

Kol Chattan

All of the technical arrangements for a *chattan* during the engagement period /// **Edition 14**

Mazel tov! You're a *chattan*!

The purpose of this booklet is to make the many arrangements during this busy period easier and to provide the *chattan* with an idea of what to expect, what they must organize, and when. We hope that this booklet will help maintain the emotional calmness so important during this period and make more room for truly focusing on *Avodat Hashem* and Torah study, and preparing to build a new Jewish home. It helps to know that all of the necessary arrangements are listed here, eliminating the need to try to think of "what else is left to do..."

The booklet includes many details, and naturally, not all of them are relevant to everyone and to every community. However, a large portion of what is included here is based on the recommendations and lessons learned by people who have organized *simchas* and shared them with us, as well as service providers and event producers. They learned these lessons by losing significant amounts of money, time, and through stress and heartache. Therefore, we recommend reading through the booklet a few times, and even if you choose otherwise, at least you will have already read the experienced recommendations of others.

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Mazel tov! | **Gmach Birkat Yisrael**

Stage One /// The Day After the *Vort*

There are things that should be closed as soon as possible, right after the *vort*.

Venue

The first thing to do after the engagement is to **look for a venue**, which will also determine the date of the wedding. There are less busy seasons of the year (winter, Elul), and periods when, within a few hours, a hall can be taken! Therefore, it is a good idea to work quickly and check a few venues simultaneously, and to close with the most suitable one. There are halls where the catering is ordered separately, and this should also be settled immediately. It is clear that this stage (like all of the details to follow) needs to be coordinated and agreed upon with the *kallah's* family. In addition, it is worth checking that nothing important is scheduled at the yeshiva on this date.

For your convenience, you can use Gmach Birkat Yisrael's list of halls, which features the full contact information for halls all over the country: name, address, contact person, telephone, guest capacity, accessibility features, and so forth. The list can be downloaded from the website directly at [Text Ratz Publishing](http://TextRatzPublishing.com) (accessible with all filters). If you will be having a *Shabbat Aufruf / Sheva Brachot* in a hall – that should also be booked as soon as possible.

After you have closed on a hall "orally," you will usually be asked to provide a deposit within a few days, and to sit and settle all of the event details. Regarding all of these matters (the hall, hours, menu, locations, contract and more), you will find details in the *Kol Mitzhalot* booklet for parents of the *chattan* and *kallah*.

Photographer

In terms of photographers, the demand is high too, and it's a good idea to book one quickly. On the one hand - what is left after the wedding (on technical level!) are the photos and videos; on the other hand - not many couples open their

albums on a daily or monthly basis, after a few years have gone by. Based on what we have checked, the average number of times that a couple opens their album ranges between five and thirty, and no more! There are photographers who are more expensive than the standard, but sometimes their work does not justify their high rates. Therefore, it is not worth splurging on a high price, but attempts to be too thrifty can also result in a lot of heartache. In our experience, younger and less familiar photographers put a lot more effort into their work in order to prove themselves, compared with famous photographers who sometimes seem to have lost their enthusiasm a bit. Considering these points and discussing with the "other side" could lead you to the right choice for your families.

There are photographers who will let you choose the good pictures out of all of the photos taken (some utilize special software), while other photographers will do it themselves. What's better? You decide. Even for quick, efficient couples, this can sometimes drag the process out for months.

We have been asked to point out: When the photographer does whatever he wants, a situation can easily arise in which it is forbidden to look at the album / video, according to the *Shulchan Aruch*. This is especially relevant to videos of the dancing (even if you are not stringent in this area, there may be women who are and it is worth respecting their wishes), certain photography positions, and more. **Insist on your preferences, he is working for you!**

Photo shoots at locations: If this is important to you, coordinate the details as well. We received very painful letters on this topic, and many *kallahs* severely regretted their photo shoot. Common reasons were: too much heat and sweating before the wedding (or worse - torrential rain), dirt and dust on the wedding dress, pressure and mistakes in calculating the time, coming late to the wedding and exhaustion from the photo shoot. Therefore, it is worth considering if this addition to the album is actually important to you. If it is important to you - it is very possible that there is a grove, overlook, garden, or pretty location near the hall which you can visit more easily for a short time before the wedding.

Mandatory: Prepare a **detailed, clear, written contract** in advance and copy the parts relevant to you: Many photographers offer their own contract, and if so, check that the following details are included. A bit of effort at the contract stage can save you a lot of money and heartache later.

Basis for a standard contract:

- The event will take place at _____ in the city of _____ on _____ (better to include the secular date to avoid misunderstandings).
- The photographer himself will be present the entire wedding, and not a team representing him (unless otherwise agreed in advance).
- The entire team will be onsite at the hall from ___ until ___ exactly (option: with the exception of the female photographer, who will be present from ___ until ___).
- At the beginning and/or end of the event, there will be family photos with/without backgrounds, and outdoor photos for the *chattan* and *kallah*.
- If additional time is needed at the event, the price will be: ___ per hour, according to a relative calculation of the time.
- The photos will be printed on a _____ type album, photo size _____, with ___ printed pages.
- For the album, it will be possible to choose ___ photos out of all of the photos taken.
- In addition, the photographer will also provide ___ albums (for the parents), type _____, size _____.
- A digital file of photos from the event at development quality will be provided by _____ at the latest, or ___ days after the photo selection is finished.
- The printed album will be ready by _____ at the latest, or ___ days after selections have been made.
- The final price for everything, including: photographer, female photographer, video, editing, (delivery), and additions will be _____ and all prices already include VAT.
- ___% will be paid as a deposit, ___% at the end of the wedding, and ___% will be paid upon receipt of the album. |Signature|

Possible additions available:

- There will be a photo shoot before the event with the photographer himself, beginning at _____, at (location): _____ (less recommended, as aforementioned).
- There will be a separate female photographer for the women, at a quality equal to the male photographer.
- There will be video photography at a quality of at least 1080 Full HD throughout the entire wedding.
- The video will be properly edited and provided on a storage device for comfortable viewing, in ___ copies.
- In addition to the regular video, a high-quality video clip will be added to the beginning of the video.
- ___ copies of the video will be provided by _____ at the latest.

- The standard price for **all** of the above, from a professional, familiar photographer, should be about NIS 7000. Photographers who are just starting out take less. When you receive the material from the photographer, a few backup copies should be made in case the storage device gets lost. The best options are backup on a server or cloud (Google Drive, etc.).

Band

The wedding band industry is primarily run by managers (agents). At many yeshivot, there is a wedding band manager who can be contacted to arrange a band that meets your preferences from a spiritual, professional, and financial perspective (you will usually get a better price through him as well). The prices for 'regular' bands range from NIS 3,000 - NIS 8,000, and vary depending on whether you have a *poiker* / keyboard / instruments, etc. You can sign a contract with them, although usually the well-known bands that work through a manager do not cause problems and follow through with what was agreed upon (we, in any event, have hardly received any complaints about bands). When you close with a band, coordinate the following details with them:

- They will be all ready and waiting **from ___ to ___** including/not including the *chuppah*.
- They will record** the entire wedding, including the *chuppah* and *benching* (if microphones are used), as you decide.
- Coordinate the **style of the music** to the guests / yeshiva.
- Whether they should play / not play "*Yamim al yimei melech*" for every rabbi who enters (if you appoint a wedding assistant - tell the band to listen only to his instructions).
- Whether to give / not give **the microphone to guests** (especially those who know how to sing...).
- If you want them to learn a **specific song** beforehand, for the wedding. If it is a song of your own, and if you have the sheet music - send it to them in advance.
- They will burn the recording onto at least one storage device at the end of the wedding and give it to the family (or to the wedding assistant).
- The final price** for the entire evening, including all of the details settled.
- Recommended: a price **for additional time, per hour** in the event that this is needed at the end of the event (which will be measured relatively).

The material from the band should also be backed up with a few copies as aforementioned.

Engagement announcement

There are different opinions on this matter. For some, this is a very important and obligatory matter, while others think it is a waste of money (there are places where the announcement can be made for free). In any event, if you have decided to invest in it, take a minute to think about the wording (Mr./Maran/Rabbi/Rav/Reb/R'...*Shlita, Hashem yishmerehu v'yichayehu/nero yair*). Make sure that there are no mistakes in the names, dates, and titles. For some reason, in many cases, this simple, small and critical bit of text has the most mistakes in the entire newspaper. It is a good idea to receive the sample by email and approve the announcement, and not rely on oral confirmation. The newspaper made a mistake that was their fault? They will usually compensate you and run it again.

Sanatucha (for those who do it...)

In most yeshivot, a *sanatucha* (party) is thrown for the new *chattan*, according to the local custom. In places where the friends borrow money, buy refreshments and organize everything - it is good to prepare a sum of money to reimburse them. In any event, think of a short and witty speech to give, and if the custom is to give out cigarettes or candies - remember to buy them on the way... There is a nice custom of visiting the various rabbis at the yeshiva to tell them the news and receive their blessing in honor of the occasion (take pictures too?). Immediately after the celebration, it is recommended to collect the photos from everyone who took pictures, because this will be forgotten later on.

Stage Two /// Before the Engagement Party

Shtar T'naim (Engagement contract)

For those who have the custom, coordinate with a rabbi (the Rosh Yeshiva, *mashgiach*, one of the rabbis from the yeshiva, the community rabbi, the Chief Rabbi, etc.) to arrange the *T'naim*. Ask about the desired wording of the *shtar* and purchase the relevant one at a book or Judaica store (you can also buy the *ketubah* at the same time, see below).

Gifts for the Kallah

There are many different types of gifts and many customs and opinions. Sometimes, they differ depending on the period of the year when the engagement takes place - holidays, birthdays, etc. The following is a short list of customary gifts, and when they are usually given (in the Litvish / Sefardi communities). **Of course, none of these are mandatory.**

<input type="checkbox"/> Engagement bouquet	Check the <i>Kol Mitzhalot</i> booklet!	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch	Engagement / first Shabbat
<input type="checkbox"/> Ring	Aside from the <i>chuppah</i> - in the Yichud room. Check size.	<input type="checkbox"/> Siddur	Random date / first Shabbat
<input type="checkbox"/> Necklace	Engagement party	<input type="checkbox"/> Machzor set	On holidays, if relevant, or at any time
<input type="checkbox"/> Earrings	Engagement party	<input type="checkbox"/> Tehillim	Shabbat / Last meeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Bracelet	Engagement party	<input type="checkbox"/> Candlesticks	Shabbat of the <i>Aufruf / Sheva brachot</i>

Additional gift ideas [also good for parents or after the wedding]: Jewelry, more jewelry, a bit more, a jewelry box, *Eishet Chayil* on parchment, a silver wand for lighting candles, silver matchbox, candlestick tray, wallet, purse, makeup bag, perfume, mixer and related contraptions, professional cooking/baking supplies, cookbook or other book, iron (sort of a gift...), camera, computer, computer equipment, cell phone, cell phone cover, earphones, hard disk, disc-on-key (with photos or music), speaker system, portable speaker, vase, plant, home decor items. There are also stores and businesses that offer a range of gifts with personalized photos, such as many of the gifts mentioned above and canvas prints, photos on wood, metal, glass, and more - you have probably seen them all.

We thought that this was obvious, but several people wrote to us and asked that we add - it is important to choose a style that you think will suit your *kallah* and/or parents, and it is a good idea to "spy" a bit with the help of a little brother/sister to check that the gift is needed (and that they didn't buy the same thing a month ago). During the engagement period, it is recommended to avoid items that are usually chosen according to personal taste, such as clothing, perfume, etc., because if she doesn't like it, everyone will feel uncomfortable.

Tip: You can take the gift you bought to a shop and ask them to package it nicely with flowers and other knick-knacks. The result will upgrade the gift for a price that is still inexpensive. This is especially recommended for costly gifts. There are those who give chocolate + a small note, etc. at every meeting. Be creative.

Bus to the Engagement Party

Contact a bus company (if the yeshiva already has their own bus service that they use, this is the best option) and finalize with them the day, location, time, no. of seats, and of course the price of transportation. In addition, organize a list of guests for the engagement party.

If you are interested in the participation of important rabbis from the yeshiva - it is your privilege and duty to take care of the payment for the taxi back and forth (it is best to pay the driver directly, not give money to the rabbi...). Or, arrange for a driver to pick them up **from their house and take them to the hall, and return them afterward**, at the time that they choose. A rabbi who has honored the event and the *chattan* with his presence is not meant to schlep around on buses or pay for a taxi out of his own pocket, twice a week.

First Shabbat

On your first Shabbat at the *kallah's* parents' house, it is nice to bring a gift to the *kallah*, and to her family members (*machloket* regarding married siblings and in-laws...), and perhaps for the home in general, like a *challah* cover/board, etc. (Take into account that we wrote the same idea in the *Kol Kallah* booklet...). In addition, you can bring the *kallah* photos/video from the *sanatucha* + celebrations at the yeshiva (gives you a lot to talk about). It is recommended to prepare a few nice *divrei Torah* about the *parasha* (and a bit from the *sugya* you are learning...).

On the first Shabbat that the *kallah* spends at your house, she isn't usually given a gift, because the guest usually brings the gift (this does not include writing her a note).

Stage Three /// The Engagement Period

“Rules”

This is not the place to expound upon the rules for the engagement period and their explanations, and there are many different opinions and customs regarding how much to meet up and talk, etc. Despite the instinctive desire for freedom, there are very clear guidelines and recommendations from everyone involved in this area, and it is definitely a good idea to pay attention to them.

We will add a recommendation from one of the prominent *mashgichim* regarding the custom in the Yeshivish Sephardic/Litvish sector to **meet** from the engagement party and onward once every two-three weeks, and to **talk on the phone** in the middle of the week for about an hour, with another 10 minute call before Shabbat. In the Chassidic sector, the customs are completely different and each *chassidut* has its own custom.

We were asked especially by one of the Gedolim to mention in the Kol Chattan booklet that all of the guidelines on this topic are based on deep sources and were handed down by rabbis from generation to generation. They are also based on the experiences of many experts in this field, past and present. Violating them has often resulted in severe consequences in the short and/or long term, and so it is worthy and highly recommended to consult with a serious authority and not make independent decisions, and each person should follow the recommendations of their rabbis.

Chattan Classes

Chattan classes are a very important part of laying the foundations of a new home, and so special attention should be dedicated to this area. *Chattan* classes are composed of three parts:

- A. **Halachot:** At most yeshivot, the halacha classes are given to groups of engaged students by a specific member of the yeshiva staff. So after the *vort*, check with the other engaged students or with the rabbi himself when the next cycle of classes is starting, when to join, and how much it costs.
- B. **Practical instruction:** Close to the wedding itself, the *chattan* undergoes practical instruction with a *chattan* teacher (there is usually someone specific at the yeshiva who teaches this). There are often two parts and a private lesson. The instruction usually costs between NIS 500 - 1000.
- C. **Theoretical instruction:** Spiritual and theoretical instruction to prepare for establishing a Jewish home, proper and desirable behavior in the home, understanding a woman's sensitivities, dealing with challenges, proper communication, and more. Usually, the rabbis teaching the *halachot* enrich the classes with relevant tips, but it is also recommended to listen to classes and recordings of additional rabbis and lecturers [by the way - don't erase these recordings at the end of the *Sheva brachot*..].

Some well-known rabbis who speak about these topics are: Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak HaCohen Kook (Rosh Yeshivat Maor HaTalmud), Rabbi Yosef Ben Porat (Rosh Yeshivat Ashrei haish), Rabbi Simcha Cohen, Rabbi Chaim Indorsky, Rabbi Nachum Diamant, Rabbi Aharon Levi, Rabbi Avner Kvass, Rabbi Baruch Greinman, and many others - each with their own unique and important style and personality. It is possible and recommended to download classes and lectures from the wide selection offered by *Kol HaLashon*, or from websites such as *Hidabrut*, *Arachim*, etc.

Relevant Books to Learn

During the engagement period, there is so much available to learn from classes, lectures, and books. The following is a list of recommended books for the engagement period (and afterward):

Recommended books:	Subject	Author	Available at
<input type="checkbox"/> Ma'amarei Hadracha L'Chattanim	Preparing for the wedding and building a home	Rav S. Wolbe ZT"L	Bookstores
<input type="checkbox"/> Na'aseh Adam	All of the topics related to building a home, including the engagement period	Rav A.Y. Kook	Bookstores
<input type="checkbox"/> HaBayit HaYehudi / Beitcha Shalom	All of the topics related to building a home, including the engagement period	Rav Simcha Cohen	Bookstores
<input type="checkbox"/> Zachu	All of the topics related to building a home, including the engagement period	Rav Nachum Diamant	Bookstores
<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage - Operating Instructions	Instructions for building and maintaining a healthy and understanding relationship	Dr. Oz Martin	Bookstores
<input type="checkbox"/> Mar'eh Cohen	Hilchot Niddah	Rav A.Y. Rubin	Bookstores
<input type="checkbox"/> Orchot Taharah	A short, succinct, and very clear book about Hilchot Niddah. Highly recommended!	Rav Tzadka	Text Ratz website

<input type="checkbox"/> Kitzur Hilchot Niddah	An abridged version of the <i>halachot</i> (recommended for reviewing, not for initial study)	Rav Yehuda Boyar	Bookstores
<input type="checkbox"/> Sha'arei Nisuin	<i>Halachic</i> preparations for the <i>chattan</i> (<i>Hilchot Tefillah</i> , accompaniment, day of the <i>chuppah</i> , etc.)	Rav Y. Teschner	Bookstores
<input type="checkbox"/> Shulchan Aruch HaMekutzar	Sections 6-7, Purity and Marriage, according to Yemenite tradition	Rav Y. Ratzabi	03-6780070

In addition, many *chattanim* take advantage of the engagement period to review and learn the practical aspects of common household *halachot*, such as *kashrut*, milk and meat, checking for bugs, Shabbat, *mezuzah*, etc. There are books that include all of these topics in one book (such as *Shaarei Torat HaBayit*, by Rav Y. Teschner, available at bookstores). It is a good idea to acquire at least a basic knowledge of these topics.

Shabbatonim for *Chattanim*

An organization called Netivoteha, run by Rav Nachum Diamant, arranges special Shabbatonim for engaged yeshiva students about every two months, with a comprehensive series of lectures. Rabbis and *chattanim* warmly recommend them. For more information and reservations, call: 052-761-3824. Cost for the Shabbaton: NIS 200 including accommodations and meals, NIS 90 without accommodations and meals (except *Seuda Shlishit*). The Shabbatonim are usually held at the Yeshiva Ketana Imrei Noam, in Ramot Dalet in Jerusalem.

Shopping

It is highly recommended to hurry up with the shopping as much as possible, and to leave yourself free time as the wedding approaches. New things to buy and organize always pop up as time goes on, and it is not a good idea to wait until the last minute. *Chattanim* share that running around and taking care of technical errands during the days leading up to the wedding is very unpleasant, and the recommendation is to try to reach the wedding as physically and mentally calm as possible. The following is a possible shopping list for the wedding. **We have written everything**, but the wisdom is to also think of your parents, who are spending a ton of money now already...And we checked: there is no *mitzvah* to buy everything new!

Wedding (Shabbat) clothing:	Weekday clothing:	General clothing:	Products:
<input type="checkbox"/> Chattan's hat / shtreimel	<input type="checkbox"/> Hat	<input type="checkbox"/> Hat / shtreimel box	<input type="checkbox"/> Shampoo
<input type="checkbox"/> Frock coat / suit / kapota	<input type="checkbox"/> Suit	<input type="checkbox"/> Pajamas	<input type="checkbox"/> Bath soap
<input type="checkbox"/> Dress pants	<input type="checkbox"/> Slacks	<input type="checkbox"/> Bathrobe	<input type="checkbox"/> Deodorant (cologne)
<input type="checkbox"/> Shabbat shoes	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekday shoes	<input type="checkbox"/> Slippers	<input type="checkbox"/> Comb
<input type="checkbox"/> Shabbat shirt (cufflinks)	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular shirts	<input type="checkbox"/> Coat	<input type="checkbox"/> Hat brush
<input type="checkbox"/> Tie (white?) / Gartel	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular ties / Gartel	<input type="checkbox"/> Scarf	<input type="checkbox"/> Winter hat cover
<input type="checkbox"/> Shabbat kippah	<input type="checkbox"/> Kippah	<input type="checkbox"/> Gloves?	<input type="checkbox"/> Shoehorn
<input type="checkbox"/> Shabbat belt	<input type="checkbox"/> Belt	<input type="checkbox"/> Night kippah	<input type="checkbox"/> Shoe polish
<input type="checkbox"/> Tallit for Shabbat (from the kallah?)	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekday tallit	<input type="checkbox"/> Dental retainer	<input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush
<input type="checkbox"/> Tzitzit + strings	<input type="checkbox"/> Tzitzit + strings	<input type="checkbox"/> Hand cream	<input type="checkbox"/> Toothpaste
<input type="checkbox"/> Cufflinks	<input type="checkbox"/> Undershirts (regular/winter)	<input type="checkbox"/> Nail clipper	<input type="checkbox"/> Mouthwash
<input type="checkbox"/> Glasses / contact lenses (solution)	<input type="checkbox"/> Underwear	<input type="checkbox"/> Alarm clock (phone?)	<input type="checkbox"/> Shaving cream
<input type="checkbox"/> Kittel	<input type="checkbox"/> Socks	<input type="checkbox"/> Notes to add to invitations	<input type="checkbox"/> Aftershave
<input type="checkbox"/> Shabbat sweater	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekday sweater	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing utensils	<input type="checkbox"/> Shaver / hair clipper machine

Please note: You can obtain coupons for significant discounts (especially for *chattanim*) for many of the above items through various organizations.

Gmachs / Funds

There are many Gmachs that lend out supplies for the event itself: benchers, prayer cards, flowers, tablecloths, dishes, *mechitzahs*, professional cooking and heating supplies, furniture, props for dancing with the *kallah*, *chuppah* equipment, and more. You can find lists of such Gmachs in phone books, local community directories, and more. Using a Gmach

can save you thousands of shekels. **Request:** You reserved items from a Gmach, but then decided to cancel? Please let them know, so that others can enjoy the items instead!

In addition, there are many funds and organizations where you can obtain *nedunya* items or even stipends and grants (the expenses can really add up) for wedding expenses, especially when there are extraordinary circumstances. To obtain them, you will usually be asked to send: the original wedding invitation, a photocopy of the *chattan* and/or *kallah* and/or parents' ID cards + appendix, details of the circumstances (no. of children in the family, income and expenses, etc.), a recommendation from the Rosh Yeshiva / community rabbi, bank account details / address for sending a check.

Study Framework

Those interested in continuing to learn at a Kollel after their marriage need to start searching as soon as possible. The yeshiva staff can help with recommendations and information. Prepare something impressive to say and keep it in your pocket (your head) at all times - you never know when you might have an interview. The level required is usually higher than the tests for *Yeshiva Gedolah*. Elements to consider: scope of the learning, amount of the scholarship (including from the Ministry of Religious Services, how many *sedarim*, holidays, exams), geographic location, number of members, Rosh Kollel). You can find information about different types of Kollels all over the country by calling 072-332-3595, and about *chavrutot* from the Kove'a Itim organization, at 072-2345-613.

Those who are not going to study at a Kollel after the wedding but want to arrange a *chavruta* can also do so by calling the number above. In order to register as a married yeshiva student (*avrech*) with the Ministry of Religious Services, you must provide the Rosh Kollel with your ID card including the appendix stating that you are married (more information below in the Marriage Registration section).

Invitations

For those who want to add a personal note to invitations given to rabbis, friends, etc., it is recommended to start writing them as soon as possible, because as time goes on, the errands increase, and *chattanim* have often found themselves staying up all night before their wedding writing these notes at the last minute. You can write the personal messages on separate, decorated notes and attach them to the invitation when it arrives from the printer. Buy Mazel tov stickers if necessary. A nice custom is to also thank everyone working at the yeshiva at this point, for their efforts over the years. Let your parents know how many invitations you will need. It is recommended to keep a few blank invitations with you on a regular basis, in case you meet someone you want to invite. Details about printing and sending the invitations can be found in the *Kol Mitzhalot* booklet for the parents.

It is usually possible to obtain a list of the yeshiva students from the yeshiva's office, as well as a list of graduates, *avrechim*, and staff members. Attached is a list that can help prevent forgetfulness and unpleasant mistakes. It is a good idea to write a detailed list adapted to your needs. You will probably add at least one person a week...

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rabbis from the area of the yeshiva | <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen and cleaning employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Rosh Yeshiva (one or more) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends from the area of the yeshiva | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Avrechim</i> at the yeshiva | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Mashgiach</i> (one or more) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends from your neighborhood | <input type="checkbox"/> Graduates from previous years | <input type="checkbox"/> Rabbanim |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends from the past | <input type="checkbox"/> Married friends | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Meshivim</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff of the <i>Yeshiva Ketana?</i> (<i>Cheider?</i> Kindergarten??) | <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the committee | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Chattan</i> teacher(s) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends at the yeshiva | <input type="checkbox"/> Managers of the yeshiva's material aspects |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Office employees |

Ketubah

There are a few different versions of the *ketubah*, including: **a.** Sephardic without a vow, **b.** Sephardic with a vow, **c.** Ashkenazi, *Badatz Eidah*, **d.** Ashkenazi, *Nachalat Shiva*, **e.** Yemenite [Available at: 03-678-0700]. Check your custom. A *ketubah* can be bought at any bookstore or Judaica store. It is accepted and highly recommended to buy **two copies**, as mistakes while filling them in are very common (corrections in a *shtar* are a very complicated subject).

For Ashkenazim: The Ashkenazi custom is to commit to "one/two hundred silver *zkuin*," and there are *Poskim* who hold that if the *chattan* does not know how much money he has committed to pay, the *ketubah* is problematic. Without getting into the full *halachic* discussion, it is recommended to check the value of silver in the market (at a change place / silver shop / Google) and estimate the amount of the commitment in shekels or dollars, to prevent any issues.

It is best for the *Mesader Kiddushin* to fill out the details on the *ketubah* (it is necessary to know exactly how), and this can be done at the wedding itself. However, things are often running late and then written under pressure, and this results in mistakes in writing the names, amounts, and more. Therefore, if possible - it is a good idea to fill in whatever can be completed in advance.

Before filling it in, check:

- The **full** names of the *chattan*, *kallah*, and their fathers as they were given at birth (and if they were changed, ask a rabbi).
- How much is being committed for the amount of the *ketubah* (silver *zkukin* / \$26,000 / \$52,000 / \$55,555 / other), and some also include the value of the *nedunya*.
- Date - only if you know **for sure** whether the wedding will be before or after sunset.

Confirmations from the Yeshiva Office

It is good to notify the yeshiva's office of your future address (can be added to the invitation if you hang it in the office). In addition, there are various forms that you will need from the yeshiva's office during the engagement period and later on in life. It would be a pity to have to travel all the way back to the office two years from now. When you receive an official confirmation letter for any reason whatsoever, it is a good idea to save it. The usual forms are: confirmation of years you studied at the yeshiva, confirmation that you are single (to register for marriage), confirmation that you receive a scholarship (a real one) for the future, which you might need to receive approval for a mortgage.

Buying an Apartment

The details on the subject of housing are abundant and change from case to case, and they could fill an entire book on their own. As such, the assistance that we can provide in this booklet does not fully respond to the need. But one general recommendation that many families mentioned is: if you are planning to buy an apartment, and you have the means - **work as quickly as possible and don't delay at all!** When a decision is made to buy an apartment "later..." - this could end up taking a few years, and in the meantime, the money is wasted on rent, prices go up, and when you are finally ready to buy, the financial means aren't always still available. If an apartment in a highly-popular location is not an option right now - real estate experts recommend buying an apartment as an investment, and investigating upgrade options later.

You can look for an apartment via companies that don't take an agent fee, but rather just a monthly subscription fee. The savings amount to tens of thousands of shekels. It is **obligatory** to check with the Ministry of Construction and Housing whether you are entitled to purchase an apartment through the *Mechir Lamishtaken* program. If you are - invest the NIS 240 to submit an application, and if you win - it's your gain.

Renting an Apartment

It's impossible to look for an apartment to rent three months before the wedding, because you don't want to pay for those months needlessly, and the landlord won't save you the apartment either. On the other hand, it is risky to wait until the last week, and there have been couples who had to pay to stay at a hotel for a week, or to live with their parents. Therefore, about **a month and a half before the wedding**, start looking for an apartment, and as time goes by, work more intensively and quickly. Don't be too lazy to go and see the apartment for yourselves and check it thoroughly, because you will have plenty of time later to regret that laziness...

In most cases, especially in areas that are Charedi or becoming more Charedi (pretty much everywhere, B"H), it is not a good idea to approach an official real estate agency that takes a month's rent for finding you an apartment. Most landlords advertise their apartments with offices that don't charge an agent fee, but rather a monthly subscription fee ranging between NIS 10-200. They will send you daily or weekly reports by mail/fax/email. A few examples are *Yisa Bracha*, *Diromat*, *Bursat HaDirof*, *Luach Ha'aretz*, and more. Searching via these companies produces much better results without the added cost. The advertisements usually overlap and there is no reason to pay double to two such companies.

When you go to see an apartment that is for rent (some of the following is also relevant when buying an apartment), compare these elements based on your priorities:

- Total price.** Including: electricity, water, gas, municipal property taxes, building committee fee, payments for repairs, painting when you leave, special payments.

- Furniture** None / partial / fully furnished. Check that the furniture is in proper working order and if there is anything broken, etc. - notify the landlord in advance.
- Size** Less than 20 sq.m. is too crowded. More than 80 sq.m. is too large for a couple. Of course, according to your norms.
- Condition of the apartment** Regular lighting, sunlight, air flow, ventilation, moisture, regular/private entrance, etc.
- Age of the apartment** Flooring, paint, stability, noise between floors, tilted flooring for draining of water, animals.
- Solar water heater** Boiler, Junkers [average cost of a boiler for a couple is NIS 100-150 per month. Take this into account]
- Reception** A young couple doesn't usually have a landline phone, and there are apartments that don't have cell phone reception - a fact that could be slightly annoying.
- Location of the apartment.** Level, area (near shul, Kollel, work, buses, mini-market, accessible by car), elevator, surroundings, community.
- Landlord** Ask about his personality, check with the previous tenants if possible, and maybe with neighbors as well.
- Leaving early** Is it possible to leave in the middle of the contract, and under what conditions (alternate tenant, etc.).
- Undertakings** Is it possible to lend/rent the apartment to friends of the tenants, painting upon exit, other appendices of the contract.

The above is meant to give you an idea of the relevant issues, but in most cases, you will need to forfeit at least one of the sections. Be realistic, compare the characteristics of the various apartments available. Out of the apartments you found - choose the best one, and don't wait for the perfect apartment to appear. Worst comes to worst - you can always try to shorten the duration of the contract (the standard period is one year). When entering the apartment, it is a good idea to take pictures and document everything. By the way, if you need to pay municipal property taxes - check with the municipality if you are eligible for a discount (this can save you thousands of shekels per year).

Important! If you never had an apartment registered under your name, or - if you bought an apartment but aren't going to live there in the near future due to continued construction, etc., and your income is under a certain amount, you are entitled to assistance for rental payments from the government. The assistance can reach up to NIS 850 per month for a couple without children. You must prepare:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All checking accounts showing all sources of income | <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of your ID card + appendix |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Application | <input type="checkbox"/> Valid rental contract |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation of payment of the application fee | <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage certificate |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of a check with bank details |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> List of employers from the National Insurance Institute |

This can be submitted to one of the assistance companies: **Milgam, Amidar** or **Mgar**. You can receive all of the relevant information from the Ministry of Housing at *5442. No one is doing you a favor! This is money that is taken from your parents' taxes (and which will be taken from you too...) and to which you are legally entitled. The Torah teaches us to value our money!

Buying Furniture

If you are entering an empty apartment and need to buy furniture, it is highly recommended to start checking the options as early as possible. When people go shopping under pressure, they make every possible mistake. If absolutely necessary, it is always possible to arrange temporary second-hand furniture until the actual purchase is made.

Take into account that furniture orders can sometimes take up to **60** days to supply, especially wood furniture. Electronic appliances arrive within a few days, and a technician can come to install them two days later (ovens and washing machines can only be opened and hooked up by licensed technicians, otherwise you lose the warranty). The critical items for a home are the **refrigerator, washing machine, and mattresses** (it is possible to ask for a spare base until the beds you bought arrive). With these items, it is possible to get by for a short period of time until the arrival of the oven/gas range, closets, bookcase, and the rest of the furniture, so these should be purchased first. In general, it is recommended to wait until after the wedding to buy anything that doesn't need to be bought in advance, so that you will be more aware of your actual needs.

The following are a few lessons learned from the costly mistakes of others:

- ☑ **Never buy at the first store you enter!** Even if the salesperson seems very honest, check prices at three different stores, at least, and it is **highly** recommended to also check price comparison websites! The differences can be huge, and it is your right to notify the salesperson of the competitor's excellent prices. Most products are made by the same few manufacturers/importers, so the differences between stores are mainly the service, price, and their credibility, not the quality. Check if the price includes VAT, and how much installation (does the technician have an official certificate?), delivery, and more will cost.
- ☑ **Summarize clearly and in writing**, before you pay, all of the details of the transaction. Products (name and exact model number promised), dimensions, colors, additions, exact price of each product with all of its added elements, exact price for delivery and installation (elevator? Bars on windows? Removal of a door? Pipes?), and the latest date for supplying the items. This will save you arguments and heartache later on.
- ☑ **It is mandatory to measure the exact dimensions and sizes** of the areas where your furniture is meant to go, so that you don't discover that the cover of the gas range knocks into the edge of the countertop, and the closet is slightly taller than the ceiling... When buying furniture for a temporary apartment, make sure there is an **option of disassembly and installation** at a later point (this differs based on the quality of the furniture and the manner of assembly, ask the salesperson), and choose **universal sizes** that will work in most apartments. Consider solutions such as a bookcase that can be divided into separate sections, a washing machine that opens at the top, sliding doors, hanging closets, etc.
- ☑ **It is worth checking in advance how many years are included in the warranty**, in order to save the cost of the insurance that the technician will offer you "at a special price valid only on the day of installation." Usually, for the warranty to be valid, it must appear on the invoice. **Important:** For some products, the warranty and your purchase documents need to be sent to the company's offices in order to be valid.
- ☑ **Accompanying items:** The technician may offer you surge protectors, hard water filters, faucets, pressure reducers, and a range of other products for your appliance, at a price that is double what you will find at the most expensive hardware store in the neighborhood (and some of them are actually worth buying).
- ☑ **When the products arrive**, check that they are completely intact. If you find any flaws - let the technician and the store know immediately, and if it bothers you - you can demand a repair or replacement. In addition, check that you received exactly what you ordered. It is a good idea to stand next to the technician so that he does a thorough job. Maybe even hint that you'll give him a nice tip if you're pleased with his work. Two screws less today = unstable or broken furniture in five years from now... In any event, don't be afraid to speak up if necessary! If there is a mistake or a serious issue - don't hesitate to send the product back with the delivery person, and definitely do not sign anything that says you received the product intact. Regarding electronic appliances, the technician is meant to sign the installation slip for the warranty.
- ☑ **Future use:** There are design elements that look good in the store, but you should consider future use as well. For example: white products usually get dirty // dark wood shows every scratch // sharp corners may look nice, until you knock into them with bare feet // have you left enough room for large objects? (oven? A crib??) // Try to think ahead, so that you don't regret your purchases later...

Marriage Registration

Registering for marriage is a purely legal and administrative process that has no *halachic* significance. You will need your marriage certificate later to present to banks, government offices, and more. In order to register for marriage, you must go to a recognized Rabbinic office, and in most places, it is not necessary for both the *chattan* and the *kallah* to be present.

Please note: The Ministry of Religious Services requires couples to register for marriage from up to 90 days before the wedding and **no later than 45 days before the wedding**. If you missed the date, you must receive special approval, fill out forms, etc. - in short, it's a headache.

Marriage registration can be done **at offices of the Chief Rabbinic in every city**. The fee is approximately NIS 700, and yeshiva students are entitled to a 40% discount. The following is an abridged list, based on the full list of Rabbinic offices in cities and councils:

City:	Address:	Telephone:	Fax:	City:	Address:	Telephone:	Fax:
Ofakim	9 Eli Cohen St.	08-992-3073	08-992-3108	Haifa	60 Herzl St.	04-864-1178	04-866-7623
Elad	13 Shamai St.	03-909-6601	03-909-6602	Tiberias	32 Hagalil St.	04-672-0993	04-672-3182

Ashdod	1 Henrietta Szold St.	08-863-0630	08-852-3021	Jerusalem	12 Hachavazelet St.	02-621-4888	02-621-4862
Be'er Sheva	8 Hatalmud St.	08-620-4000	09-620-4000	Petach Tikva	37 Hovevei Zion St.	03-905-1528	03-911-3625
Beit Shemesh	1 Abba Naamat St.	02-991-1361	02-991-7714	Tzfat	74 Hapalmach St.	04-697-1633	04-697-1633
Beitar Illit	4 Ba'al Hatanya St.	02-580-8889	02-572-5561	Rehovot	2 Goldberg St.	08-936-2541	08-936-2665
Bnei Brak	12 Rabbi Akiva St.	03-578-1133	03-579-5212	Rechasim	12 Hagefen St.	04-984-6989	04-866-1528

What do you need to bring when registering for marriage?

- ID cards of the *chattan* and *kallah*.
- Marriage certificates of the parents (if one of them was born abroad).
- Three passport photos for each spouse.
- Registration fee (usually about NIS 200 per spouse).
- Confirmation letter from the *kallah* teacher.
- Confirmation that you are single (see below).
- Name of the *Mesader Kiddushin*.
- Witnesses testifying that the *chattan/kallah* are single (especially outside the city).

In addition, there are private offices authorized to register marriage, such as: **Badatz Eidah Chareidit**, 26 Strauss Street (Zupnick buildings), Jerusalem, between 11:15 - 13:30 and from 17:15 - 19:00. The registration fee is NIS 420 (combined). Telephone: 02-6252808

After the wedding, it is necessary for the *Mesader Kiddushin* to fill out a confirmation form stating that he officiated at the *chuppah*, and including the names of the witnesses and a photocopy of the *ketubah*, etc. - as requested by the marriage registrar. These must be sent by fax to the registrar's office, and after a few days, you can go to pick up the marriage certificate.

Afterward, you must go to the Interior Ministry **with your marriage certificate**; the *kallah* needs to get a new ID card (new photo [with her hair covered]) and the *chattan* needs to get a new ID card appendix. Technically, the *kallah* can go alone and obtain a new appendix for the *chattan*, but after the wedding, both the *chattan* and *kallah* are entitled to receive a new ID card for free, so why not. In some cities, when you say that you are a *chattan* and *kallah* at the entrance, you will be sent to the front of the line. You can use this opportunity to also change your official address. Consider whether you should change it to the address of your new apartment (especially if you are renting), or perhaps leave your parents' address. Government offices coordinate this information, and changing it later is a complicated procedure that takes time. The ramifications are regarding where mail will be sent, property taxes, elections, residency, and more.

Confirmation that you are single: In the event that you are registering for marriage at a local council or Rabbinate office that is not in the city where you live, you may be asked to present confirmation that you are single. In order to obtain this confirmation letter, you must approach the Rabbinate in the city where you live [as stated on your ID card from the past six months] and bring your parents' marriage certificate, pay a NIS 135 fee, and two witnesses who are not related to you or to each other, who will testify that you are not currently married (even if you were previously married). For yeshiva and seminar students, it is enough to bring written confirmation from the office of your current place of study stating that you are not currently married. In exchange, you will receive a letter of confirmation that you are single, which you can bring in order to register your marriage at any Rabbinate office you choose. If you are foreign residents, you must bring a letter confirming that you are single from the Rabbinate presiding in your city of origin.

Stage Four /// Before the Wedding

Dress Rehearsal

Experience has taught that it is a very good idea, about a week or more before the wedding, to put on **all** of the wedding clothing at the same time, from head to toe, and not to suffice with trying on each item separately. We sincerely hope that you will not discover that the new belt is too wide for the loopholes of the pants, the sleeves stick out of your suit

too much, or that the pants that you originally tried on with weekday shoes are now too long when worn with dress shoes.

If you have purchased new glasses for the wedding - it is recommended to start wearing them at least two days before the wedding in order to get used to them, so that you don't feel dizzy at your wedding. The same is true for shoes, which should be worn for a Shabbat or two before the wedding.

Collecting your Belongings from the Yeshiva

Many *chattanim* forget expensive belongings at the yeshiva. When you have a few free minutes, it is a good idea to prepare a complete list of all of the storage areas at the yeshiva, and of your belongings that are meant to move out with you when the time comes.

There are those who recommend packing your belongings in boxes, as early as possible, in order to avoid last-minute pressure. You won't believe how much stuff you have! For your convenience, the following is a list of items that are sometimes forgotten:

<input type="checkbox"/> Comforter / blanket and pillow	<input type="checkbox"/> Gemaras and books	<input type="checkbox"/> Coat	<input type="checkbox"/> Laundry supplies
<input type="checkbox"/> Winter bedding / items	<input type="checkbox"/> Tefillin	<input type="checkbox"/> Sweater / scarf / gloves	<input type="checkbox"/> Night light
<input type="checkbox"/> Fan / mister / portable air conditioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Shabbat / weekday hats	<input type="checkbox"/> Umbrella	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal furniture
<input type="checkbox"/> Space heater	<input type="checkbox"/> Suits / shirts etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Backpacks and suitcases	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

"And You Shall Be Honest"

Before you leave - check that you don't owe any money to anyone in the yeshiva complex. You don't want to figure out later how to transfer five shekels to the hanger Gmach... Some continue the automatic payments to the yeshiva for an extra month or two in order to cover any debts that might exist (including anything taken from the kitchen or maintenance staff), or simply as a gesture of thanks. Aside from general debts, check whether you owe money to:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local synagogues: Donations / books / mikveh / other. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yeshiva: Transportation, food, water, electricity, photocopying/printing. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gmachs: (of supplies / services / cash) at the yeshiva and nearby. | <input type="checkbox"/> Books: Book binding, Gemaras, books, supplies. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lenders at the yeshiva itself and nearby. | <input type="checkbox"/> Talmud Torah: Purchases on credit, money from Purim fundraising. |

Supplies For the Wedding

Contents of the suitcase, at most branches:

- Booklet of blessings for the *chuppah* in large print + list of honors.
- Special wipes for cleaning stains quickly.
- Black and white thread + needle + safety pins.
- Tylenol, band-aids, first aid kit.
- Glitter. Wheat. Ashes. (For various customs)
- Spare *ketubah* (3 versions) + pen.
- Spare white tie.
- *Tefillah* for the *kallah* (white leather)
- Candle holders for the *chuppah* + candles + lighter.
- Silver [disposable] kiddush cup + plate + corkscrew.
- White wine (highly recommended, in case it spills (and it always spills)).
- **Thin *chattan* glass for breaking (mandatory!! to prevent danger).**

In addition, you need/should to bring:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kittel. For those who have the custom. Recommended to iron in advance. | <input type="checkbox"/> Wedding ring. Can be kept in the <i>chattan's</i> pocket. * |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tallit. The <i>kallah</i> usually brings it. An extra one is a good idea too. | <input type="checkbox"/> Gift for the Yichud room. In pocket, or appoint someone to be responsible for this. * |

- Tefillin!** There will be Shacharit tomorrow too...
- Key to the apartment.** So it isn't left in a different city.
- Names for davening.** During the *chuppah* and after the wedding.
- _____
- Spare shirt and tie for the *chattan*.** Highly recommended!
- Chuppah* supplies suitcase as aforementioned.** Or your own supplies.
- Cash** (a lot of it... details in *Kol Mitzhalot*).
- Ketubah*** Especially if it has already been filled in.

* There are those who have the custom of entering the *chuppah* with empty pockets. In this case, appoint someone to place it in the *chattan's* pocket on the way from the *chuppah* to the Yichud room.

Transportation For the Wedding

Yeshiva students are known for not usually having cash handy, so it is customary to organize a bus for them to the wedding (and the *chuppah*) when necessary. Also, if the wedding is during *Bein HaZmanim*, it is nice to reimburse them for travel expenses (which could also encourage them to attend the wedding), and if you do this, consider appointing someone to be in charge of the matter. If there are a few weddings during *Bein HaZmanim*, it is possible to organize one person to be in charge for all of the weddings, who will make a chart of all of the weddings and all of the boys, and check how much each needs to receive and how much each *chattan* needs to pay.

Similar to the engagement party, it is definitely proper to organize transportation for the *Mesader Kiddushin* and the yeshiva staff, and to pay the driver directly or send someone to pay them. In addition, set a clear time for the driver to bring the *Mesader Kiddushin* and **stick to it**.

The Big Day

It is highly recommended for this day to be completely free of technical arrangements, and this **will only happen if you make an effort to finish everything in advance**. The night before, it is recommended to go to sleep early [at least to try...]; the wedding day is long and exhausting, and will help to be alert. The day of the *chuppah* is a very holy day, and more than anything else - it is important to make time for davening and contemplation, quietly and calmly. It is a good idea for the *chattan* to go to *Mincha Gedolah* even in the summer (*vidui* like on *Erev Yom Kippur*). If you want to go to the Kotel on the day of the wedding itself - try to go for Shacharit or immediately afterward, **not in the afternoon**. In general, it is recommended not to leave the house on the day of the wedding to go anywhere, and to make the trip the day before.

Prepare a clear list in advance of everything that needs to be done on this day, and hang it in a prominent location in the house. Everything that has been done can be checked off, so that you can see exactly what is left. Make sure to have a logical meal during the day for the family members. Before you leave, make sure you haven't forgotten any of the things you need to take to the hall (as listed above). If the wedding is in a distant city - consider whether you prefer to leave in the early morning hours and get ready there.

Is there a driver with a car who is taking the *chattan*? Make sure he comes early and is ready without any delays. Coming in a nice/decorated car? Update the photographer so that he can capture the moment of arrival. Rented a special luxury car? It is possible to understand the driver's excitement, but this is really a terrible time to test drive the car and to try out a driver who has never driven one before and doesn't feel fully in control. (A paramedic from Hatzolah wrote to us that he was personally onsite at three accidents with *chattanim/kallot* in luxury cars...)

At the wedding itself, you - the *chattan* - should be happy! **Make sure to smile and warmly greet** family members, important guests, and to smile for the camera too (sometimes the *chattan* doesn't notice and doesn't make sure to smile, and the results in the photos are not very flattering). Think about it: if they came to the wedding, they have dedicated time, effort, and perhaps money on travel and a babysitter in order to participate. Don't they deserve a big smile from you, and to feel like you are happy to see them? On the evening of the wedding, the venue is your home (there are even those who hold that this has *halachic* ramifications...), so all of the guests are your guests. Treat each one of them kindly and with joy, even if you don't really know them (yet... you never know). Even at the end, during the family photos, it is also important to smile and be alert...you don't want to commemorate drooping eyelids in your album.

Witnesses for the *chuppah* and other honors

The *chuppah* is often delayed when there are no witnesses (relatives cannot be witnesses), so it is worth planning this in advance and coordinating with the witnesses that they come before the official time of the *chuppah*, ready to observe. You can give the honor to two of the *meshivim* at the yeshiva, who can come to the *chuppah* on the yeshiva's bus so that you won't get stuck. In addition, it is a good idea to plan the list of honors and blessings in advance (including the appropriate titles for each one), and not to leave this spontaneous. You can also appoint someone to honor each

one of the people called up to the *chuppah* properly; this same person can also help during the *Sheva brachot* after benching. For more information, see the **Kol Mitzhalot** booklet.

Guests for Shabbat

Organize a list of the guests for the *Shabbat Aufruf* and/or *Shabbat Sheva Brachot*, or appoint someone to do this - to update the guests regarding the location, how to get there, what to bring with them (bedding? Food?) and when. Detailed information about organizing this Shabbat can be found in the **Kol Mitzhalot** booklet.

P.S.

To conclude, based on recommendations and requests from educators and marriage counselors, we are adding the following paragraph. It is common for feelings, deliberations, questions, and concerns to arise during the engagement period. This is a natural and not at all rare phenomenon, and the most important thing under such circumstances is - **not to suppress!** Every person has a rabbi at yeshiva, a wise figure, or an older, responsible adult (absolutely not a friend!) with whom he can clarify feelings, questions, and doubts if they arise.

It is also possible to consult anonymously with professional organizations who operate on a volunteer basis and provide qualified, discreet advice. The most highly recommended of them is called **Yesichena**, which has dozens of professional, experienced therapists and counselors (all of whom are yeshiva/seminar graduates from our sector) who are accustomed to hearing these types of questions. They can be contacted by email at y@yeshichena.com and of course via the **Yesichena website**. There are also additional well-known organizations that provide anonymous consultations by phone.

What else?

- Tying tzitzit.** And for the *tallit*. If you bought a new weekday *tallit*.
- Chattan's Dvar Torah.** It is highly recommended to prepare this early! During the *Sheva brachot*, you won't have the time or the ability to concentrate.
- Torani topics for discussion.** To talk about with rabbis etc. in the *mizrach*, at the wedding and at the *Sheva brachot*. (upcoming holiday, *halachot* related to *chattanim*, etc.)
- Joint bank account.** Really not urgent before the wedding. It is highly recommended not to scatter everything in different accounts, but rather to manage it all in one place.
- Organize the apartment.** Most will probably be organized the way the *kallah* chooses, but you need to bring your belongings to the apartment and organize them in a reasonable manner. You'll do the rest later.
- Wedding clothing.** Leave at your parents' home and don't take to the apartment - you'll need them for the wedding, of course.
- Chanukat HaBayit** When purchasing an apartment, the custom is to learn with a *minyan*, etc. When renting, there are those who say that the presence of three men is enough.
- Gift for the parents.** There is a nice custom for the *chattan* to leave a small gift (and letter) for his parents, who raised him and brought him to this point in his life, and for his siblings, for not interfering too much.
- Ironing.** The wedding shirt, spare shirt, *kittel* (recommended), and for those who hold that ironing is prohibited during the week of *Sheva brachot* (*melacha*), everything needs to be ironed in advance.
- "Shomer."** Arrange with someone for the day of the wedding, and for the *Sheva brachot* days (mainly for a Shacharit wake-up call...). Can be a child too.
- Extra tie for Shabbat.** It is good to organize (borrow) an extra (white) tie for the wedding and for Shabbat, in case it gets dirty, and perhaps to switch off.
- Haircut.** It is recommended to go for a haircut the day before the wedding, and to tell the barber that it is a "*chattan's* haircut" (a bit more expensive, but he will be more careful). It is not a good idea to use shaving cream close to the wedding, especially for those who are not yet experienced. Many *chattanim* have suffered the consequences.
- Planner.** During the engagement period (and maybe in general), it is highly recommended to keep a planner or calendar with reminders and tasks. This will help prevent forgetting important things.
- Teshuvah.** The day of the *chuppah* is like Yom Kippur. Make sure to leave time for concentrating on the importance of the day, for Torah and contemplation, and not for technical errands.
- Tefillah.** In the end - it's all we have. Prepare a list of names of people who are sick and need divine help, and of course - of your friends who you've left behind...
- Tzedakah.** On this big, auspicious day. There are those who have the custom of donating a meal for the poor through a *tzedakah* organization (based on the story of Rabbi Akiva's daughter).

Translated and published in collaboration with:



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Mazel tov!

Layout and production:

A horizontal graphic banner with a dark blue background on the left and a white background on the right. The left side features a white speech bubble containing the Hebrew text "מחברי הספרים... כבר יודעים..." and "הוצאה לאור - זה טקסט רץ." Below the speech bubble is a grid of 15 icons representing various production services: תרגום (translation), המרה (conversion), טריקה (tracing), תמלול (captioning), הקלדה (dictation), עיצוב (design), עמוד (page), הנהגה (direction), ניקוד (vocalization), עריכה (editing), הפצה (distribution), מכירה (sales), פרסום (promotion), דיגיטציה (digitization), and הדפסה (printing). The right side of the banner features the logo for "טקסט רץ. הוצאה לאור" (TextRatz Publishing) and the phone number "039-111-444" in large, bold digits. Below the phone number are the email addresses "x039111444@gmail.com" and "textratz.co.il".

For your convenience, the following is a list of all of the common purchases and errands, in chronological order and by subject. Put it in your pocket and check off what you've already finished.

----- ✂ ----- ✂ ----- **General to-do list - Cut and save** ----- ✂ ----- ✂ -----

- Transportation to wedding
- Invite guests to *chuppah*
- Witnesses and honors
- Supplies for the wedding
- Wedding assistant
- Shomer*
- Names for davening
- Tie tzitzit
- Iron shirts
- Chattan's* haircut
- Guests for Shabbat
- Extra tie
- Teshuvah*
- Tefillah*
- Tzedakah*
- _____
- _____

- Transportation to the engagement party
- Gifts for the *Kallah*
- Chattan* classes
- Relevant books to learn
- Kollel*
- Find an apartment
- Marriage Registration
- Write invitations
- Hand out invitations
- Ketubah* (fill in)
- Support funds
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- Preparations:** _____
- Collecting belongings
- Pay debts

- Shoe polish
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Mouthwash
- Shampoo
- Bath soap
- Deodorant
- Hand cream
- Nail clipper
- Shaving cream
- Shaver
- Shoehorn
- Alarm clock
- Hat brush
- Notes to add to invitations
- Writing utensils
- Winter hat cover
- Retainer
- To organize:** _____
- Venue
- Photographer
- Band

- Contact lenses (+ solution)
- Kittel*
- Shabbat shoes
- Weekday shoes
- Slippers
- Socks
- Pajamas
- Bathrobe
- Undershirts (regular/winter)
- Underwear
- Shabbat sweater
- Weekday sweater
- Coat
- Scarf
- Gloves
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- Products to buy:** _____
- Hairbrush

- Clothes shopping:**
- Chattan's* hat
 - Weekday hat
 - Hat box
 - Shabbat kippah
 - Weekday kippah
 - Chattan's* frock coat / suit
 - Suit
 - Shabbat shirt
 - Regular shirts
 - Cufflinks
 - White tie
 - Regular ties
 - Shabbat belt
 - Belt
 - Shabbat pants
 - Slacks
 - Tallit* (from the *kallah...*)
 - Weekday *tallit*
 - Tzitzit* (2) + strings
 - Glasses

Guide booklets from Gmach Birkat Yisrael:

- **Kol Chattan** - All of the technical arrangements for a *chattan* during the engagement period
- **Kol Kallah** - All of the technical arrangements for a *kallah* during the engagement period
- **Kol Mitzhalot** - Technical tips and advice for parents of the *chattan* and *kallah*

Please note:

The files are constantly updated according to recommendations based on common experiences; to receive the latest edition of this booklet or others - contact us by email. We are always happy to hear your feedback, comments, lessons, and other ideas:

birkatisrael1@gmail.com

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With blessings for a binyan adei ad /// Gmach Birkat Yisrael

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