



# WEDDING GUIDE

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# YOU'RE ABOUT TO TIE THE KNOT



LIVE IN ALL WAYS

LOVE IN ALL WAYS

This guide is packed with helpful tips that are aimed to assist you throughout the entire process of your wedding planning. My goal is to have you confidently walk into your wedding day knowing you're in good hands with me! Consider me your friend, right hand man, and confidant, because we'll be spending a lot of time together on your wedding day! Over the years, I've picked up a few tricks that will help me ensure that your images are simply stunning since you deserve nothing less. Allow me to give you the lowdown on what you may expect.







# SO WHERE DO YOU START?

## GET THE VISION FOR YOUR BIG DAY

It's your wedding day! You get to plan the wildest and most gorgeous celebration you can think of-the sky's the limit! Now that you have the opportunity to plan the wedding of your dreams, begin by keeping a journal dedicated only to your wedding vision. Make a note of every little detail you can think of so you have a quick reference and don't forget any of your brilliant ideas! Perhaps some fireworks and a spectacular entrance to get your guests' attention and leave them with lasting memories? What mood do you wish to convey? What do you want to feel and experience as the bride and groom on the most romantic day of your life?

## SET A WEDDING BUDGET

Now that you have a vision for your big day, you're already halfway there with your budget. Making a budget will assist you in keeping track of all of your costs and in seeing the bigger picture. Budgeting will also guide you in planning the remainder of your wedding as you determine what you want and don't want, where you want to spend and where you want to save a little money. This brings us to your must-haves: the things you will establish as your non-negotiables and will receive the majority of your budget so that you can bring your dream wedding into reality.





YOUR  
LOVE  
STORY  
TOLD



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# THE WEDDING TIMELINE

Create a detailed, hour-by-hour wedding day timeline to guarantee your wedding day runs smoothly. This will help you stay organized, stress-free, and on time. Share your wedding day timetable with your wedding party, wedding coordinator/planner, photographer, caterer, florist, and other vendors once you've completed it so that everyone is on the same page.

While most weddings follow the same format, the order in which these events occur may differ based on your preferences. It's not a one size fits all. Please feel free to talk to me about the specifics of your day and I can help you work it out!

To help you plan the perfect wedding timeline, here are some suggestions for how much time to give for each event, as well as a general order of events.

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## SAMPLE TIMELINE

10 hours of coverage with a first look

<b>12:00</b>	Getting ready and detail photos
<b>2:30</b>	First look, couple & wedding party photos
<b>3:30</b>	Ceremony
<b>3:30</b>	Family photos / cocktail hour
<b>4:30</b>	Grand entrance
<b>5:00</b>	Dinner begins
<b>6:00</b>	Speeches, first dance
<b>7:00</b>	First dances
<b>7:30</b>	Cake cutting & wedding games
<b>8:00</b>	Champagne pop to start the party
<b>11:00</b>	Midnight lunch

Note: Depending on the time of the year, we can plan a quick golden hour shoot for your couple photos.







A circular inset photograph showing a young man and woman in a field of tall grass and wildflowers. The man is wearing a white shirt and dark pants, and the woman is wearing a light green dress. They are sitting together, looking at each other. The background of the field is a soft, hazy blue sky.

# DETAIL SHOTS

Please gather all of your wedding details and photos have it available for me to shoot when I arrive. After greeting you, I'll begin taking detail photographs while your hair and makeup are being done. I suggest gathering these items in a box ahead of time.

Quick tip: If you want clutter-free images, designate a room or a section of the room as the bag area and keep the majority of your belongings there. Make sure this spot is not directly behind the main light source/large window of the room.



#### FOR THE BRIDE:

- Shoes
- The rings
- All other jewelry
- Headpieces
- Perfume
- Bouquet
- Garters/handkerchiefs
- Pretty Dress Hanger
- Wedding stationary with envelopes i.e. invitations, programs, thank you cards.

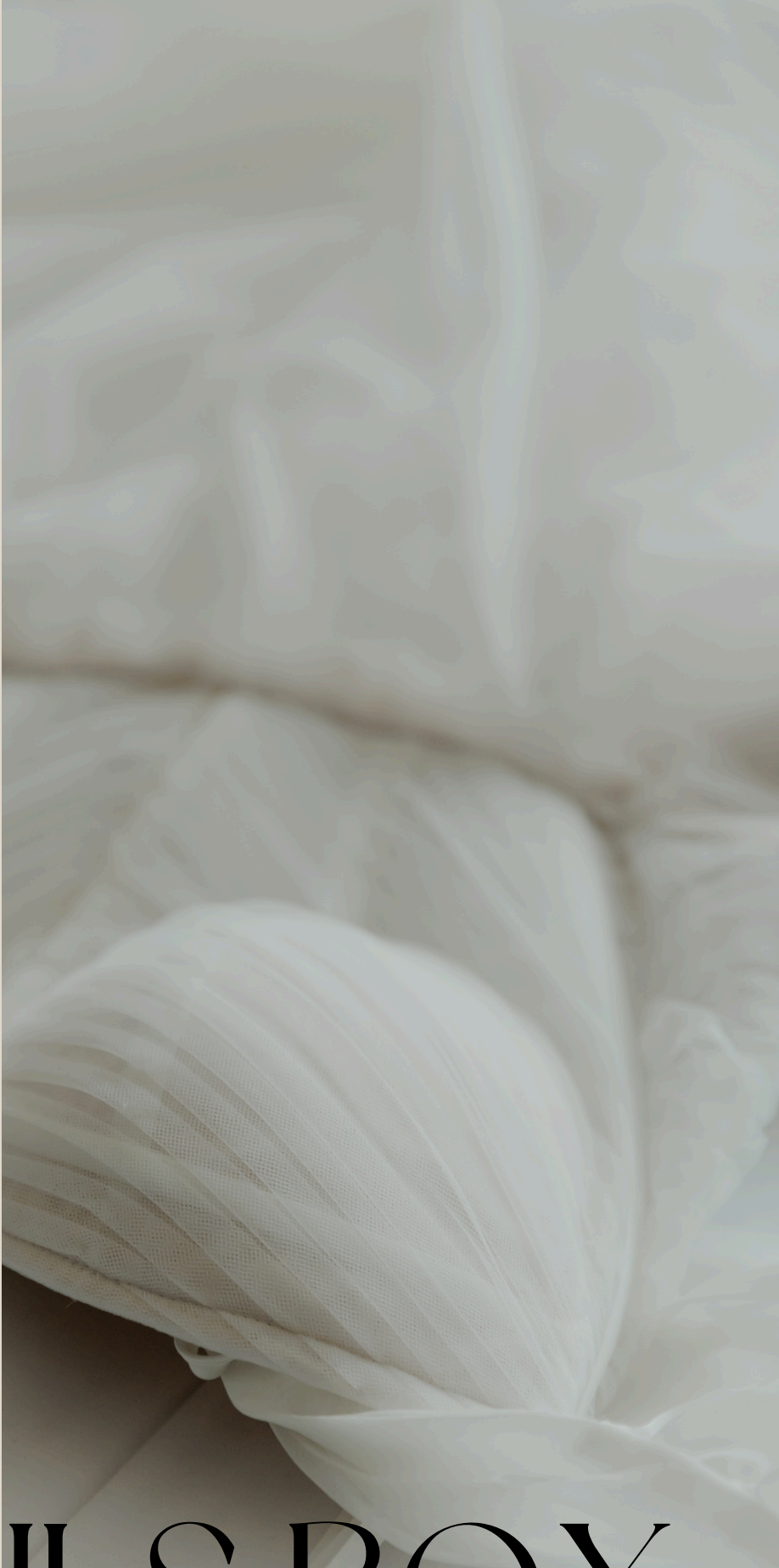
#### FOR THE GROOM:

- Shoes
- Pocket square / Tie / Bowtie
- Belt
- Socks (If patterned)
- Cologne
- Cufflinks
- Watch

#### OTHER:

- Vow Books
- Ring Box
- Any other special details

# DETAILS BOX







## GETTING READY

I'd like to capture your excitement and emotion while you prepare. Those priceless moments with your bridesmaids, mother, sister, or anyone else who is assisting you. These photographs usually end up being my favourites. There's something about the jitters leading up to the wedding, the small moments of "this is it," and the often booze-induced chuckles with your best friends.

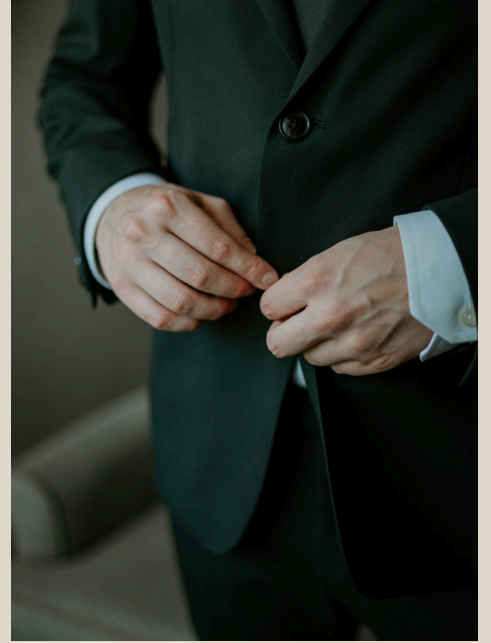
This part is primarily candid. However, I try to make sure everyone is generally ready before I start photographing them. You probably don't want a photo of yourself with half-done makeup or hair.

## WHAT TO WEAR

You'll want to ensure that you're getting ready in a way that you'd want to be captured on photos. It's absolutely up to you how you go about doing so. For some brides, having her bridal party wear matching outfits is the way to go. Others would think of it as giving everyone a customized shirt or robe to wear while getting their hair and makeup done. After all, you're not just making memories on your wedding day; you're also preserving them. By the time I enter the room, you should all be looking and feeling fantastic!



# THE



After your venue and ceremony area, the getting ready place is also a significant space. It's where you'll spend the morning with your wedding party getting ready, which we all know will be a space we will spend a lot of time in. When picking a location for getting ready, look for an open space with plenty of natural light. Consider renting out a lovely Airbnb or boutique hotel room if the space provided by your venue for getting ready does not seem to be a suitable fit.

# SPACE



# LIGHTING



## INDOOR LIGHTING

Au Natural baby! Choose a space that has big windows with lots of natural light coming through. This is important for indoor ceremony spaces and getting ready photos. Keep in mind, you will be placed in front of the largest, natural light source for your getting ready photos so, keep this space tidy and as wide open as possible.

## OUTDOOR LIGHTING

Choose a space/venue that has copious amount of fully covered shade. The goal here is to make sure the lighting on your faces is even and equal, we want to avoid some parts covered in shade while others are not.

This is important for outdoor ceremonies and outdoor photo locations between the hours of 11am-4pm. Now, if your heart is set on an outdoor ceremony spot that does not have any shade, I suggest setting up your ceremony so that the sun is behind or in front of the arch and not off to the right or left.

Just a reminder, we will location scout prior to your wedding day to make sure we get you the best lighting for your outdoor photos.



# LIGHTING CONT...



## RECEPTION VENUE

The reception venue, whether indoor or outdoor will most likely be shot using flash photography which means the lighting situation has more freedom but it is important to keep the mixed lighting to a minimum where possible. Keep your lighting choices to one specific lighting style, as much as possible here.

## HELPFUL HINT

When taking lighting into consideration it's best to snap a photo of yourself in the different lighting situations and see which lighting you like best. For example;

When choosing an outdoor ceremony space, have your partner take a photo of you in the space, at the same time of day your ceremony is to start, and on a bright sunny day. This way you'll see if changes need to be made. I love when my clients ask my opinion on their lighting situations, this is a large part of my purpose as your wedding photographer so, I'm more than happy to help!







# FIRST LOOK



Let's face it: your wedding is both the best and somewhat stressful day of your life. I usually advise my couples to do a first look since it allows you to have a quiet moment with your partner away from the crowds at the ceremony. You get to take a break from the hustle and bustle to spend some quality time with each other and soak up the love and excitement.

You want to see that teary and emotional reaction from your partner when you first see each other. However, when you're up in front of a large crowd, it's difficult to concentrate about anything other than the faces staring at you.

What I've discovered is that taking a first look gives you a safe space to be emotional and enjoy the moment. After seeing each other for the first time, you can hug, kiss, twirl, and get a good look at each other without feeling rushed. First look photos give you a moment in your crazy day to tell each other how much you love each other in private.

Now, if you prefer to stick to the traditional way, let's do it! I suggest choosing a ceremony space that is in the shade or has even lighting across both your faces so we can beautifully capture all that pure emotion!







# COUPLE'S PHOTOS



After the first look, we'll capture some photos of just the two of you. I suggest that you ask your friends and family to give you space during this part. Most people find it easier to relax when they aren't in front of an audience. But hey, if you prefer to have your own personal hype team with you, I'm game! If you've chosen the traditional first look at the aisle we'll do this section straight after the ceremony. In either case, you're overflowing with joy and love, and these images will prove it!

## BUT WE'RE AWKWARD IN PHOTOS...

One of the most common worries I hear is this one. When this concern is brought up, it typically means "I've never had professional photos taken before" or "I'm awkward/nervous in front of the camera" - and it's one of my favourites to answer because I always say, "that's my time to shine!"

You won't be stiffly posed or nervously standing in an uncomfortable position long enough to wonder what your hands are meant to do. Expect to be reminded of the power and beauty of your love story by laughing until it hurts and falling head over heels again as they whisper sweet nothings in your ear. My goal is to empower you through movement and prompts to be the fullest version of yourself because that's where beautiful imagery emerges. This isn't a wedding photoshoot, these are your wedding memories captured in real time.

You'll leave with hundreds of photographs that will capture your love for each other. Believe me when I say we're going to have some fun!



# THE WEDDING PARTY

It's time for the wedding party after your first look and couple's photos. I'll take some shots of just one partner's side, then the other's, and then a group shot of everyone. I'll also make sure to grab individual shots of the two of you with members of your party. If you don't want to do a first look, we'll do this section after the ceremony. I know you want your wedding to be a blast for all of your best friends. So, similarly to the couple's shoot, I'll use natural movement and prompts. One of my favourite wedding party prompts is to have the couple kiss while everyone else cheers loudly!

Get everyone's bouquets ready and boutonnières on!





# THE CEREMONY



And we're finally here! This is the moment you've been looking forward to. It's easy to get caught up in all the preparations and stress. However, remember the most important thing is that this is the beginning of your lives together. Savour this moment!

The usual ceremony lasts approximately 30 minutes, but if you want to include any specific traditions, I'd recommend giving yourself an hour.

Two important tips that I have are asking your officiant to move out of the way before the first kiss so they aren't in the background of the photo and holding your kiss longer than usual for lots of photos!





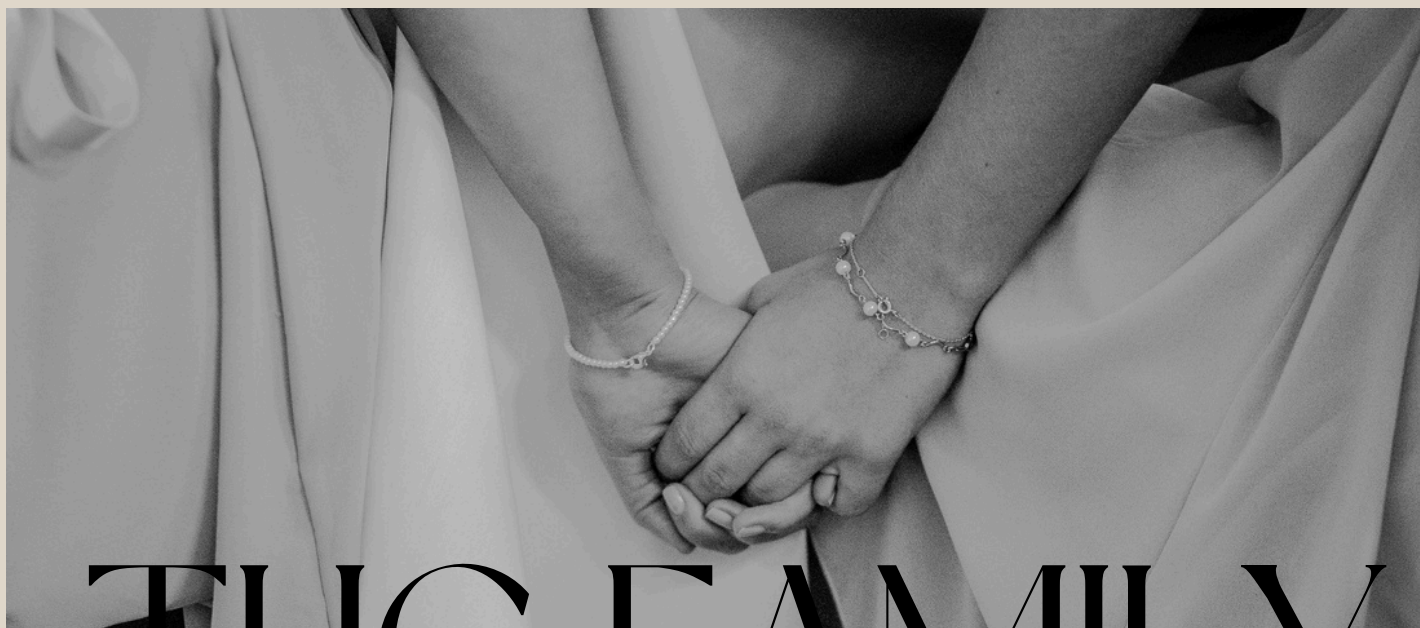
My goal is for you to have the most enjoyable and efficient family photos possible! While they may appear daunting, I am here to make them go smoothly. Here are some tips:

## LET YOUR FAMILY KNOW

Make sure the family members who will be in your group shots are aware ahead of time. You can also have your officiant make an announcement asking family members to meet for photos after the ceremony in a designated location.

## PREPARE A SHOT LIST

Before your wedding, I will request a shot list so that I can get all of the family photo combinations you want. This way, I can have my assistant or a friend of yours call out who is up next and we won't forget any shots that you listed.



# THE FAMILY





## PERSON IN CHARGE

It can be a huge help to have a friend or family member who knows your family to assist in making sure everyone in the family photos is there and ready to go.

## BIG TO SMALL GROUP

I highly recommend taking photos of grandparents or older guests first so that they can be dismissed earlier. Then starting with the largest group and working your way down to smaller groups so that any visitors who are no longer required can be dismissed and the space remains calm and quiet.

## AVOID PHONE PHOTOS

When a guest takes a photo over my shoulder, it can confuse folks as to where to look and slow down the process. Please ask guests to refrain from taking photos with their phones until after I've finished my photos, we want to avoid a paparazzi type situation.



# THE RECEPTION

You've done it! Woohoo! Now that you're married, it's time to celebrate! I'll shoot some candid and group shots during the reception, so if you have any friends or extended family members you need photos with, now is the time! During the reception, a lot of things happen, therefore I'll photograph everything. You have the freedom to make the reception your own! The possibilities are endless!

Here are the usual reception events:

- grand entrance
- toasts
- first dance
- parent dances
- bouquet toss
- garter toss
- cake cutting
- grand exit





# MONEY SAVING TIPS



## MAKE YOUR GUEST LIST THE A-LIST

It should go without saying that a smaller guest list is better for your budget as well as your sanity! Even if it's impossible to reduce your list to 20 people, reducing it from 300 to 150 will help you go from overwhelmed to manageable. An intimate celebration, more often than not, necessitates less money and effort—and it comes with a priceless bonus: more quality time with the smaller set of guests you invited! However, if your aim is to have a grand celebration, I'm here for you!

## FLOWERS AND FOOD IN SEASON

Seasonal and local are two words that will help you save money on catering and flowers. When you buy in season, you obtain food and flowers at their peak of supply when prices are typically lower. Plus, they don't have to be shipped halfway around the world when they're cultivated locally. As a result, you not only save money but also minimize your carbon footprint. Win-win.







# PICK A LOCATION THAT LOOKS GREAT AU NATUREL

You will save money on rentals and decorative items if you choose a wedding venue that does not require much decorations. Allow nature's beauty to do the work for you in outdoor areas with stunning views!

# HAVE YOUR ENTIRE WEDDING AT ONE VENUE

You won't have to stress about the difficulties or additional costs of getting everyone from the ceremony to the reception.

# FIND A VENUE THAT WILL LET YOU BYOB

For many weddings, alcohol is a big expense, so keeping control of the cost-per-bottle is critical to keeping that expense in check. Look for places where you can buy and serve your own alcohol so you can keep tabs on the price.

LOVE IS LOVE



LOVE IS LOVE



# A LOVE



# SO GOOD





# UNPLUGGED WEDDING

When you marry the love of your life, you ask all of your closest friends and family to be there to rejoice with you and witness your union. You want them to be there to share this special moment with you; you want to see their faces, their grins, their tears of joy and excitement as you walk down the aisle. You don't want to glance back down the aisle and find people taking shots of you with cameras and phones covering their faces.

I've witnessed many situations where a guest's phone is sticking out into the aisle, obstructing not just the moment but also the images I'm capturing as your photographer. I strongly recommend having an unplugged ceremony to avoid phones dangling down the aisle and to allow guests to be more present.

There are a few ways to inform your guests if you decide to have an unplugged wedding. Tell them early through the invite by adding a line that says, 'We would love you to be there, so we are having an unplugged wedding, please no photos during the ceremony.' You can also request that the officiant make a brief announcement requesting guests to turn off their phones and refrain from taking photos.









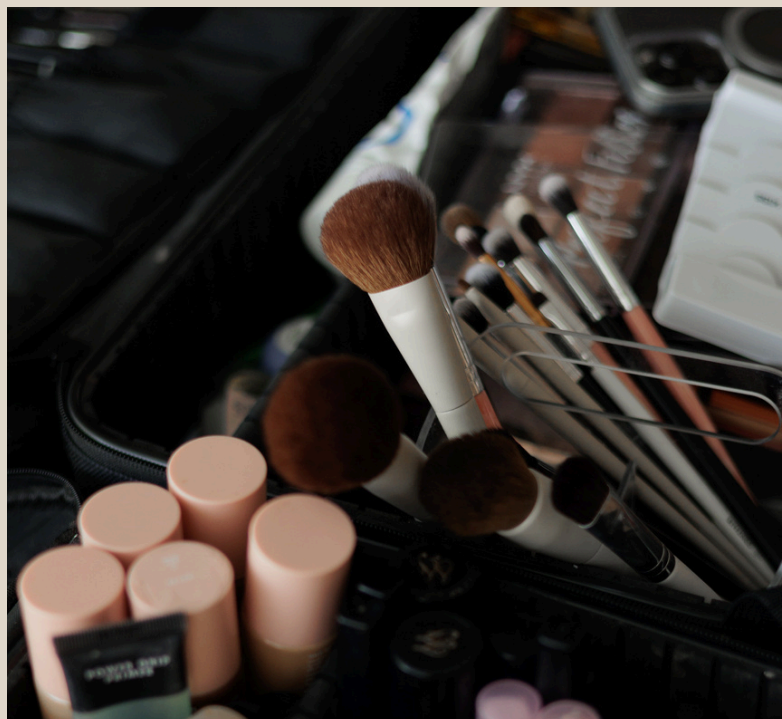
# SELF CARE

Don't forget about the most important person in your wedding—you!

Wedding planning isn't simply time-consuming; it can also be intimidating at times. You might be stressed, overwhelmed, and spread a little (or a lot) too thin as your big day approaches.

Self-care is a very vital aspect of wedding planning, as well as life, that many people overlook. No matter how overwhelmed you are with wedding planning, your physical and mental health should not be taken for granted.

Sure, there may be snags along the way or even on the big day, but the most important thing is that you're being married and all of your friends and family will be there to celebrate with you! The couples that have the most fun during their weddings are those who focus on the important things and don't sweat the small stuff.











CONNECT WITH ME

LET'S START THIS  
ADVENTURE



# MINDY WILKINS PHOTO

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## MY SHOT LIST

### GETTING READY

dress  
suit  
shoes  
jewelry  
bouquet  
boutonnieres  
rings  
invitations  
getting makeup done  
putting on wedding attire  
putting on jewelry  
putting on shoe  
candid of everyone

### RECEPTION

grand entrance  
cake  
decorations  
guests interactions  
toasts & speeches  
first dance  
parent dances  
guests dancing  
cake cutting  
bouquet toss  
garter toss  
grand exit

### BRIDAL PARTY

each side separately  
individual photos  
entire party

### THE COUPLE

shot of rings  
individual photos  
couple together

### CEREMONY

ceremony site & details  
everyone walking down the aisle  
each partner's reaction  
exchanging of rings  
reading of vows  
first kiss  
guests

### FAMILY

Every family situation is different.  
Please prepare a list of family  
combinations that you want  
photographed.



PLEASE WRITE YOUR MUST HAVE SHOTS  
HERE. YOU CAN SEND ME A PHOTO  
AFTERWARDS AND WE CAN BRAINSTORM!

# YOUR SHOT LIST

FAMILY

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COUPLE

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OTHER

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# GET IN TOUCH

You have put me in a trusted role for the most romantic day of your life and I take this position with high respect and gratitude. Please reach out to me with any and all questions, confirmations, crazy ideas or just to say hi! My goal is to have you confidently walk into your wedding day knowing you're in good hands with me!

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📷 @mwilkinsphoto

💻 [www.mwilkinsphoto.com](http://www.mwilkinsphoto.com)





LET'S GET  
YOU MARRIED!

LET'S DO IT!



LET'S DO IT!

@MWILKINSPHOTO