



# How To Have The Perfect Anipal Wedding

by

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Weddings are a regular feature of life for Twitter's anipals – here a few tips that will help you if you're planning yours.

## ***1 – Choosing Your Partner***

Please – choose your partner with care.

This may sound so obvious as almost to be insulting, but it really is something that needs to be said.

Most anipals really are marrying their true love, but just as with humans there are a few who are focused much more on the wedding than the marriage it will lead to. Naturally, this happens more among inexperienced anipals who have met a potential partner very quickly after joining Twitter than to those who have had longer to get to know pals, but at the rate the Twittersverse is expanding this could well happen more and more in future.

So, please don't skim over this part – if you can answer Yes to all the questions, then congratulations! And if not, these words just might help you to improve your relationship – or prevent you from making a painful and very public mistake.

- 1.1- Do you spend much time tweeting together?
- 1.2- Do you sometimes make a point of being on Twitter at the same time?
- 1.3- Are your humans friends, or at least in the process of becoming so?
- 1.4- Do you ever chat with your partner, or do your humans talk to each other, on DM, Google Chat, or in any other way that isn't public?
- 1.5 - If you live in different time-zones, are you both prepared to make the effort to

fit in with each other's times, at least occasionally?

1.6 - Is your partner the first pal you look out for when you go online?

1.7 - Do you often go to pawties and events together?

1.8 - Do your and your partner's sense of humor fit in well together?

1.9 - Do you feel proud and happy to be seen with your partner?

1.10 If you strongly disagreed with your partner about something, would you try to sort things out in private first before getting into a public quarrel?

## **2 – Getting Engaged**

Before anyone proposes in public, it's a good idea to be reasonably sure that the answer is going to be Yes! If Yes is also your answer to the questions above then that should already have taken care of itself, but even if your partner is happy to marry you it's as well to make sure they're also *ready* to. There can't be many things much more embarrassing than having a marriage proposal turned down in public, but a bride who's said Yes because she didn't want to hurt someone's feelings by publicly saying No is not a great basis for a marriage, either.

Many couples get engaged during a big public occasion, such as a pawty or someone else's wedding. That's great, as it lets other anipals share your big moment, and everyone loves that. I'm sure you don't need reminding to pick your moment wisely, though – most pals would have more sensitivity than grab the spotlight just as another couple are about to make their vows, but I've seen it done!

## **3 – Choosing the date**

Before you pick a date, it's as well to check the Anipal Times Events Calendar to make quite sure the date and time are free.

Yes, it's perfectly possible to go ahead and have your wedding any time you want to, but if it clashes with someone else's or a fundraiser that's already been planned well in advance, you'll cause offense and hurt as well as embarrassing guests who may already have been planning to attend the other one, so if there's a date you desperately want, such as your birthday, the best thing to do is get your booking in as far ahead as possible. before anyone else can claim it!

If there's a date that really means a lot to you and someone else already booked it, it may be possible for you to do a deal with them – for example, a fundraiser may be happy to share the time with you if you agree to use their hashtag along with your own and tweet their charity link. No-one's likely to feel under an obligation to do that for you, though, so you may need to use your diplomatic skills.

Otherwise, just look through the Calendar for a vacant date that suits you. When picking the time, remember that some of your guests may be in different time-zones. US Eastern Time, for example, is 3 hours ahead of Pacific Time and 5 hours behind time in the UK and Ireland, and there are several different time-zones covering Australia and New Zealand. There are lots of sites and applications where you can easily see work out what the time

difference is for any locations that you choose.

Once you've picked your date and time you can reserve them by having them entered on the Anipal Events Calendar. To do that, scroll down to the bottom of the Calendar page to see the contact details – at the time of writing this I maintain the Calendar, so currently they'll ask you to e-mail me at [shaynacat@anipaltimes.com](mailto:shaynacat@anipaltimes.com).

At this point it's perfectly OK to give me just the names of the bride and groom, a contact (a Twitter @ name is just fine) and the date and time you want, but to be able to give you a good entry in the Calendar, and some proper mentions in the Upcoming Events section of the Anipal Times Pawties and Events page before the big day, I'll need a little more than that closer to the event. Usually a few sentences from whatever information you put on your blog or twtvite (more about that in a moment) will be sufficient.

#### **4 - Sending Your Invitations**

This is much simpler than it generally is for off-line weddings – you just go to <http://twtvite.com> and set up your event, then tweet the link to everyone you know! Make sure you have your wedding hashtag ready – it's a good plan to keep it as short as possible to leave as much room as possible for tweeting, memorable enough that people don't have to keep looking it up and simple enough to minimize the risk of typos.

Alternatively, instead of using twtvite you might want to put the details on your blog, and it's absolutely fine to do both.

#### **5 – Planning Your Wedding**

There are two ways you can do this – one is to find a suitable location, make the participants' clothes, bake and decorate the cake and arrange for all the other noms and drinks, find a celebrant, book the DJ(s), find a photographer and generally drive yourself so crazy worrying about the preparations that you can't enjoy your big day... and the other is to hire [Anipal Wedding Planners](#).

Led by the repeated winner of the Coolest Human Award, [@danapixie](#), the [AWP](#) will see to all the details and take the worry off your shoulders.

#### **6 – Your Part In The Planning**

6.1 Choose a celebrant;

6.2 Choose your companions – Maid of Honor, Bridesmaids, Best Man, Ushers, etc. How many you have and what you want to call them is entirely up to you, but AWP will need their names and their head-shots to work with;

6.3 Choose a location. You don't need to worry about details – a general description such as tropical island, top hotel, European castle or Swiss ski resort is just fine;

6.4 Choose the style and colors for your wedding, and describe in general what sort of clothes you have in mind – eg, bride in long white dress with veil, bridesmaids in long pink dresses, bridegroom and attendants in tuxes with cravats matching the bridesmaids' dresses, pale yellow flowers, etc. The planners will tell you what you need to choose and when you need to tell them by, and will have lots of items for

you to choose from;

6.5 Specify any particular music you want, and when you want it to be played. Some pals like music played before the ceremony starts, or while they're signing the register – some have lots of favorite music they want to be a part of their big day, and others are happy to leave the choice entirely to the DJ;

6.4 Some pals like to choose a charity for guests to contribute to as a wedding gift – it's not obligatory, but if you want to do that you need to choose the charity, put it on your blog and/or your twtvite and make sure you tweet its link to pals before and during the wedding; and

6.4 Write your vows. Getting the wording just the way you want it can be harder than you imagine, so it's a good plan to think about it well in advance, with plenty of time to adjust it if you decide you want to.

It's a good idea to save them in your word-processor and copy/paste them into your Compose Tweet box to make sure they're short enough to tweet. You don't have to tweet the whole lot at one time – most vows take 2 – 4 tweets to send.

## **7 – Bridal Shower**

This is a tradition that started in the USA but is catching on in other countries, too. It's not obligatory, but if you want to have one it can be a lot of fun! (Sorry, guys – this one is strictly for the girls...)

7.1 – Choose a hostess – this is *not* the bride-to-be, but usually her closest friend(s);

7.2 - Choose a date as for the wedding, and reserve it on the Events Calendar;

7.3 - Choose a hashtag and set up a twtvite or put the details on your blog, also as for the wedding;

7.4 - Tweet the date and time and twtvite and/or blog link;

7.5 - Be prepared to receive some slightly risqué gifts (givers, please note – *slightly* risqué's fine, but nothing you wouldn't want your mother to see. The event is public, and some pals who'll see the tweets in their timeline whether they attend the event or not are easily embarrassed or offended); and

7.6 - Relax and enjoy the event – and don't be too surprised if you get quite a lot of friendly teasing!

## **8 – Bachelor/Bachelorette Pawties**

8.1 – Choose your hashtag;

8.2 - Choose your date and time and reserve them on the Events Calendar as for the wedding. It's a good idea to make it at least a week before;

8.3 - Decide on your location;

8.4 - Set up the twtvite and/or blog post, as for the wedding;

8.5 - Choose your entertainment – Chippencats and Chippendogs are very popular, and you may want to book bartenders and DJs, and have pictures of your location available to tweet;

8.6 - Tweet reminders to everyone you want to be there (though please put as many names as possible on each tweet, as it's very easy to get suspended from Twitter for sending the same tweet too many times!); and

8.7 - As for Bridal Showers, please remember that lots of people who aren't attending the event will see your tweets in their timeline. A bit of good-natured teasing's fine and some boisterous behavior is expected, but smutty jokes and sleazy comments by any of the guests will offend a lot of people – a DM to anyone who oversteps the line is usually enough to deal with any problem.

## **9 – The Big Day**

9.1 – Try to have an early night beforehand – seriously. A Twitter wedding is a hectic thing, and you need to be fresh and full of energy to enjoy it properly;

9.2 - Make sure you've read the script that AWP will send you as a guide – it's not about trying to control what you say, but just to make quite sure that everyone involved knows when they have to do important things like make the vows or the speeches at the reception;

9.3 - Please do your best to be on time!! Sometimes things crop up at the last minute and simply can't be helped, but lack of planning isn't one of them.

Twitter sometimes has a problem allowing someone to change avatars, so it's a good plan to put your wedding finery on a few hours ahead of schedule, just in case. It's also well worth having a jail account (in case you're new to Twitter and haven't needed one yet, Twitter jail, aka T-jail or Twitmo, is the state of being unable to tweet due to a temporary suspension by Twitter for tweeting too much, and a jail account is the emergency account that people use to get around it).

You should be able to log into it at a moment's notice, if need be – and do make sure you have it dressed up for the wedding, too. It can cause a lengthy hold-up if the wedding can't continue because the Bridegroom, Bride or Celebrant suddenly goes unavailable!

*(Tip – it sometimes helps you to stay out of Twitmo if you close all your Twitter windows except for the wedding hashtag and your mentions – even if you haven't tweeted much yourself, just having lots of tweets come in on other open windows has the same effect.)*

No-one wants to put restrictions on your big day, but a wedding usually lasts 3 hours, and staff and guests can't always stay much longer – some may well have folks offline who need attention, and staff may have another party to work at after yours, so it really is important that you can get the ceremony over and reception in full swing within the time you've scheduled. If for any reason you don't think 3 hours will be long enough, then book the event for 4 so everyone knows before the start.

9.4 Be prepared to laugh if things go wrong. They usually don't, but sometimes a very busy timeline will cause someone to miss a cue, a picture doesn't show up as it should, or a music link which worked fine when it was tested will refuse to play. Don't stress about it – some things are just beyond control, and if they go wrong everyone will do their very best to put them right.

9.5 If your wedding trends, that's wonderful – but be warned, the spammers will come out in force. They won't have singled out your wedding – they put unwanted links on any tag that's trending.

9.6 If you see spam, just ignore it. Someone seeing spammers will call for everyone to block and report offenders. The main participants in the wedding (Bride, Groom, Celebrant and anyone else who has a speaking part) should ignore that call and stay focused on what they're doing, and leave everyone else to do the blocking and reporting. Usually Twitter will very quickly get so many spam reports that the offenders disappear, but if there happen to be too many to be dealt with quickly you can always change the hashtag. Your guests will all be there already, so no-one's going to miss the ceremony because of it;

9.7 When you're ready to leave, thank those who've played a major part in your big day. The immediate wedding group should all be thanked by name – it's a good plan to have their names listed in your word-processor after your wedding vows so you can copy and paste them into tweets as quickly and easily as possible. You might also like to tell your guests they're welcome to stay on and pawty. Those who don't have to be somewhere else straight afterwards quite often want to, and if the DJ doesn't have another gig to get to and can stay on for a while, or one of the guests knows how to play some music, the pawty may go on for quite some time!; and

9.8 Enjoy your day! You'll probably find it goes so fast you'll have missed quite a few things, but the AWP will have a wedding album waiting for you so you can savor all the details afterwards.

## **10- After The Wedding**

10.1 If possible, attend social events together. If the time difference makes it impractical for you both to arrive at the same moment or to stay for the same length of time that doesn't matter, but your pals will feel cheated if they've recently celebrated the wedding of a couple who then act as if it had never taken place; and

10.2 Enjoy your new status! It's great fun to have someone to hang out with, and hopefully your humans are now good enough friends to have a lot of fun online together, too.



Wedding-bell graphic courtesy of <http://www.webweaver.nu>