

Wedding Photography Planning Guide

Behind the Lens



Hello Brides & Grooms-to-be!!!

I am SO excited for you!

Getting married is one of the biggest days of your life, and I am honored that you are trusting me

to give you some friendly advice on how to best capture each & every moment and memory on your special day.

It takes a team effort, but you are going to have an **AMAZING** wedding day if you have a great team of talent working for you!!

I have photographed hundreds of weddings and have learned a few secrets and planning tips you can use **BEFORE** the wedding day that will help things run more smoothly. This way you can relax and focus on **ENJOYING THE MOMENT**, knowing you will get

all the pictures you are dreaming about.

So even if I can't photograph your wedding day, I truly hope this guide will help you have a great experience with your vendors (and especially your photographer). And you can always check out my blog for more tips on engagement sessions, what to wear, and more.

Many wishes to you both for a **Picture-Perfect** wedding day!

Heather

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What's Normal?



I get this question A LOT!
And the answer is: everything.

Some weddings are traditional, others are everything but, but most often I see a mix of the two. Here is a short list of a few traditions & trends so you can decide what works best for you and your wedding:

Traditional

1. Couples don't see each other before the wedding & all the portraits are done after the ceremony
2. There's an even number of bridesmaids and groomsmen in matching attire

3. Couples leave before the end of the reception

4. All the portraits are done during the cocktail hour - so couples miss it

5. Couples have toasts during dinner & cut the cake immediately after that

Trending

1. First Look - Couples see each other & do portraits before the wedding
2. Uneven number of maids & men, different styles & colors

3. Couples have a special send off (aka sparklers or bubbles)

4. Some or all of the portraits are done before the ceremony so couples can join cocktail hour

5. Reception can go in any order you want & now couples often wait to cut the cake until an hour or two after everyone is done eating dinner

PERSONAL is the new normal. So have your best friend as your Man of Honor, your mom walk you down the aisle, or your husband cut in on the father/ daughter dance. It's your day, you can really do whatever you want!



Portrait Tips

Everyone wants gorgeous portraits on their wedding day, and few people want to take more than an hour to do it. So here are a few tips to help you get what you want in the time you want to do it:

TIP 1

Always plan for portraits to take a little longer than you think. People love to chat at weddings, which can slow things down, along with drink breaks, snacks, or a missing family member. I have found it is best to allow 2-5 min. PER posed photo if you don't want to feel rushed.

TIP 2

Let your photographer know if you have any props you want to use (i.e. signs, pictures, sparklers, etc.) so they can think ahead of time of creative and unique ways to use them.

TIP 3

Email a link to any photos you love or want to "copy." Better yet, share your Pinterest board! Most photographers prefer to be creative and create unique pictures but sharing the style you like along with special requests is always a good idea to do in your pre-wedding consultation meetings.

TIP 4

Don't over think it. Photos turn out best if you don't over think every detail and make yourself stressed out or self-conscious throughout the day. Trust the photographer to help you feel relaxed and give you direction so that you look your best in your images. They've done this hundreds of times before and know how to help you laugh and feel confident in front of the camera.

TIP 5

This one is more for the guys - please be sure to have clean fingernails!! No manicure needed, but your hands will be in the photos and you want all the attention on that bling!

*This is YOUR day.
Enjoy every moment!!
You will remember
your feelings & the
experience you had
while the photos were
taken so let your
photographer make it
AMAZING.*

TIP 6

If you want natural looking pictures, try to forget about the photographer. Listen to their instructions, but concentrate on enjoying your photo shoot with your new hubby, family, and best friends. The photo shoot time can be the most enjoyable part of the wedding day because you get to spend it alone with your favorite people. Act natural, laugh, and smile! A good photographer will edit out any bad ones.





TIP 7

Remember that your photos will be around for decades to come, hanging on your walls and at your parents' house. With a great photographer you will get amazing pictures, even if it rains. Every detail (and mishap) makes up your unique story and will bring back those precious memories. Besides, rain is good luck on a wedding day!! :)



Portrait Checklist

Bride w/ _____

Groom w/ _____

- _____ Bride & Groom w/ officiant
- _____ Bride & Groom with all grandparents
 - _____ w/ Bride's grandparents _____ w/ Groom's grandparents
- _____ Bride & Groom with Bride's extended family (aunts, uncles, cousins, approx. # _____)
- _____ Other Bride extended family _____
- _____ Bride & Groom with Groom's extended family (aunts, uncles, cousins, approx. # _____)
- _____ Other Groom extended family _____
- _____ Bride & Groom with ALL extended family (approx. # _____)
- _____ Other extended family _____

--- Aunts, uncles & cousins done with photos ---

- _____ Bride & Groom with Bride's parents
 - _____ add siblings _____ add grandparents
- _____ Bride & Groom with Groom's parents
 - _____ add siblings _____ add grandparents
- _____ Bride & Groom with all parents
 - _____ add siblings _____ add grandparents

--- Aunts, uncles & cousins done with photos ---

- _____ Bride & Groom w/ Flower Girl & Ring Bearer
- _____ Bride & Groom with entire wedding party
- _____ Bride w/ Bridesmaids
 - _____ each w/ Bride individually
- _____ Groom w/ Groomsmen
 - _____ each w/ Groom individually

--- Bridal party done with photos ---

- _____ Bride & Groom
 - _____ Bride alone _____ Groom alone
- _____ Other _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Timeline Worksheet

(Times are a LITTLE flexible but let your photographer know how much)

Bride getting ready at - Time _____ Location _____

Groom getting ready at - Time _____ Location _____

Special details to photograph/ notes:

Photographer Starts at _____ Ends at _____
2nd Photographer Starts at _____ Ends at _____

Ceremony starts at: _____ Ends at: _____ Receiving line? yes or no Inside/ Outside

Special services/ notes:

Bridal Party portraits taking place by ___ ceremony ___ reception ___ other _____

Reception Times - Cocktail Hour: _____ Intro _____ End/ Exit: _____ Sparklers? _____

Reception order of events (should be shared with DJ or band)

- please number in order what you have planned -

___ 1st dance	___ parent dances	___ dinner
___ toasts	___ cake cutting	___ bouquet
___ hora	___ other _____	___ garter
___ shoe game	___ other _____	___ anniversary dance

Special services/ notes:

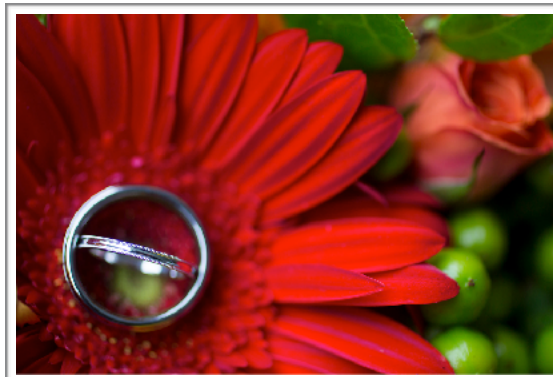
Timeline Tips



There are a lot of details that need to be planned and organized for a wedding day to go smoothly. This list cannot take the place of a good wedding coordinator who makes sure every detail is planned but it will help you have more time to relax & enjoy your day.

Before the Ceremony

- Make sure there is lots of natural light in the room where you plan to get ready. (Window light is SO beautiful!)
- If possible, try to have all details together before your photographer arrives. (The dress, jewelry, shoes, bouquet, veil, etc.) Including both wedding bands!



- Remind everyone to try to keep the whole area tidy and free of trash, bags, clothes, etc. This is where a lot of great candid moments will happen and you don't want to spend the time cleaning up.
- Allow more time than you think you need to get ready! It's better to have a little extra time

than feel RUSHED! (If planning a First Look, you will have to be dressed about 2 hours before the ceremony.)

- Most importantly be sure to Relax and have FUN!

After the Ceremony

- Family formals do not have to take over 30 min. However, this is only possible if you have a short list of portraits and give it to your photographer ahead of time! (see centerfold of this guide)
- Let your photographer know if any family members may not get along and/or may not want to be grouped with other family members so they can avoid any awkward interactions during family formals.

- Bridal party portraits (including those with you and your new hubby) take at least 20 min. Please allow more time if you want to go to multiple locations, have a large party, or want fun and creative photos (they take more time than simply “smiling for the camera”).

At the Reception

- If you run out of time and there are posed portraits that your photographer didn't get before, dinnertime is the next best opportunity. I like to give you at least 5-10 min. to eat (since you are served first) and then we can catch everyone before they have a chance to spill anything!

- This is the fun part! Your DJ should work out the timeline with you ahead of time and will run the show. I always touch base with them in case there are any changes or adjustments we need

to make and your coordinator can do the same.

Weddings rarely go perfectly or exactly as planned. It's ok! You have a team of pros & we have seen it all so you can trust us to make everything amazing no matter what.

- Know your photographer's overtime policy. I often stay 10-15 min. late and will help your guests organize for your grand exit. And in the rare instance I am not scheduled to be there till the end, I always hug goodbye so you have a chance to ask me to stay!



- Amazing Friends



Cake

Incredible Edibles
incredibleediblesbakery.com
(804) 729 - 7555

CakeAlicious
cakealiciousdesignstudio.com
(757) 234-4300

Kadi Bakes
kadibakes.com
(509) 270-8898

Florists

Jeff's Flowers, Of course! Inc.
jeffsflowers.com
(757) 827-5333

Morrison's Flowers
morrisonflowersandgifts.com
(757) 220-1242

Vivid Expressions
www.vividexpressions.com
(757) 802-3199

Hair & Makeup

About Face MUA by Kim
aboutfacemua.com
(757) 969-8287

Behind the Veil
behindtheveilstudio.com
(757) 965-7500

Bridesmaid
kimwadsworth.com
(757) 617-3587

Lighting

Blue Steel Lighting & Design
bluesteelightingdesign.com
(757) 816- 1939

Stage Right Lighting
srlevents.com
(757) 431-1122

Coordination

Happy Hour Hostess
thehappyhourhostess.com
(757) 773- 5351

Truly Yours
eventsbytrulyyours.com
(804) 728-0667

DJs

Music Makes You Happy
musicmakesyouhappydj.com
(757) 544- 9727

Transportation

Royal Coach Limosine Company
royalcoachlimo.net
(757) 420-9331

Videography

DreamClip Films
dreamcliponline.com
(757) 771-0288

Captivated Productions
captivatedproductions.com
(757) 560-9809

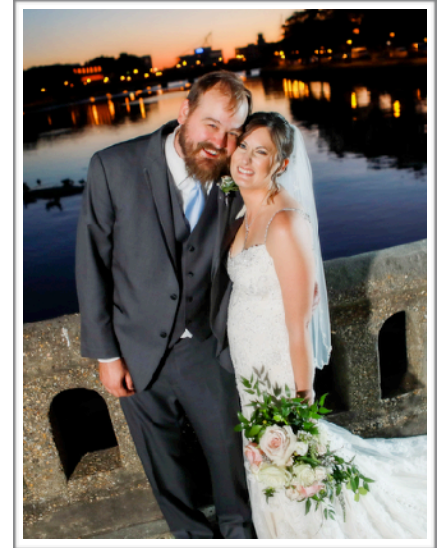
More available upon request!!



The Photojournalism Difference

“I wish I could scream to the world how happy I am that we had Heather do our photos!!!”

We LOVE our photos. When you look at the pictures you feel as though you are experiencing the wedding even if you did not attend it. The candid shots are awesome and the still shots are wonderful. She captured every moment!!!”



Heather was absolutely amazing. **For all the money spent on a wedding, this investment will last a lifetime.**

She was personable, interested in our story and what we wanted our wedding to be, and flexible in meeting our needs. On our wedding day she captured everything, yet was hardly noticed. And the best part—we absolutely love our pictures!!! She captured the feel of the day and gave us a priceless gift – the ability to re-live our magical day.”

“I am 100% happy with Heather. I was looking for a photographer who would do more than just take pictures, but rather capture the mood in unique ways.

On the wedding day, Heather arrived early and ready to get going, which was perfect. We loved everything. Her professionalism set her apart from many other photographers. She seemed to be EVERYWHERE at once. We now have an awesome way to remember our wedding!”

