks.



Are couples going abroad for their stag/hen dos?

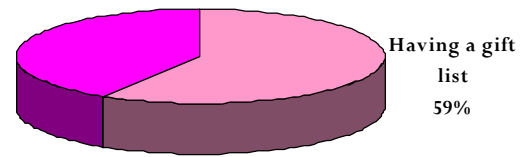
14% of couples are both going abroad for the hen/stag dos. A further 14% of grooms and 5% of brides are also celebrating abroad.

Gift Lists

Are couples planning on having a gift list?

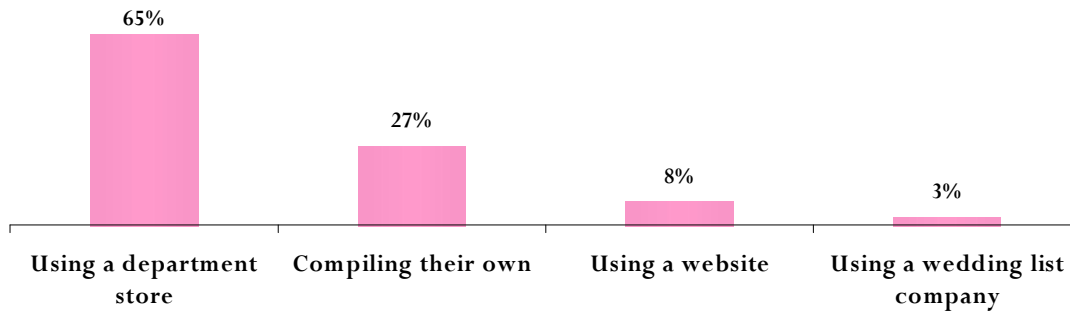
The number of couples planning on having a gift list for their wedding has decreased from 64% in 2005 to 59% this year

Not having a gift list
41%



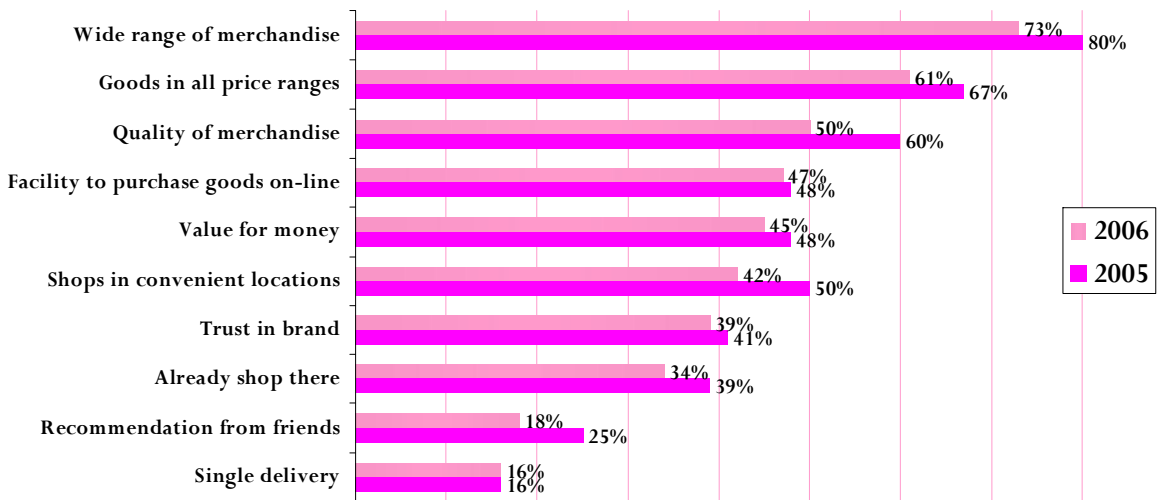
Where are they having their gift lists?

Of those couples who are having a gift list the most popular source is through a department store.



What are the key criteria in choosing a gift list?

The number one criteria for choosing a gift list is a wide range of merchandise. Since 2004, the facility to purchase on-line has increased in importance from 38% to 47% (48% in 2005). Quality has actually decreased by 10% back to 2004 level and all other aspects have also seen slight declines.



Gift list value

Mean 2004: £1,486

Mean 2005: £1,634

Mean 2006: £1,707

