

Wedding Photography Checklist

As you look through the galleries of your favorite wedding photographers, there is a critical element that you can't get just from looking at the images: your enjoyment of your wedding photos will be influenced in some way by your experience. We want your wedding day to be as much fun and stress-free as possible, and we know that a big part of that depends on us doing our job quickly and professionally so you can celebrate with your friends and family. It's just not that much fun to stand around for hours of family photos when you really just want to hanging out with your families!

In order to make sure that you receive the wedding photos that you've been dreaming of and that our part of the day runs smoothly, we'd like to know as much as possible about the photos you just have to have on your wedding day. We've found that using a checklist can be very helpful for both us as photographers as well as for you the brides and grooms.

What are we looking for? We want to know who you want family portraits of, when the portraits will be, who are the VIP's at the wedding, and what are the quirky and special things that we should be sure not to miss. VIP's should include close family members – people you don't see very often or are very close to – not just people in your wedding party. As time goes on you will be very grateful that you have a record of their presence at your wedding.

We hope this list will be helpful for you when you are planning out your day. For the family shots, especially, this list should help you determine how much time you need to plan for family portraits. A good estimate is 2 minutes shooting time for each shot. VERY IMPORTANT - since you are making a list of people you want in your family photos, why don't you use this list to contact them and let them know that you need them to be around at the designated time for portraits? Nothing slows portrait sessions down like missing people.

Now, this document is not a contract. Rather, it works best as a guide. Weddings are unpredictable events, and we cannot guarantee that we will get every shot that you check here. BUT we sure will try.

We also recommend designating a family member or close friend to be your wedding coordinator. This person will be responsible for corralling friends and family at portrait time, and can also help point out special VIP's to us. Remember, you will be too busy to point out your siblings and favorite aunts to us on your wedding day. By designating somebody close to you to point out your VIPs, we can work on highlighting them in our candid shots.

Please note, I have not included the standard ceremony and reception shots in this list. We are more concerned with finding out which non-traditional shots you have in mind and helping you create a timetable for your day. But DO let us know about unique items that you have planned that you don't want us to miss!

A few more tips:

- Let us know about your family structure
- The extended family shot list is very important, especially if you have a number of shots with relatives other than your immediate family.
- Make sure your family members know where and when they are expected for pictures
- For every photo you add to your list, add approximately 2 minutes of shooting time.
- When planning your timetable, plan in ample time for makeup, hair and getting ready. It will take longer than you think.
- Plan for your exit – you'll get everybody out on time and bring the event to a nice close

Getting Ready Photos

These shots can be taken at the bride/groom's house or can be scheduled to be shot an hour or so before the ceremony. Keep in mind that guests will start to arrive 30 minutes before the ceremony starts, which will affect the scheduled timing.

Ceremony

The majority of ceremony shots are standard and most photographers know what to take. **The things that you might want to add to this list would be anything that may be cultural in nature and/or an event that you've added to part of the ceremony that is not part of the standard ceremony fare.**

Formal Photo Shoot

This usually happens after the ceremony, but if you are getting married in the Fall months and/or you have a very limited time between your ceremony and reception, it might be beneficial to do this before the ceremony. Everyone meets at a pre-determined photo location. Be sure to inform all individuals that are required for your photos. If family photos can be done at the reception hall, this is generally a better plan and can be scheduled to occur just before the reception starts. Also, as mentioned above, a number of family photos can be taken care of before the ceremony at the "getting ready" locations!

Reception Photos

If you have any special events scheduled that you think the photographer should know about, be sure to be specific and add them. Any extended group shots, other than immediate family should probably be scheduled into this part of the day.

Family VIP List. Are there members of your family that you want to be extra-sure we photograph? Grandparents? Family you don't see very often? Anything at all, just let us know so we can make a point to catch them.

Standard family photo list. We know that we have asked you to prepare a VIP list above, but the following covers all of the standard combinations that you want to make sure you capture for your family photos. We have included some of these into some of the above areas, especially if we felt it would be beneficial to do these shots at times when it would be the easiest in your schedule, but the following is so that you make sure you don't forget anything. Again, copy and paste the following into a document and edit to your needs:

- Bride with Mother
- Bride with Father
- Bride with Mother & Father
- Bride with Siblings (you may want to do individually or as a group)
- Bride with Mother, Father and Siblings
- Bride with Mother, Father, Siblings, their spouses and children
- Bride with Grandparents
- Family generation photo including all above (you may want to wait and do this with the groom)
- Groom with Mother
- Groom with Father
- Groom with Mother & Father
- Groom with Siblings (you may want to do individually or as a group)
- Groom with Mother, Father and Siblings

- Groom with Mother, Father, Siblings and their spouses and children
- Groom with Grandparents
- Family generation photo including all above (you may want to wait and do this with the bride)
- Bride, Groom and Bride's Parents
- Bride, Groom and Groom's Parents
- Bride, Groom and Both Sets of Parents
- Bride, Groom and Bride's Grandparents
- Bride, Groom and Groom's Grandparents
- Bride, Groom and Bride's Siblings
- Bride, Groom and Groom's Siblings
- Bride, Groom and all Siblings
- Bride, Groom and Brides entire family
- Bride, Groom and Grooms entire family
- Bride, Groom and both families combined
- Other friends, family members not listed?

Event	Time	Place	Important People
Getting Ready			
Pre-Ceremony Photos			
Ceremony			
Post-Ceremony Photos			
Reception			