

WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY CHECKLIST

VERY IMPORTANT: The photo list is every photographer's guide, but it can also be their nightmare. Lists can assist your photographer to do their jobs in some areas of your day, but they can also hamper the creativity of your photographer. **The information below is just a guideline.** It is not set in gold. In most cases, the lists below will only assist traditional photographers. You may even have a photographer that supplies you with one themselves. You also may have a photographer that won't work from one. The best advice we can give you is to let your professional guide you when it comes to what information they will need from you. And if you're still not sure, don't be afraid to ask!

So as we mentioned above, the details of the list will change depending on what type of photographer you choose, i.e. documentary, creative and/or traditional. So please use this list as more of a guide. We've designed it so that you can copy and paste it ... and then edit it to suit your needs.

Some tips to keep in mind before we start the list:

- Let your photographer know about your family structure, i.e. divorces, deaths and family feuds!!
- Keep your list short for photojournalistic style photographers, you're hiring them to document your day as it flows
- The extended family shot list is very important, especially if you have a number of shots with relatives other than your immediate family.
- For every photo you add to your list, you must add approximately 2 minutes of shooting time. So if you're trying to figure your family photos into your timeline, the length of your list will be your guide on timing.

Now let's deal with very important players besides yourselves that are part of your event. It is very important to make a VIP list. You want your photographer to get familiar with the family members and wedding party members, as quickly as possible, so separating and identifying them on a list will help. It's also beneficial for the photographer to know how many people they are going to have to deal with during the shooting time.

VIP LIST

Copy and paste the following into a document, fill in the names of the players, add and delete as necessary.

Bride's Side:

Mother of the Bride
Father of the Bride
Stepmother
Stepfather
Maternal Grandmother
Maternal Grandfather
Sisters
Brothers
Stepsisters
Stepbrothers

Groom's Side:

Mother of the Groom
Father of the Groom
Stepmother
Stepfather
Maternal Grandmother
Maternal Grandfather
Sisters
Brothers
Stepsisters

Stepbrothers

Bridal Party:

Maid of Honour
Bridesmaids
Flower Girl
Best Man
Groomsmen
Ring Bearer

Okay, now let's talk about the standard shots for your big day. We've broken them down by each separate event for the day. **Keep in mind again, that your photographer may be the type that really shouldn't work from such a detailed list, so you may want to edit considerably, or not use this at all.** However, if you are hiring a student photographer and/or a friend of the family, this list will be gold to you!!

Pre-Ceremony Shoot with Groom

These shots can be taken at the 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. This is sometimes a good time to get a number of the family photos out of the way so that they don't cut into your photo shoot timing after the ceremony.

FB Tip: If you know that time is rushed and/or you want to save time from your photographer's schedule, then skip this part of the day and move to the bride's house first.

Copy and paste the following into a document and edit to suit your needs:

- Closeups and Full Length - Alone
- With your mother
- With your father
- With both your parents
- With other family members
- With the bestman
- With the groomsmen
- With ring bearer
- Checking your tie and/or finishing up
- Getting ready candid
- Groom's Details, i.e. boutonniere, tuxes hanging, bottle of cologne, card/gift from bride, etc.

Pre-Ceremony Shoot with Bride

These shots can be taken at the bride's house while she's getting ready. Again, this is a good time to take some of the family photos to save time later.

FB Tip: If you are rushed and/or want to eliminate time from your photographer's schedule, have a family member take these photos and have the photographer scheduled to start at the ceremony.

Copy and paste the following into a document and edit to suit your needs:

- Closeups and Full Length - Alone
- With your mother
- With your father
- With both your parents

- With other family members
- With Maid/Matron of Honor
- With bridesmaids
- With flower girl
- Putting on the finishing touches
- Adjusting garter
- Bride's Details, i.e. the dress, the shoes, the bouquets, makeup, jewellery, card/gift from the groom, etc.

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.

FB Tip: Other than a group shot with all of your guests, taking family or wedding party photos at the church is not necessarily a good idea. It is difficult to separate you from your guests and a lot of religious venues have more than one event planned per day.

Copy and paste the following into a document and edit to suit your needs:

- Ushers seating guests and mothers
- Bride's Arrival
- Processional
- Bride being walked down the aisle
- Groom waiting at the alter
- Bride being given away
- Wedding Party members at the alter
- Kneeling at the alter
- Exchanging rings
- Exchanging vows
- Lighting unity candles
- Exchanging kiss
- Signing marriage license
- With officiant
- Recessional
- In front of the church after ceremony
- Candids outside with guests
- Guests outside and inside the church. Some brides have elected to have shots done of all of the people attending the church ceremony.
- Couple leaving in limo

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. You can consult with your photographer on where an appropriate place may be. Be sure to inform all individuals that are required for your photos. Exchanging cell phone numbers with the photographer is beneficial in case there is a misunderstanding regarding where to meet.

FB Tip: 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!

Copy and paste the following into a document and edit it to suit your needs:

- Bride Alone
- Groom Alone
- Bride & Groom together - various locations
- Bride with attendants
- Groom with attendants
- Bride with "the guys"
- Groom with "the girls"
- Bride with each attendant individually
- Groom with each attendant individually
- Entire Wedding Party
- Hands with wedding rings
- With children from wedding party
- With best man and maid of honour

Reception Photos

This list covers all of the standard happenings at a reception. If you have any special events scheduled that you think the photographer should know about, be sure to be specific and add them. It also doesn't hurt to provide your videographer with a list of the scheduled events for the reception. Any extended group shots, other than immediate family should probably be scheduled into this part of the day.

FB Tip: If you have hired a videographer, then this is the time for them to shine. You might want to think about not having the photographer stay for the reception.

Copy and paste the following into a document and edit it to suit your needs:

- Talking with guests at reception - receiving line
- First dance
- Cutting the cake
- Toasting
- With special guests
- Dancing and candid photos at the reception
- Wedding Cake before cutting
- Food or dessert tables
- Organist and/or soloists
- Musicians

- Any decorations that you have spent a lot of time and energy putting together.
- Candid photos of everyone at the reception
- Photo of the invitation with bouquets, toasting glasses and table centerpieces

That basically covers all of the aspects of your day in a very specific manner. Again, you may have a photographer that is very free flowing and photojournalistic ... a list like this could be very restrictive for them, so please keep that in mind.

Next we are going to setup a 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

The last part of your list may be to include any friends and extended relatives that you want photos with. Be specific with your groups. The photographer needs to know, for timing purposes, exactly what the sizes of the groups will be to coordinate it quickly and efficiently.

I think we've covered everything. Good luck with your list ... **the last thing we want to say is** ... you've hired a professional, and although we've provided you with a very comprehensive list, always check with your photographer on what they require and how they prefer to proceed with your day. They will appreciate you putting your faith in them!!