

MARRIAGE IN MEXICO

Congratulations on your engagement! Here's what you need to know to make the marriage legal in the Federal District of Mexico City.

The following are the requirements for marriage in the Federal District (Mexico City). However, marriage requirements prevailing in the thirty-one states of Mexico are in general very similar to those of the Federal District.

Legal Requirements

Consent: People under the age of 18 may not get married in Mexico without parental consent. With parental consent, boys have to be at least 16 and girls need to be at least 14 years of age.

Foreigners Getting Married to Foreigners: You don't need to be resident in Mexico in order to get married there, you'll just need a passport and your tourist permit, plus some other paperwork (see below). If you plan to get married to a Mexican in Mexico, you will need additional documentation.

1. **Chest X-rays and Blood Tests:** these must be done locally in Mexico, as the results of the blood tests and the X-ray documentation must be in Spanish and the tests need to be done within a certain time frame of the Marriage Application Form being completed. Not all states require the Chest X-rays. Check locally.
2. **Four Witnesses:** You will need to have 4 witnesses present at the legal ceremony, and they must have valid identification (Passport).
3. **Validity Outside of Mexico:** Your Marriage Certificate will be valid world-wide, BUT you should get your certificate 'legalised' in Mexico to ensure it is legally accepted when you get back home. The process is the reverse of getting your Native documentation legalised by the necessary authorities (e.g. Foreign Office) for marriage in Mexico (see below); The registry office in Mexico will tell you where this can be done locally.

Required Legal Documents

An American or other foreigner wishing to be married in Mexico must present to the appropriate Civil Registry certain documents described in the paragraphs below. All documents from the U.S., except for the valid U.S. passport, must be authenticated by an American authority (usually the Secretary of State), from the state where they originated, who attaches an "Apostille" to the documents listed below.

Important! ALL Foreign documents listed below (with the exception of your passport) will need to be:

1. **Translated** into Spanish;
2. **Notarised** by your nearest Canadian/American Mexican Consulate and;
3. **Be 'Legalised'** in the country where you live by the appropriate organisation or authorities.

4. **Marriage Application Forms:** These forms are attained from the local registry office in Mexico. You will need to specify whether you will get married under joint or separate property on this form.
5. **Passport:** Full Passport, valid for at least 6 months past your expiry date and a copy of same (both the bride and groom). For Canadian citizens, you can view more up-to-date information here: [Government of Canada – Entering Mexico](#)
6. **Travel Permits:** Original copies of the tourist permit which was completed at the port of entry or other resident permit (visa, FM3, FM2, etc)
7. **Birth Certificates:** These will need to be certified and translated by an approved translator. Contact your nearest Mexican Consulate for more details.
8. **Divorce Decree / Death Certificate:** If either or both persons were previously married, then copies of Divorce Decree/ Death Certificate, if applicable (see Previously Married) will be required for presentation.
9. **Chest X-Rays:** The Plates from the Chest X-rays (Get these in Mexico)
10. **Blood Test Results:** Written results of the blood test, written in Spanish (Get blood test done in Mexico). Again, these must be done locally in Mexico, as the results of the blood tests and the X-ray documentation must be in Spanish and the tests need to be done within a certain time frame of the Marriage Application Form being completed. **Not all states** require the Chest X-rays. Check locally.

The Marriage Process

11. In Mexico, only civil marriage is recognized as legal. Persons wishing to do so may also have a religious ceremony, but it has no legal effect and does not replace in any way the legal binding civil marriage. A civil wedding in Mexico is fully valid for legal purpose in the U.S.
12. Civil marriages are performed by the Civil Registry of each municipality (Registro Civil). The address of the main office of Mexico City's Civil Registry is:

Oficina del Registro Civil
Arcos de Belen y Doctor Andrade
06720 Mexico, D.F.
tel. (011-52-5) 578-7140

13. Marriages are performed without charge at the premises of the "Registro Civil". They may also be performed elsewhere, but in this case a fee is charged which should be ascertained from the "Registro Civil".
14. Foreigners are not subject to a residence requirement but will have to identify themselves by a presentation of their tourist cards and of a valid passport and a copy of their birth certificates authenticated and translated as described above. Foreigners planning to marry a Mexican citizen should pay particular attention to the special requirements listed in paragraph below.
15. Persons previously married must present proof of the termination of that marriage in the form of a divorce decree or death certificate. If the divorce or death took place outside of Mexico, it must be authenticated and translated into Spanish. Divorced people cannot marry in Mexico until one year after the termination of the divorce.

16. If either party is widowed, the death certificate of the deceased spouse will be needed as part of the documentation requirements.

If you plan to marry a Mexican National in Mexico, you'll need to fulfil some **additional requirements**:

17. In addition to all of the above documentation, you will need to obtain permission from the "Secretaria de Gobernacion - Oficina de Migracion" where for a fee of around US\$200/£130 you'll need to acquire a permit to marry a Mexican national. The document is known as "Permiso para contraer matrimonio con un nacional".
18. The office issuing this permit must be the same office that has jurisdiction over the area where the marriage is to take place - so check beforehand!
19. This process can take from two days to two weeks, depending on the State and the people at the local government office: be prepared to be patient if you have to! Foreigners wishing to marry a Mexican citizen must first obtain permission to do so from the "Instituto Nacional de Migración" Secretaria de Gobernación (Ministry of Interior).

Marriage Fees

20. You will need to pay your Marriage License fee (approx £20/US\$30*), allow the **waiting period** to go by (anything from 30 minutes to a few days, depending on the State), and then the ceremony can take place and the marriage will be legal.
21. The least expensive option is to have the ceremony performed at the Local Registry Office. For a further fee, you can arrange for the ceremony to take place elsewhere (hotel, beach, colonial mansion, etc). You will need to make further arrangements with all parties involved, or instruct your Wedding Planner to arrange this on your behalf.
22. Once the civil ceremony has been completed, you will need to obtain a certified copy of the marriage certificate (Acta de Matrimonio). This will prove that you have been legally wed in accordance with Mexican law, and the marriage will be recognised just about everywhere in the world where it can be, including the USA, Canada, United Kingdom / EU.
23. Word is, that local authorities in Cancun are charging foreigners a disproportionate fee of US\$600 (£420) for a permit to get married there (locals pay around US\$30/£20).

Church Weddings: Are very difficult to arrange here for a variety of reasons, Firstly, the Mexican government recognizes only civil weddings; Secondly, the Roman Catholic Church (which predominates in this country) requires compliance with many formalities, which have proven be cumbersome in most cases. The civil judge, however, has no problem with a minister or lay person being present and speaking at the ceremony, on several occasions, protestant ministers (usually Presbyterian) have read from the bible, etc.

If you would like to get married in a church in Mexico, this can be arranged, although additional planning and fees will be required.