

CEREMONY PLANNING GUIDE

TIPS AND RESOURCES FOR
PLANNING YOUR WEDDING
CEREMONY

PART 2 OF OUR PLANNING GUIDE

**WWW.THE
530BRIDE.COM**

WEDDING CEREMONY

CHECKLIST

12 + Months

- ☐ Set a wedding date and choose a location
- ☐ Discuss and decide on general ceremony preferences (civil, religious preference, etc.)
- ☐ For outdoor ceremonies, determine a contingency plan for inclement weather

8 + Months

- ☐ Research officiant options in your area & meet with potential officiants
- ☐ Confirm your officiant and add payment details to your budget tracker

4-5 Months

- ☐ Discuss ceremony personalization / preferences with your officiant and select any ceremony readings
- ☐ Prepare marriage license application & any required paperwork.
- ☐ Begin making a list of ceremony music including prelude, processional and recessional music
- ☐ Confirm ceremony rehearsal time & location with your ceremony venue and officiant. Add the ceremony rehearsal time to your Timeline.
- ☐ Meet with your wedding planner and/or florist to discuss ceremony arrangements if desired

2-3 Months

- ☐ Select readers for the ceremony, if desired and share with them appropriate information.
- ☐ Review and decide on processional & recessional order and details.
- ☐ Begin writing your own vows, if desired.

3-4 Weeks

- ☐ Determine the ceremony standing order for the bridal party.
- ☐ Finalize ceremony programs & finish writing your ceremony vows (if applicable.)
- ☐ Obtain a marriage license.
- ☐ Reconfirm and share all final details with your wedding planner and officiant, including your final ceremony outline, processional and recessional details, final reading selections and any personalized additions.

1 Week

- ☐ Pack your marriage license to bring to rehearsal and give to your wedding planner, officiant or keep in safe place
- ☐ If you wrote your own vows, provide a copy to the officiant

Ceremony Stats



The average length of a non-denominational wedding ceremony is 12-18 minutes depending on the size of your wedding party and any special readings or traditions; while religious ceremonies range from 1-3 hours including communion or other cultural traditions



62% of weddings have a flower girl. and
56% have a ring bearer.
- *Assoc. of Bridal Consultants*



In a 2011 study of American weddings, Brides magazine found that nearly 5 percent of brides included a pet in the wedding party, and its editors estimated that nearly double that amount had pets present during the ceremony and/or reception



Of 984 Northern, CA couples surveyed, the average cost of a ceremony officiant was \$233 - 2015 Wedding Report

Though you certainly don't have to, 65% of surveyed brides wore a veil during their wedding ceremony - *weddingideasmag.com*





Tips for planning your ceremony and mistakes to avoid

DO HAVE A QUALITY SOUND SYSTEM FOR YOUR CEREMONY

You've planned a beautiful wedding ceremony with meaningful vows and special readings, make sure that your guests can hear you. Choose a DJ who offers ceremony and reception packages, preferably a DJ who provides a lapel mic for the officiant at a minimum.

DO RESERVE AT LEAST THE FIRST ROW ON BOTH SIDES OF THE AISLE FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY

Reserve the first and second rows on both sides of the aisle depending on the size of your immediate family (those who are being ushered or who you would like to make sure have a close seat.)

Don't underestimate the importance of your officiant

Have an in-person or Skype consultation with your officiant to ensure that you all connect. This also gives you a chance to hear them speak and to get a sense of how their typical ceremony is structured.

Even if you are choosing a friend or acquaintance make sure to go over your ceremony order in writing, and specifically ask for a script or provide one.



Photos by Daffodilhil Photography

DO LIST THE ACTUAL CEREMONY START TIME ON YOUR INVITATION

While there are some cases where there ceremony has started a few minutes later than planned, there is certainly no reason to expect your guests to be a half hour early for your ceremony. More often than not, guests arrive early. After they have signed the guest book there is not a lot do while waiting to be seated (especially in the heat.)



Photo by Katelyn Owens Photography

DO PROVIDE A BRIEF TIMELINE FOR YOUR WEDDING PARTY AND IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS

By creating a timeline ahead of time you can give them a heads up if they are needed prior to the ceremony or directly following the ceremony for photos. Ask your officiant or your DJ to instruct the wedding party and/or family to stay in the ceremony area for family shots. This will help your photographer get through the shot list without having to chase down your uncle Joe in line at the appetizer table!

DON'T SERVE ALCOHOL BEFORE THE CEREMONY

We do everything we can to make sure your ceremony starts on time. If guests arrive and the bar is open, chances are everyone will mingle around the bar area instead of finding their seats.

DO CONSIDER AN UNPLUGGED CEREMONY

We have all seen the ceremony photos where looking down the aisle all you see are guests with their cell phones out. It sort of takes away from the ceremony because everyone is focused on their devices rather than listening to the vows and experiencing the ceremony with you.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ADD YOUR PERSONALITY TO YOUR CEREMONY!

Tell your love story, be personal in your vows, honor your unique relationship by adding unique elements to your ceremony .



Photo by Katelyn Owens Photography

Basic Ceremony Outline

No two weddings are the same, a ceremony is unique to you as a couple. Some choose to incorporate their religion or beliefs while others choose to keep it short and sweet without a reference to a specific religion or belief.

The following is a very straightforward sample outline:

We are gathered here today to celebrate one of life's greatest moments, the joining of two hearts and to give recognition to the worth and beauty of love, and to add our best wishes to the words which shall unite this couple in marriage.

Should there be anyone who has cause why this couple should not be united in marriage, Shush!!

Who Gives this Woman/Man today to be married (optional)

Today we have come together to witness the joining of these two lives. For them, out of the routine of ordinary life, the extraordinary has happened. They met each other, fell in love and are finalizing it with their wedding. A good marriage must be created. It is never being too old to hold hands. It's remembering to say I love you every day and it is not just marrying the right person its being the right partner.

Vows

I, GROOM/BRIDE take you GROOM/BRIDE to be my husband/wife, my partner in life and my one true love. I will cherish our friendship and love you today, tomorrow, and forever.

I, GROOM/BRIDE take you GROOM/BRIDE to be my husband/wife, my partner in life and my one true love. I will cherish our friendship and love you today, tomorrow, and forever.

Basic Ceremony Sample

CONTINUED

I Do's

GROOM/BRIDE do you take GROOM/BRIDE to be your HUSBAND/WIFE? ("I do") Do you promise to love, honor, cherish and protect him/her, forsaking all others and holding only unto him/her? ("I do")

GROOM/BRIDE do you take GROOM/BRIDE to be your HUSBAND/WIFE? ("I do") Do you promise to love, honor, cherish and protect him/her, forsaking all others and holding only unto him/her? ("I do")

Rings

Wedding rings are an unbroken circle of love, signifying to all the union of this couple in marriage."

GROOM/BRIDE, This ring is my sacred gift, with my promise that I will always love you, cherish you and honor you all the days of my life. And with this ring, I thee wed.

GROOM/BRIDE, This ring is my sacred gift, with my promise that I will always love you, cherish you and honor you all the days of my life. And with this ring, I thee wed.

By the power vested in me I now pronounce you

You may kiss your GROOM/BRIDE.

I present to you our happy couple

Blessing/Exchanging of the Rings

The wedding ring is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual bond which unites two loyal hearts in endless love. It is a seal of the vows _____ and _____ have made to one another. Bless O God these rings, that _____ and _____, who give them, and who wear them, may ever abide in thy peace. Living together in unity, love and happiness for the rest of their lives

Lord, please bless these rings that Bride and Groom are about to exchange. May these rings forever remind them of their covenant with one another, as well as the circle of love they have publicly created here today. May their compassion and kindness for one another always be like these rings, with no beginning and no end. May the precious metal remind them of their precious commitment, and if either begins to tarnish, may they joyfully undertake the sacred duty to make it shine brightly again. May their relationship always be like these rings, separate but close, simple but beautiful. May these rings always belong to their hands, and their love always belong in each other's hearts. Amen

Simple Vows

"With this ring, I pledge my love and faithfulness to you, today, tomorrow and always. As this ring has no end, neither shall my love for you."

_____, I give you this ring as a symbol of our vows, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, With this ring, I thee wed.

MORE CEREMONY RESOURCES & TIPS

No need to reinvent the wheel, we've grabbed some helpful links for you to check out as you plan your ceremony

Sample Ceremony Scripts/Vows

- <http://apracticalwedding.com/wedding-ceremony-scripts/>
- <https://www.theknot.com/content/secular-nondenominational-wedding-ceremony-scripts>
- <http://offbeatbride.com/tag/ceremony-script/>
- <https://www.myweddingvows.com/traditional-wedding-vows>
- <https://www.theknot.com/content/gay-wedding-ceremony-scripts>

Ceremony Play Lists

- <http://bridalguide.com/blogs/bridal-buzz/music-monday-wedding-processional-songs>
- <http://apracticalwedding.com/wedding-ceremony-playlist-ideas/>

Etiquette & Traditions

- <https://www.everafterguide.com/wedding-procession-order.html>
- <http://www.marthastewartweddings.com/334371/wedding-processional-order#264731>
- <https://www.insideweddings.com/news/planning-design/how-to-order-wedding-processionals-for-nontraditional-families/3239/>



**Need a Referral?
Contact Us Today!**

*Happy
Planning!*

The 530 Bride

Ceremony Worksheet

Groom's name:

Bride's name:

Wedding date:

Final guest count:

Ceremony Processional

Reserved Seating:

Escorted Family:

Wedding Party:

Ceremony start time:

Estimated length:

Officiant:

Addressed/Special Readings:

Who has marriage license at the end of the night:

Set-up/Music Selections:

Number of chairs:

Rows:

Chairs/row:

Block off:

Rows:

Aisle?

Welcome table:

Gift table:

Aisle décor:

Altar décor:

Ceremony set-up time:

Music/DJ set-up time:

Ceremony Music Selections

Tip: You don't have to recreate the wheel. Ask your DJ for a recommended song list and then remove anything you don't like and add songs that are personal to you. For prelude or cocktail hour music you can simply list the genre you prefer and some of your favorites and your DJ can take it from there!

Pre ceremony:

Family processional:

Wedding party processional:

Bride processional:

Recessional:



THE 530 BRIDE

We help couples plan their wedding without going crazy in the process, it doesn't have to be scary or stressful we promise! Our team works together to create an individualized and personable experience for our clients while coordinating and planning beautiful weddings that guests will really enjoy being a part of.

MORE
QUESTIONS?

(530) 988-8344

CONNECT WITH US!



WWW.THE530BRIDE.COM

