

Get ready, get organized, and get hitched with Office



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Crabby Office Lady

Preparing for a wedding can be a stressful time. But with a little help from Office, you can get a handle on your ever-growing to-do lists, plan a realistic budget, and even create an online photo album and scrapbook.

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Well, it's almost June and we all know what that means: Teenagers with too much time on their hands, air-conditioners on the fritz, and of course, weddings. Ah, June brides. I was one myself — three times, in fact. Now when June rolls around each year, it's all I can do to avoid the bridal shops and stop myself from making tasting appointments with catering companies.

But you! You're getting married! Congratulations! Gelukwens! Mazel Tov! Félicitations! (Finally!) And because of my vast experience with weddings ("Always a bride, never a bridesmaid"), I feel compelled to help you out with your mountainous list of preparations. You have a lot of decisions to make:

1. Should we invite old flames?
2. Should we hire Uncle Buddy's '70s glam rock band for the reception?
3. Should we have purple taffeta or fuchsia crinoline for the bridesmaids?

Office can't help you with those kinds of decisions, but I can:

1. No.
2. No.
3. Let the bridesmaids wear what they want. (Trust me on this one.)

Office can, however, make this an easier, smoother, and even fun experience as the big day approaches.



Mortie: On the sofa while Outlook does the organizing

When my first husband, Mortie, and I got married, Outlook helped me write my to-do lists, keep track of the guests, and stay on my schedule. Take it from me: you're going to need help, and Outlook is a handy organizer. I only wish Mortie had been, too. Get off the couch and take a walk, Mortie.

You're probably already familiar with the many things that Outlook can do. But here are a few little tips that helped me and Mortie:

Keep track of the guest list If you want to make a list of all the guests and their addresses, phone numbers, e-mail, and so on, print up your contacts in booklet style. You can also take all your contacts and add their names and addresses to envelopes and invitations. You start this in Outlook, and then you complete it in Microsoft Word.

Let the other wedding planners in on what you're doing You can publish your Outlook calendar to the Internet so that you and your wedding planners can access it any time to know what's coming up and when.

Make your to-do list and stick to it Want to be able to see, at a glance, what you've accomplished and what's still in the queue? Create task lists that you can view on the computer, print out, and check off your duties once you've accomplished them. You can also assign tasks to your mother or to other folks who are helping you with the planning. This is a great way to distract your mother-in-law-to-be and send her off on some impossible errand.

How to keep track of guests, tasks, and plans with Outlook

- [Print Contacts](#)
- [Introduction to publishing Internet Calendars](#)
- [Publish a calendar on Office Online](#)
 - [Everything you need to know about Outlook tasks](#)



Alfred: Budgeting to the last penny with Excel

When my second husband, Alfred, and I got married, he took care of all the details. All I had to do was sit back and stay out of his way. Way out of his way.

Alfred was my "super-organized honey-bunny" (although I often called him something very different during the breakup). He knew how much we were spending on every ice cube, every Swedish meatball, every embossed napkin. How did he do it? With his trusty assistant, Excel.

Alfred created our very own wedding budget template that had editable lists of items we were spending money on. It also had columns for our estimated costs and columns for our actual costs (so that we could compare and see how close our estimates were). There was even a row for adding unexpected costs, like the town hall window we had to replace after Great Aunt Geranium kicked her shoe through it. (She is quite a lively dancer.) And who can forget the toll this wedding took on the local florist? Alfred paid by the petal.

Of course, because Alfred had created a spreadsheet to keep track of who gave us each gift, we were able to send out thank-you notes before we even went on our honeymoon to Amherst, Massachusetts, to visit Emily Dickinson's family home. (Marry a literature professor, take a romantic tour of a spinster poet's cobwebby bedroom. Oh, the romance of it all ...)

Yes, Alfred and Excel were meant for one another. (Love that program, Alfred? WHY DON'T YOU MARRY IT?!?)

How to plan a budget, track gifts, and kill a florist with Excel

- [Alfred's wedding budget template](#)
- [Alfred's wedding gift tracker](#)
 - [Wedding flowers planner](#)



Jason: Photo galleries in FrontPage

Why shouldn't a young, up-and-coming artist like Jason be attracted to a hip, happening, hottie like me? (You can keep your snickering to yourself.) And for me, well, after Alfred and I finally called it quits, meeting an artist like Jason was like having a tall, cool glass of lemonade on a summer day. With lots of crushed ice. And three swirly straws.

Jason didn't care about preparations for the wedding. And because we decided to do away with the big ceremonial thing and spend our money on the honeymoon in Bora Bora, we wanted all our friends and family to see how happy we were and let them share in our joy. And I'm glad he took so many photos because friends, he made me look just fabulous. In fact, he created a stunning presentation on the Web for all our friends and family using the FrontPage 2003 photo gallery feature.

With four different layouts to choose from, Jason created a photo gallery for each week we honeymooned. (Yes it was expensive, but he gracefully let me pay for it all.) He was able to upload his scanned photos, upload his digital photos straight from his camera, add captions, create thumbnails, and even use a different theme for each gallery. Then he published the gallery to our Web site, and all our friends and family shared in our love — as brief it was. (Four weeks, to be exact; I'm still recovering.)

How to create a photo gallery in FrontPage

- [Display a gallery of photos on your Web site](#)
- [Create a photo gallery](#)
- [Change the layout of a photo gallery](#)



Crabby: Came out fine in the end

Yes, well, I'm single again. But I wouldn't trade all the wonderful experiences I've had for anything. And you know what they say ("they" being Liz Taylor and I): Thrice bitten, and the best is yet to come.

However, in this day and age, it's a good idea to know what you're getting into ... and what you're coming into it with. Husbands come and go, but you can keep hold of your stuff forever with Access and a little database know-how.

- [Asset tracking database](#)

Congratulations again, and don't forget to send me a postcard!

Tip of the week

Adrienne Ong is a librarian and sent me this tip for Excel 2007.

"I generated a book list from the library database (a utx-auto file) which opens in Excel. In the original file, the Chinese characters are displayed as `â,....,ã½©è`. To display the Chinese characters in Excel:

1. Select the **Data** tab.
2. On the **Get External Data** group, Click **From Text**.
3. Select **All Files** and find the the .utx file. The Text Import Wizard will be displayed.
4. Under **File Origin** select **65001: Unicode UTF-8**.
5. Click **Next**. The Chinese characters "`â,....,ã½©è`" will be displayed as `傅,佩榮`.

Thanks Adrienne! I'm not sure when I will personally have use for Chinese characters, but you never know ...

"Marriage is a great institution, but I'm not ready for an institution yet." — Mae West

About the author

[Annik Stahl](#), the Crabby Office Lady columnist, takes all of your complaints, compliments, and knee-jerk reactions to heart. Therefore, she graciously asks that you let her know whether this column was useful to you — or not — by entering your feedback using the **Did this article help you?** feedback tool below. And remember: If you don't vote, you can't complain.

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