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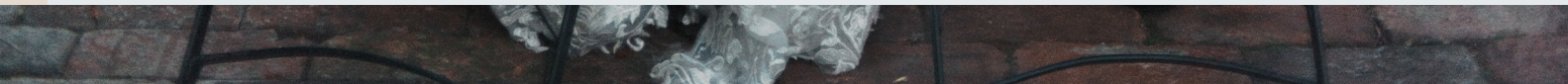
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2025

## WEDDING GUIDE

*Tips, tricks and resources*







04  
hello & thank you

06  
what to expect

08  
timelines

12  
getting ready

INDEX

16  
first looks

20  
portraits

30  
ceremony & reception

36  
tips & tricks

40  
vendor recommendations





# HELLO —

*and thank you.*

Chances are if you’re reading this, you’ve booked me as your wedding photographer! For that, I want to thank you! I’m truly honored and I cannot wait to spend the coming weeks getting excited and hearing the details as your day comes together. I take pride in “choosing” my clients as much as they “choose” me — in my eyes, this relationship is a two-way street and that mutual understanding of one another is what will help create amazing photos.

This guide will give you an idea of what to expect during your wedding day! Please take this guide as a grain-of-salt, as EVERY wedding is different. All of it was written from personal experience from the many weddings that I have worked, so please (x100), if you have any suggestions or new ideas, I would love to incorporate them into your special day.



# WHAT TO EXPECT

*This guide will help give you an idea of what its like to work with me & set expectations for the both of us throughout the process. My hope is that working with me is consistently three things: collaborative, simplistic, but most of all , fun!*

## ADJECTIVE NO. 1

First off, I love my job as a photographer because I am *always* collaborating with my couples. So if there are any special details or special moments you want me to capture, please don't be shy- I'd love to have those captured for you. In the end, I am a story teller and I want to capture your day as the beautiful storyline it is.

## ADJECTIVE NO. 2

Less is always more, and with that, I try to keep the day as easy and simple for my couples. You will hear this A LOT- the wedding day moves FAST! So please plan as if things will run behind. That said, If something on my end feels like it might be too much for my couples, I will let them know. My style is to capture the true emotions of the day and the mission is always and will always be the same- I want you to look back on your

gallery and feel the same exact feelings you had during each of those moments.

## ADJECTIVE NO. 3

To tie everything up, this is YOUR big day and I want this to be one of the BEST days of your lives! I take my job seriously but I am not a serious person. I love having fun with my couples and being silly. Your day will be filled with so many emotions, but in the end, I'd want this to be a fun experience working with me.



*Collaborative. simplistic.  
and of course. fun.*





# TIMELINES

*The schedule of your day is the single most important piece to make sure things run smoothly. If you are not working with a coordinator or planner, it's important that you and I work together and create a schedule that will not only give me time to do my best work, but allow the day to be stress-free. I'm very on it when it comes to my timelines and try to stay on schedule throughout the whole day!*

When I'm not capturing portraits, details, or big moments, I take a step back and become more of a quiet observer—looking for those in-between, candid moments that truly bring the day to life. My goal is to document the real emotions and interactions as they naturally unfold. That being said, having an experienced planner or venue coordinator helps tremendously, especially during the getting-ready portion of the day. When a planner is present, they keep track of the timeline, allowing me to focus fully on capturing your story. However, if there isn't a planner or coordinator, I take a more hands-on approach. I'll ensure things stay on schedule by keeping a simplified version of the timeline on my phone, making sure we don't miss any key moments.

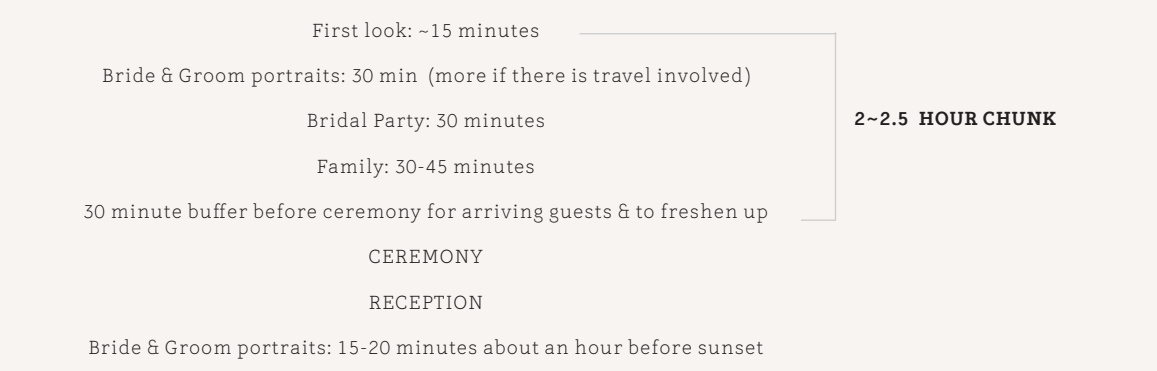
The timeline on the next page shows what an ideal day looks like for me timing wise. This is obviously strictly an example, but will show you how I typically structure the day if given the opportunity. I like to make sure we have optimal time built-in for things like off-location portraits, bridal party & family based on how many people there are, venue restrictions, etc. In all, we can achieve this ideal timing and you'll get higher quality photos because we aren't rushed for time.

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ideal timing:

The first question I generally get before a wedding is “how long should we set aside for portraits”? Easy answer: your first look should happen about 2-2.5 hours before your ceremony, which means bride & groom should be ready to go about 3 hours before the ceremony. More complicated answer: depending on the size of your bridal party, size of family, how much time the two of you want for portraits, whether there is any travel involved, etc. will all indicate the perfect timing.



If you plan on doing a first look, this would allow for more refreshed photos. In my experience, doing the photos after the ceremony can be tiresome, especially for the bridal party (who is ready to party by then!)

**If you do NOT plan on doing a first look- I’d usually try doing each bridal party and each side of the family *separate* before the ceremony. After the ceremony, I would then capture the full party and both sides of the family together.**

sample photography timeline:

This is based on a 4:30pm start time (this was an August wedding) who booked the 10-hour package.





## GETTING READY

*The getting ready portion of the day is such a fun and memorable part of a wedding because that's where all the true nervousness and excitement is so evident.*

However, the thing that is often forgotten about this part of the day is how chaotic it can be. How cramming 8 bridesmaids, the make-up artist, the hair stylists and the photographers into a single room filled with make-up, curling irons, hairspray, duffel bags, garbage cans, water bottles, food, and clothing can start to feel over crowded and LOOK very cluttered. The goal of classic and elegant getting ready images is space & light.

This is why I often recommend couples consider their getting ready space instead of leaving it until the last minute...and it doesn't have to be limited to a hotel room. Looking at homes on VRBO or Airbnb are a great option as well — they tend to have more interesting and lovely backgrounds AND better light. And just more room to spread out and not feel cramped.

IF you are getting ready in a hotel room, consider getting an extra room OR asking friends if their room can be cleaned and used as a clutter-free zone — aka: people's belongings are not allowed to be there! Are you getting ready at your venue? Perhaps there is a



*We made sure to ask  
for a corner room at the  
hotel so we could have  
more natural light.*





whole separate room where the dress can be photographed free of clutter. In both of these options, light is something to take note of as well. I typically like to be able to shoot in a room with all of the lights off, so this means lots of good natural light. Mixed light of any kind (natural light + lamps + overhead lights) tend to lead to odd skin tones.

*Scheduling tip:* The hair and makeup artist are usually ALWAYS running late. That said, I would start my getting ready coverage once the hair

and makeup are done. If you purchased the Gold Package or an extra hour for flat lay details, I would start my coverage about 30 minutes to one-hour before the hair and make up are supposed to be finished.





# FIRST LOOKS



*A time for just the two of you. Intimate, sacred, with no distractions.*

First looks have easily become one of the most beneficial “modern” additions to a wedding day. Tradition has it that typically a bride & groom would see each other as they walked down the aisle, however nowadays, seeing one another BEFORE the ceremony has become fairly popular. I often tell people that if they want the work they see in my portfolio, I need time, and a good amount of it. A first look can impact this greatly. Not convinced? Here are a few more points why I love them:

- 1) On average, you get to spend about 4-5 hours MORE with your significant other on your wedding day.
- 2) First looks are almost always more emotional and meaningful than seeing each other down the aisle (afraid you’ll miss that “epic moment” down the aisle? I’d say 99% of my couples STILL got choked up walking down the aisle even though they saw one another prior...music & having people present changes everything!)
- 3) They allow you to enjoy time with your friends during cocktail hour because we aren’t scrambling for photos. Bring on the apps and drinks and go mingle!
- 4) We aren’t rushed to do your portraits, family portraits, AND bridal party during cocktail hour. Not being rushed allows me to do my best, most creative work.
- 5) You’d likely not need to add more time to your already packed schedule to accommodate more portrait time in the evening.

In all, I won’t force any of my couples to do a first look, but I often encourage it for many other reasons besides just getting “more portraits”. It really does make things run very smoothly and I’d be sad if you didn’t at least consider it. :)





*More real moments for  
your special day.*



## P O R T R A I T S

*This is the part where we just have a grand ol’ time.*

I love being involved in planning out a wedding day schedule. Not meaning I overpower all other vendors and needs, but getting a great variety of photographs requires shooting in different parts of the day with different light. Your portraits will be the ones you hang on your walls, the ones you show your grandchildren, and the ones your parents will hold as keepsakes forever.

During our “sunset hour” portraits, it usually last between 20-40min and we would try to do it about one-hour to 30 minutes before sunset. Here, my goal is to not only capture beautiful pictures and moments, but to allow you both to breathe and take it all in as a married couple away from your family and guests! There is a high chance that we’ve done an engagement session together and if so, the poses and direction will be very familiar ;) If I have not shot at your wedding venue yet, I will do research beforehand and check where the hot spots are + ask the venue coordinator to show me where the common photo locations are.



### *Bride & Groom*

On the wedding day, everything moves FAST. When working with me on your big day, I have a calm demeanor but at the same time, I take the timeline very seriously. I find a nice balance between not stressing my couples out with the timeline, but at the same time, getting those important, beautiful shots! If things are running super behind, I tell my couples the gameplan and any expectations before we execute.

When it comes to working with me on the portraits, I treat it like an engagement session. I am very big on finding multiple locations within the timeframe/vicinity with the best light! When it comes to posing, I'm not worried at all! My couples trust me with what I think looks amazing and I point out to my couples what looks best for the camera :)









## Wedding Party

If you have a bridal party, please read this! If not, feel free to skip.

For big group shots, I keep them to a minimum. If you're doing a first look, I'll start with the full bridal party photos right after. Then, I'll break the group into each side of the bridal party. Since these shots happen right after the first look, I'll need everyone—including flower girls and ring bearers—ready to go.

Bridal party and family photos can sometimes feel stressful, but having everything organized will make the process smooth and easy for everyone!

Group photos typically take about 30–45 minutes. To keep things easy for everyone, I prefer to do them on location. Traveling elsewhere can add unnecessary delays to the timeline. If your venue has limited space, I'll find the closest and most convenient spot for group photos.



### Family Photos

Formal family portraits are the most straightforward part of the day. We'll capture a variety of combinations for each side of the family, along with a few shots of both families together. This process can feel long, tedious, and even overwhelming for some couples, which is why it's the one part of the day where I require a shot list.

I also ask that a family member from each side helps call out names to keep things moving smoothly. If there's no shot list, I typically start with a large group photo, then break it down—each side of the couple, then immediate family, then parents—before repeating the process for the other side.

This portion usually takes 25 minutes to an hour, depending on family size. Also, not all extended family members need to be in these shots. If you'd like a photo with a cousin or someone important, we can always grab that after the ceremony, during cocktail hour, or later in the evening!







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*Wedding Tip: Bring some drinks and snacks for your family and wedding party before their group formals! It's hard to smile when your mind is focused on food ;)*

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# CEREMONY & RECEPTION

*Lighting & locations DURING the wedding : the part of the day I feel like is talked about the least! Granted I know I can't control ALL situations for my clients, but there are things that you can do to set me up for success (and make an impact on your final images) no matter the venue.*

Prior to each wedding I shoot, if I have not shot at your venue yet, I always location scout at or near the venue and make some suggestions for you for portraits, bridal party, & family. However, if you have a special place in mind, let me know before your day so I can take a look to see if it will be a good fit during different types of weather, light, AND if it will work into our timeline. For DURING the wedding (ceremony & reception) there are a few questions worth asking before you make any final decisions that will vastly improve the quality of your images and how they feel.

If you're holding an outdoor ceremony, there are a few things to consider:

- What will lighting be like during the time of your ceremony? Will you both be in direct sunlight? Only one of you in the shade? Maybe before the wedding you can take a look at what the light is like OR research some imagery to see what to expect. Perhaps it means moving you both into the shade or tilting the ceremony set-up slightly so you're not both squinting into the sun.
- Will there be anything above you or behind you? A gazebo, an arch, standing on a stage? Sometimes these things will play a part in what to expect with your images and if they are casting shadows or not.
- Is there enough space for me to walk around the perimeter of the ceremony space? If so, this will allow for a lot more variety in your final images (i.e. images of your parents, bridal party, etc.)







If you're holding an indoor ceremony:

- What will the available lighting be? Is there any natural light or is it all ambient/artificial light? If it's all artificial light, perhaps we can improve this with adding hanging lights, candles or spot lights.
- If you're getting married in a church, what are the photography restrictions? Some churches don't allow photographers past the last pew and to never "cross the aisle".
- Does your venue/church allow flash photography?

Reception spaces are important too:

- What lighting are you providing during dinner? Hanging lights? Candles? All of these impact mood AND photos because they change the temperature in which I'm adjusting my white balance. Candlelight & hanging lights usually allow skin tones to feel warmer, whereas
- Where is the head table and what is behind you? i.e. is it a full set of speakers, a catering table or is it a nice clean background? I'd suggest

double checking this just to see what will be IN the majority of your images.

- When people stand for speeches, will they be near you or standing at their seat? I prefer near you so I can get reactions of the both of you!
- Will the DJ be using any kind of uplighting or directional light during dances? If so, I'd love to be connected with him or her to discuss options! No one likes spotted skin. :)

I will say, don't let this section stress you out. Just share some details with me (especially if I haven't shot in this particular location before). It will help me feel prepared and earn you great images in return.





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*My lighting preferences: Natural, indirect light. Shaded but well lit. Backlit greens. Golden hour sun. Direct but diffused sunlight. Off-camera reception flash. Direct flash on the dancefloor.*

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## TIPS & TRICKS

*So, you can probably now see how much thought goes into your wedding day coverage. It's a BIG day. It's also a really long day with a lot of people vying for your attention, for pictures, walk over here, over there. Of all the weddings I've shot, there are a few other random tips and tricks throughout your wedding day that not only improve your photography, but that will allow you to enjoy it that much more :)*

### The Wedding Day Coordinator

If you're having a wedding of more than 50 people, consider hiring a planner or at least a day-of coordinator that is not related to the wedding in any way (not also a guest or friend). He/she will be able to curb all questions and concerns so you can spend time "floating" through your wedding day and not trying to figure out how you ended up six place-settings short or how the DJ needs an extension cord or who should be getting ice for the white wine to start chilling. While friends/guests seem like a great idea, they too like to mingle, have a few drinks and enjoy themselves. Having a dedicated person whose

job it is to help make your day run smoothly not only saves your sanity, but it makes my job easier so I won't have to be the one running around trying to figure out when guests will be seated for dinner so I can set up my lighting.

### Unplugged Wedding

Consider asking guests to put away their cell phones, iPads, cameras and electronics during the ceremony. I've had so many almost-amazing moments ruined by large iPads or iPhones being held up in the aisle way. Without all those distractions, your guests will be able to focus solely on the two of you, and the reason they're there. Instagram can wait.



### Starting Your Day

Your wedding day can be a hectic one — consider starting your day with a dedicated breakfast/ time with your spouse or completely alone. It's the most peaceful/fun way to calm your nerves and start your day!

### Hair & Make-Up

Hair and makeup artists often run behind schedule, and my team begins coverage once you're finished with hair and makeup. To keep everything running smoothly, I recommend planning for at least a 30-minute buffer between your scheduled hair and makeup completion time and our arrival.

### Snacks & Water

Have an abundance of snacks and water available with you and the bridal party throughout the day! My couples usually skip lunch (due to how quick everything moves) so having snacks after the ceremony will keep you afloat up until cocktail hour and then dinner!



Write Out Your Vows Prior to the Wedding Day

You’ve probably heard this so many times, but it is SO true- the wedding day moves FAST. Be present with your family and friends at the beginning of the day without having to rush through writting your vows. But more specifically, you won’t be stressed on your big day!

Rain

If it rains, we will have a plan B. For portraits, my couples and I will always have plan to either shoot inside or under an overhang. In some situations, we also opt into a fun, umbrella shoot!

Set Aside Alone Time

Your wedding day will be a whirlwind—in the most exciting way possible! But I truly believe in slowing down and soaking in the moment whenever possible. After the ceremony, I make it a priority to carve out time for just the two of you, even if it’s only for five minutes. This part always gets me emotional because it’s such a special moment—just you and your partner, away from the excitement, taking it all in together before the celebration continues.

And Most Importantly

Every once in a while, STOP and look around. Take a mental snap shot of what is going on. Breathe in, breathe out. You’re getting married! Soak it all in!





## VENDORS WE LOVE

*A few of our favorite people & businesses in the industry. All of these individuals I have either personally worked with and/or admire their work and process. I'm always updating this so if you have a personal experience with someone, I'd love to hear it!*

\*You can use Adobe Acrobats feature to actually link websites here if you don't want to type them out!



### WEDDING PLANNERS

One Sweet Soriee: Tawny,  
[onesweetsoiree.com](https://onesweetsoiree.com)

All the Deets: Alyssa,  
[Allthedeets.me](https://allthedeets.me)

Kadenjamesevents: Chessie,  
[Kadenjamesevents.com](https://kadenjamesevents.com)

### VIDEOGRAPHY

Coldstudio: [@coldstudio.co](https://@coldstudio.co)

Fylm Media: [Fylmweddings.com](https://Fylmweddings.com)

### FLORISTS

Diosa Blooms: [Diosablooms.com](https://Diosablooms.com)

H&J Florals: [HandJflowers.com](https://HandJflowers.com)

### MAKE-UP ARTISTS & HAIR

Vivian PYT: [Vivianpyt.com](https://Vivianpyt.com)

Nubian Beauty: [@nubianbeautyonline](https://@nubianbeautyonline)

Lou Lou Magsaysay: [Styleseat.com](https://Styleseat.com)

### DJS

DJ George: [@Dj\\_George650](https://@Dj_George650)

Dj Eternal: [Thecrowduplifter.com](https://Thecrowduplifter.com)

### CATERERS

Carrie Dove Catering: [Carriedovecatering.com](https://Carriedovecatering.com)

Global Gourmet Catering: [GGcatering.com](https://GGcatering.com)

Midsummer Kitchen: [Midsummerkitchen.com](https://Midsummerkitchen.com)

### RENTALS

Chairs 4 Events: [Chairs4events.com](https://Chairs4events.com)

Abbey Party Rents: [Abbeyentssf.com](https://Abbeyentssf.com)

Francis Lane: [Francislane.com](https://Francislane.com)

### OFFICIANTS

Bing: [gobinggo.info](https://gobinggo.info)

### DRESS SHOPS

Papers & Petals: [Papersandpetals.com](https://Papersandpetals.com)

A&Be Bridal: [Aandbebridalshop.com](https://Aandbebridalshop.com)

Flares Bridal: [Flaresbridal.com](https://Flaresbridal.com)

### INVITATIONS & DESIGN:

Hyegraph: [Hyegraph.com](https://Hyegraph.com)

Handlettering by Britt: [@handletteringbybritt](https://@handletteringbybritt)

Lucky Orchid Designs: [Luckyorchiddesigns.com](https://Luckyorchiddesigns.com)





# THANK YOU KINDLY—

Congratulations for finishing up that entire guide. I know it’s a lot of information to take in, but it really allows me to do my best work when my client and I are on the same page.

A quick thank you note will go here. This thank you doesn’t have to be super formal, just be honest. Tell them this isn’t a rulebook but something they hope they can take to heart because you pour so much of yourself into a wedding day.

Cheers!