

The Wedding Timeline Guide



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Welcome
2. Why you need a timeline
3. How much time do you need?
4. Things to consider
5. Planning Prompts
6. Sample Timeline
7. Tips
8. Thank You







NICE TO MEET YOU

Hey! I'm Ashlynn, a wedding and elopement photographer based in East Tennessee and Northern California. I'm thrilled that you have found your way to this freebie! Planning a wedding requires a lot of resources and sometimes those resources are your vendors. My goal is to help guide you through wedding planning and provide you with the best experience possible.

Your day should be spent having fun -- not worrying about every little detail. You deserve a stress free day! A well planned out timeline is a great way to ensure that happens. I hope this guide can help you create the perfect schedule for your dream wedding.

WHY DO YOU NEED A TIMELINE?


A timeline is one of the most important parts of your day. It will keep the day organized and ensure everything happens when it's supposed to. No one will be left trying to figure where to be and what to be doing. Additionally, a solid timeline allows you and all your vendors to be on the same page. A good timeline will help allivate stress off of you and your spouse allowing you to focus on what's important. I've learned the more organized and detailed the timeline is, the better the day flows.





HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU NEED?

I've shot many weddings and after a while, you start to learn how long things usually take. Here is the MINIMUM amount of time I would recommend for different parts of your wedding day. Keep in mind every wedding is different and you may need more / less time for each part of your day.



Details : 30 mins

Getting Ready: 1 hr

First Look : 30 mins

Ceremony : 30 mins - 1hr

Wedding Party Photos : 30 mins - 1 hr

Family Portraits : 1 hr

Reception : 2 - 4 hrs

Sunset Portraits : 30 mins



THINGS TO CONSIDER

Buffer Time

Make sure you factor in plenty of buffer time. The last thing you want on your special day is to be feeling rushed and stressed. Let's face it, things often run behind before the ceremony so that is where I recommend having the most buffer time.

Travel

Are you getting ready at a different location than the ceremony? Is the reception at a separate location? Are you going to a different place for couple photos? Be sure to factor in travel + traffic times. Pro tip : If your wedding requires travel throughout the day, consider coordinating the drive for your bridal party. This could be either designating someone to car pull everyone or getting a party bus / limo to travel with.

First Look

Consider a first look so you can do your bridal party photos before the ceremony. Doing this will elevate the need to round everyone back together after the ceremony.

Priorities

Figure out what you prioritize most. Is it family photos? Is it fun dance photos? Is it couple photos at sunset? Once you have decided what means the most to you, make sure to give that a little extra time. For example, if sunset photos are really important to you, consider allowing up to 45 minutes instead of 30 minutes.

Wedding Size

Consider your guest list and how big your bridal party is. The more people the more time needed. Same goes for how many people you want photographed for the family portraits.



A romantic photograph of a couple holding hands in a field at sunset. The man is wearing a grey sweater and the woman is wearing a white lace dress. The background shows a soft, hazy landscape with mountains in the distance.

PLANNING PROMPTS

Use these prompts to help guide you and your partner create a timeline.

1. Is everything happening all in one place?
2. Will you need to travel at any point of the day? If so, is travel accommodated for bridal party?
3. How long will it take you to get ready?
4. What time is the hair & makeup artist scheduled to start?
5. What time does your ceremony start?
6. How long will your ceremony be?
7. Are you doing a first look?
8. Are you doing a first look with bridal party or parents?
9. How large is your bridal party?
10. How many people do you want to photograph for your family portraits?
11. Do you want to take your wedding portraits at a specific time? (Sunset)
12. What time does the sunset?
13. Will there be toast? How many toast?
14. How much time are your vendors covered for?
15. What time does the reception start?
16. Does your venue have a set stop time or no noise hours?
17. Are you doing a first dance with parents?
18. Are you doing cake cutting, garter toss or bouquet toss?
19. Do you want a group photo of everyone at your wedding?
20. Are you doing a grand exit?

MY TOP TIPS

- Hire a wedding planner or assign someone with the tasks of making sure things go according to the timeline.
- Assign a family member to help with family portraits. They will know who everyone is and will make it easier for your photographer to capture everyone in a timely manner.
- Make sure to communicate with your bridal party and family when their portraits will be taken and where. Communication goes a long way!
- If you have a larger guest count and / or bridal party, invest in more hours of coverage.
- Plan your timeline with your photographer. They will have tons of tips on when is best to do things based on lighting.
- Most importantly don't stress if things don't go 100% according to plan







SAMPLE TIMELINE

This sample timeline is a REAL timeline that one of my wedding clients used for their wedding. This timeline is based off my most popular coverage option of 8 hours. However, each day is unique and coverage is based off of your needs and wants!

2:00 DETAIL SHOTS
1:30 BRIDE GETTING READY
2:00 GROOM GETTING READY
2:30 FIRST LOOK
3:00 BRIDAL PARTY PHOTOS
4:00 CEREMONY
4:30 FAMILY PHOTOS
4:30 COCKTAIL HOUR
5:30 ENTRANCE INTO RECEPTION
6:00 DINNER BEGINS
6:30 TOASTS
7:30 FIRST DANCE
7:45 DANCE FLOOR OPENS
8:00 COUPLES' SUNSET PHOTOS
9:00 BOUQUET & GARTER TOSS
9:00 DANCE PARTY PHOTOS
10:00 CAKE CUTTING



Thank you!

Thank you so much for download this guide. I really hope that this helped you with your timeline planning. This job means the world to me - and my couples are what make it happen. So thank you, from the bottom of my heart. Don't forget - I'm here for whatever you need, whether that be help with your timeline, help deciding on a dress, or questions about the booking process. My job goes beyond clicking the button of my camera - I'm here to make sure you have the best wedding day possible.



Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is anything else I can do to assist you beyond this guide!



ashlynnshelbyphotography@gmail.com



228 -234 - 4834



[@ashlynnshelbyphotography](https://www.instagram.com/ashlynnshelbyphotography)



ashlynnshelbphotography.com