

To make a hand tied wedding bouquet, gather conditioned flowers, arrange them in your hand, and secure the stems with floral tape or twine. Trim the stems, add a ribbon, and keep the bouquet in water until it is needed.

Choose and prepare your flowers

Start with a few larger flowers for the centre, then add smaller blooms and foliage for shape. Roses, spray roses, carnations and eucalyptus are useful choices, but you can use any sturdy flowers you like. Pick a limited colour palette if you want a calm look, or mix more colours for something lively.

You will also need clean, sharp scissors or flower snips, floral tape or twine, ribbon and a clean bucket or vase. A mirror can be handy for checking the bouquet from the front.

Remove leaves that would sit below the waterline or get in the way of your grip. Cut the stems at an angle and put them in clean water for several hours before arranging. Keep the flowers somewhere cool, away from direct sun and heat.

Build the bouquet in your hand

Choose one flower as your starting point and hold it loosely where you expect to tie the bouquet. Add another stem at a slight angle, then turn the growing bunch and add the next stem in the same direction. This creates a spiral, which helps the flowers fan out rather than crowd together.

Work gradually, mixing larger blooms with smaller flowers and foliage. Keep turning the bouquet so you can see it from every side. Place some flowers a little higher and others slightly lower for a soft, rounded shape. Your hand does not need to become a vice. A relaxed grip makes it easier to adjust stems.

Pause now and then to look at the bouquet in a mirror. Fill any obvious gaps, but leave enough space for each flower to be seen. If the bunch feels too heavy or wide to carry comfortably, take a few stems out.

Secure, trim and store

Once you like the shape, wrap floral tape or twine firmly around the stems at your grip point. Tie it securely without crushing the stems. Trim the ends to a similar length, leaving enough stem below the tie to hold and to reach water.

Wrap ribbon over the binding and tie it in a knot or bow. Keep the ribbon above the waterline, or add it shortly before the ceremony so it stays dry. Put the bouquet in a clean vase with enough water to cover the cut ends, and store it in a cool place. Pat the stems dry before carrying it.

Questions about hand tied bouquets

How far ahead can I make the bouquet?

Making it the day before gives you time to adjust it. Keep it cool and in clean water, and choose fresh, sturdy flowers.

How many stems do I need?

There is no fixed number. Flower size and the bouquet shape matter more, so start with a modest bunch and add stems until it feels right.

Can I make the bouquet without floral tape?

Yes. Twine tied firmly around the stems can hold the arrangement together. Cover it with ribbon if you prefer a softer finish.

More background: local flower delivery in Europe