

THE GROOM'S GUIDE

Ring, ring

THE WEDDING RING IS A SYMBOL OF LOVE AND COMMITMENT THAT LASTS A LIFETIME. SO CHOOSE IT WELL.

That little band of precious metal has a big job to do. It seriously communicates to the world the wearer is married; as a piece of jewellery it has to be flattering and as the precious thing will hardly ever be removed, the ring has to be so comfortable you hardly notice it's there.

Ring styles that are beautiful as ordinary jewellery may not suit a wedding ring. Very wide bands, for example, although striking and stylish can feel uncomfortable after a while and have to be removed to give the skin some air. These extreme styles may not be the best choice for 'absolutely every day of your life' wear.

Couples may choose matching bands or the bride may choose a more flashy design to match her engagement ring or a diamond encrusted eye catcher, whichever, the main guiding factor should be the long term performance of the ring. Will you still love it when you're 64? Hopefully this ring will be forever.

Fashions in jewellery come and go, one year gold, the next year silver, so matching a wedding ring to current fashion jewellery or a favourite watch is short term thinking. The wedding ring can stand alone.

Wedding ring lowdown

METALS

The stamp displays the quality of the gold: 9k, 10k, 14k, 18k or 24k which is the purest and softest; 14k or 18k don't scratch as easily. White gold is an alloy of gold and white metals, rhodium plating makes the white gold appear whiter. It is reasonably hard, but does wear away eventually, a jeweller can re-rhodium plate annually. Platinum is the most prestigious and expensive metal, almost twice the price of gold, platinum is the hardest and most durable of them all and hardly needs any maintenance other than a clean every so often.

TIMING

Allow enough time to order your rings, most are custom made and usually take around four to six weeks to complete. Order rings at least eight weeks prior to the wedding. If circumstances mean that rings are ordered at the last minute, ensure the manufacturer has loan rings, just in case the deadline is not met.

SIZING

It's important that fingers are sized accurately by the jeweller. Take into consideration that fingers change, in warmer weather fingers will be slightly larger, weight loss or gain will affect finger size. The most common mistake is upsizing.

MAKING

Your jeweller should explain the methods of manufacture and the types of finishes and durability. Some finishes will last longer, choose a finish that will not easily wear off or show blemishes. Shop around, see what's available so you are satisfied you have found the best.