

# Buying Sheets

Back to Basics

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## **Why is it important to create a buying list?**

If you do not currently make a **buying list**, I encourage you to start and experience a more efficient, effective and stress-free way of shopping for your flowers.

There are multiple advantages for creating a **buying list** when you are buying your flowers from the wholesalers in store, online, the supermarket or a local florist shop.

A buying list can easily be created with pen and paper, on the computer on a word document or on an excel spreadsheet. Ultimately, you can choose the best method that works best for you!

The benefits for creating a list include:

### **Reduces Waste**

It is important to be realistic about the products that you require for the upcoming event, wedding or arrangements that you are making up. When buying items you don't necessarily need, results in a greater chance they'll be wasted, especially if you have a busy schedule! By creating the buying list, allows you to visualise what and how much stock to buy and avoid wasting materials.

Top tip: If you do overbuy by mistake, you can use the products to practice or create designs for your portfolio depending on your work schedule.

### **Saves time, money and energy**

Creating a buying list will focus your attention and prioritise your spending on what you need for upcoming arrangements.

If you are paying a visit to the wholesalers, it can be a game changer if you have a list! You can be in and out of there in a flash, rather than pacing the aisles!

### **Aid Planning & Organisation**

A well planned, organised buying list can help you to plan your designs and purchase the correct materials for the week ahead. It helps you to focus and organise you and your team, especially during busy periods. We are less likely to be lured by distractions, such as gorgeous blousy blooms or a new sundry product if we have a plan and buying list in place.

### **Feel Good Exercise**

Lists are a great 'feel good' exercise! Creating a buying list can give you a sense of accomplishment, sticking to a plan and controlling urges to buy items you do not need! This triggers the release of dopamine making you feel good! It is not just good for your overall well-being, but also your profit margins!

## How to create a buying sheet?

1. Create a **table** on the preferred document
2. In the first column add in all the **designs** you need to create (leave the first cell empty, see below). For example, if you are doing a wedding, add 'Bride BQ,' 'Bridesmaid BQ' etc.
3. In the second column, add the **quantity** of each design you need to create. For example, if you are doing a wedding, you may need to create more than one bridesmaids bouquet or buttonhole. Add the number to the quantity column to refer to.
4. Along the top row add all the **materials** that you want to use or have been requested for the event/ wedding or flower arrangement. If you can, add the full botanical names where possible. This will help when you are visiting the wholesalers in person or online.
5. **Calculate the numbers** of each material for each design. *If you are starting out on your journey, this can be trial and error. If you are struggling, you can refer to our Shopping Lists or find a similar design and count the flowers used to give you a rough indication.*
6. For the multiple designs such as Bridesmaids Bouquets, you will need to calculate the **total number of stems** to buy. For example, you may need 5 stems of 'Rose Quicksand' per bouquet and you have 3 bridesmaids bouquets to make. In total, you will need to purchase from the wholesalers 15 stems of 'Rose Quicksand.' You can add the two figures to the table and identify the differential by circling, changing the colour or highlighting. The buying list can be adapted to suit your needs.
7. Once you have worked out how many flower stems per arrangement, you simply need to add the **'totals' together** and name the row accordingly.
8. Be aware that for fresh flowers, you will need to purchase from the wholesalers in wrap sizes. This can vary for different types of flower varieties. For example, roses can be sold in 10 or 20 stems, whereas Astilbe is in 30 or 50 stem wraps. For ease, you can add a row with this information to help you when purchasing (if you know). This is your buying list that you will take to the wholesalers, in-person or online.
9. *Optional:* You can add the costings beneath the totals. This will help to keep you focussed and you can always refer back to the list for future weddings or events. Be aware that pricing can vary from season to season, especially during peak holidays.

## TOP TIPS

Small designs such as buttonholes or corsages, can be created using minimal flower content. You can either use leftovers or with some of the lower flowers from materials such as Gypsophila, Waxflower or Alchemilla Mollis. It is not necessary to purchase 'whole' stems for these designs. You will however need to make note just as a reminder.

*'You pay for the whole stem, so use it all!'*

Where possible, do not allow your clients to dictate the flower choices! This will mean that you can be more savvy when buying and gives you much more artistic license.

Save your buying lists! After you've created the designs, it is always a good idea to evaluate and save for future events. You've put in the hard work! Ask yourself questions such as 'Did you buy too much?,' 'Could I cut back?'

Flowers and arrangement	Quantity	Rose (per stem)	Gypsophila (per stem)	Hydrangea (per stem)	Carnation (per stem)	Eryngium (per stem)	Hard Ruscus (per bunch)	Eucalyptus (per bunch)	Soft Ruscus (per bunch)
Bridal Bouquet	1	9	3	2	5	3	5		
Bridesmaid's Bouquets	3	7	2	1	3	2	3		
Top Table Arrangement	1	5	3	5	3	3	3	1	1
Buttonholes	6	1	0.25						
Ladies Corsages	2	2	0.5						
Table Arrangements (small)	6	4	2	2	3	1	3	0.25	
Pew Ends (or jam jars)	8		2	1					
Pedestal	2	5	3	5	7	3	7	1	2
<b>Total no. of stems / bunches</b>	-	<b>79</b>	<b>48.5</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>5</b>

*\*\*For the purposes of this buying list I have included flower materials for a wedding using excel spreadsheet*

## EXTRA ROWS

**Wholesale Wraps :** Find out the flower wrap sizes from the wholesalers. For example, roses are sold in 10 or 20 stem wraps. You will need to purchase 8 x 10 or 4 x 20 Rose

**Cost per stem:** Find out the wholesale price from your wholesalers to help you price up the wedding. This will also help you when you refer back for future weddings. Don't forget to add VAT/labour!

**Spares:** Document the number of spares of each flower variety to help you monitor this. If you have extra, it is a good idea to use up for portfolio work or for general stock. Try to avoid too much waste!

## SPARES TIPS

Spares can be useful and give you peace of mind, especially if there is any broken or bruised stems in your order from the wholesalers. The recommended percentage is 10% over. However to avoid waste, you do not need to have too many spares. To avoid this, you can tweak the spreadsheet to meet your needs.

For example, if you have an expensive bloom such as a Hydrangea (sold in wraps of 10 stems) and you have 5 spares. It is unlikely that you will be able to use these in arrangements and therefore, it is worth tweaking the existing sheet to meet your needs and budget.

3 x Top Table Design, 5 x Pedestal, 1 x Bride, 1 x Bridesmaids (4), 1 x Pew Ends (6).  
This leaves 1 spare stem only.

Whilst this is a much more effective way of working out your numbers, you need to make sure you are giving your clients perceived value for money, and confidence that your flowers are going to be premium quality.

Another option is to create using the traditional pen and paper version! Here is an example, you can see that the 'totals' have been circled in this version to help you view more easily.

	Rose	Gypsophylla	Soft Rusus	Eucalyptus	Ostia	Lisianthus or spray rose
Bride bouquet	7	2		1/2 bunch	5	3
Bridesmaid	5 (15)	2 (6)		1/3 bunch (1)		2 (6)
Buttonholes	1 (4)	1/2		✓	1 (4)	
Jim Ties	2 (12)	1/2 (3)			1 (6)	1/2 (3)
Top Table arrangement	7	3	1 bunch	1/2 bunch		3
Garland			1 bunch	2 bunch (two types)		
Pew ends	2 (12)	1 (6)				
Total	57 (3)	21 (4)	2 bunches	4 bunches	15 (5)	15 (5)
	3 x 20	1 x 25	2 x 1	4 x 1	2 x 10	2 x 10