

THE WHITE EDIT

OUR FULL GUIDE TO GETTING MARRIED IN IRELAND

You can legally marry in Ireland without having to fulfil any residency requirements. This applies to civil wedding ceremonies, religious wedding ceremonies and secular ceremonies. However, you may choose to avoid the legalities and paperwork involved and have a low-key civil ceremony at a registry office in the UK to fulfil the legal requirements followed by a Wedding Blessing in Ireland at a venue of your choice.

Civil Ceremony

In Ireland, civil ceremonies are usually conducted by a Registrar and take place in the local Registry Office or at an approved wedding venue (i.e. a hotel, castle or estate).

There are no residency requirements for couples wishing to have a civil ceremony. However, you will need to attend an appointment with a Registrar to give at least 3 months notice of your intention to marry. You will also need to meet with the Registrar 5 business days before the wedding ceremony takes place.

These regulations also apply to same-sex couples. It has been legal for same-sex couples to be married in Ireland since 2015.

Religious Ceremony

In Ireland religious ceremonies are legally binding.

There are no residency requirements for couples wishing to have a religious ceremony however you will need to attend an appointment with a Registrar to give at least 3 months notice of your intention to marry in addition to any arrangements you make with your chosen place of worship. You will also need to meet with the Registrar 5 business days before your religious wedding ceremony takes place.

The requirements vary from religion to religion and can be complex so it is best to contact the place where you wish to be married well in advance for detailed guidance. Whether you can marry or not depends on whether there are any registered solemnisers available to perform the ceremony at your chosen venue.

Wedding Blessing / Humanist Ceremony

In Ireland, it is possible to have a legally binding Humanist ceremony if you follow the procedure for a civil ceremony and use a Humanist celebrant who is a registered solemniser.

Alternatively, the private, non-denominational, non-institutional nature of a Wedding Blessing gives you the flexibility to marry when and how you want with no legal requirement for the ceremony to take place in a licensed building. Therefore, you can hold your ceremony wherever you like—at a restaurant, in a private house or your favourite location. The choice is yours.

There is also no legal requirement for the ceremony to follow a set structure so it can be as formal or informal as you like. Once again, the choice is yours.

These ceremonies are usually performed by a celebrant who will be able to help you select the style, structure, readings, music and vows that reflect your tastes and feelings as a couple resulting in a highly personalised and unique, non-religious ceremony.

Please note: If you do choose to have a Wedding Blessing, or a Humanist Ceremony without a registered solemniser, you will also need to have an official civil ceremony in order for your marriage to be legally binding.

All Ceremonies

You can legally marry in Ireland without having to fulfil any residency requirements. This applies to civil wedding ceremonies and religious wedding ceremonies. However, you may choose to avoid the legalities and paperwork involved and have a low-key civil ceremony at a registry office in the UK to fulfil the legal requirements followed by a Wedding Blessing in Ireland at a venue of your choice.

**** A civil ceremony is often easier to arrange than a religious ceremony. ****

Although there are no residency requirements for the marriage to take place, you will need to attend an appointment with a Registrar to give at least 3 months notice of your intention to marry. You will also need to meet with the Registrar 5 business days before the wedding ceremony takes place.

The process:

- 1.** Make an appointment with a Registrar to give 'Notification of Intention to Marry'. Three months notice is required from the date of your appointment with the Registrar so it is important to book this appointment well in advance to allow for the required time. Appointments can be made by contacting the local Civil Registration Office or Health Service Executive (HSE) headquarters. For details of their offices go to www.civilregistrationservice.ie There is also an online booking system www.crsappointments.ie
- 2.** When you attend the appointment with the Registrar you will be required to pay the notification fee of 200 euros.

**** Couples should check directly with the registrar before the appointment to ensure they bring all the necessary documentation. ****

You will probably require the following documentation:

- A CNI or equivalent from your home country. This document confirms you are not married in your home country and there are no other impediments to the marriage. Information about UK-issued CNIs can be obtained from <https://www.gov.uk/marriage-abroad>
- Birth certificate (long form version).
- A valid passport.

- If you are widowed, you must provide both your previous marriage certificate and the death certificate of your husband/wife.
- If you are divorced or your marriage was annulled, you must provide the relevant certificates.
- Civil partnership dissolution, if applicable.
- Details regarding the proposed marriage ceremony such as of the date, the venue where you wish the ceremony to take place and the proposed solemniser.

****** *The person solemnising the marriage must be on the Register of Solemnisers (available at the Registry Office). The regulations about who can be a solemniser are very strict, and in practice the list is comprised of either civil registrars and clergy of various religious bodies.* ******

- You will require two witnesses (aged 18+) for the ceremony and will need to provide their names, addresses, occupations and photocopies of their passports.

Please note: Documents issued outside of Ireland must have a Hague Apostille from the relevant issuing office in your country of residence (For UK issued documents go to www.gov.uk/get-document-legalised). If the name on any of your documents doesn't appear exactly as it does on your birth certificate, you will need to provide the Irish marriage authorities with evidence of your name change (Eg. marriage certificate; deed poll).

- 3.** During the course of the appointment, you will both be asked to complete a Declaration of No Impediment stating that you are not aware of any lawful impediment to your proposed marriage.
- 4.** The Registrar will issue each of you, and the proposed solemniser, with an acknowledgement confirming the date/receipt of notification.
- 5.** At the end of the appointment the Registrar will issue you with a Marriage Registration Form (MRF) based on the information you have provided. This form will need to be given to the person solemnising your marriage (the Registrar or religious/secular solemniser) prior to the ceremony taking place.
- 6.** Once the ceremony has taken place, you will be issued with an international wedding certificate.

****** *If the marriage does not take place on the date specified on the MRF it must take place no later than 6 months from the date specified. After that, the MRF expires and the notification process will need to be repeated.* ******



Civil Ceremony

Civil ceremonies take place in the local Registry office or at an approved venue such as a hotel or one of Ireland's luxury castles, manor houses or estates. Since June 2014 it has also been possible to be married in an outside location, but only at Registrar approved locations.

These regulations also apply to same-sex couples. It has been legal for same-sex couples to be married in Ireland since 2015.

Religious Ceremony

You can have a religious ceremony if...

- one/both of you are Catholic and neither of you are divorced.

No residency rules apply. A Roman Catholic wedding is legally binding and will take place in a Roman Catholic Church.

**** If you wish to have a non-Catholic religious ceremony in Italy, you will need to have a civil ceremony first in order for your marriage to be legally binding. ****

Couples planning to have a Catholic marriage ceremony in Italy need to allow at least six months for all the documentary requirements to be met.

The process:

1. Contact the priest of the church where you would like the ceremony to take place as the priest must first give you permission to marry.

2. Visit your local parish priest to discuss your plans to marry in Italy. He will be able to guide you through the process and documentation required.

You will probably require the following documentation:

- A pre-nuptial enquiry form.
- A valid passport.
- Baptism Certificate issued from the parish of your baptism.

Please note: the certificate must be dated within the six months prior to your wedding. · Confirmation Certificate issued from the parish of your confirmation.

- A CNI or equivalent from your home country. This document confirms you are not married in your home country and there are no other impediments to the marriage. A CNI is valid for 6 months under Italian law. Information about UK-issued CNIs can be obtained from <https://www.gov.uk/marriage-abroad/y/italy> Non-UK citizens can click here for details on how to obtain the certificate relevant to their country.
- A certificate confirming the completion of a pre-marriage course. Your priest will inform you whether this is required.
- Permission from your Parish Priest(s) to be married outside your own parish (Letter of Freedom).
- If one of you is not a Catholic, a dispensation, issued by the Bishopric of the home country, is required.

3. Documentation should reach the church where you wish to be married at least two months before the date of the wedding.

4. The priest will make a request for publication of the banns at the local Town Hall (Ufficio di Stato Civile) and publish the banns in the church where you wish to be married.

Increasingly, many couples are choosing to have a low-key civil ceremony at a registry office in the UK to fulfil the legal requirements, followed by a Wedding Blessing/Humanist Ceremony in Italy—regarding this as their actual ‘Wedding Day’—where they share vows and exchange rings in the presence of their friends and family.

Wedding Blessing / Humanist Ceremony

In Ireland, it is possible to have a legally binding Humanist ceremony if you follow the procedure for a civil ceremony and use a Humanist celebrant who is a registered solemniser. Alternatively, the private, non-denominational, non-institutional nature of a Wedding Blessing gives you the flexibility to marry when and how you want with no legal requirement for the ceremony to take place in a licensed building. Therefore, you can hold your ceremony wherever you like—at a restaurant, in a private house or your favourite location. The choice is yours.

There is no legal requirement for the ceremony to follow a set structure so it can be as formal or informal as you like—you can have a traditional Church Ceremony with the religious parts replaced with readings and vows or you can have a light-hearted ceremony with humorous readings and vows. Once again, the choice is yours.

These ceremonies are usually performed by a celebrant who will be able to help you select the style, structure, readings, music and vows that reflect your tastes and feelings as a couple resulting in a highly personalised and unique, non-religious ceremony.

Please note: If you do choose to have a Wedding Blessing, or a Humanist Ceremony without a registered solemniser, you will also need to have an official civil ceremony in order for your marriage to be legally binding.

*** Although we have done our best to ensure the information above is correct, please note it is intended only as a guideline and should not be regarded as legal advice. ***

