

The Ideal Wedding Day Timeline

Planning your wedding day can feel overwhelming - but the right timeline makes all the difference. This guide walks you through an ideal flow for a smooth, stress-free day with plenty of time for beautiful, meaningful photos (and a few dance floor twirls!).

Getting Ready (2-3 hours before ceremony)

- Hair & Makeup Finishing Touches
- Detail Photos (invites, shoes, rings, dress, vow books, etc.)
- Candid Moments with bridesmaids & groomsmen
- Getting Dressed (Plan 30-45 min for zipping, steaming, etc.)
- First Look with Parent (optional but sweet)

Pro Tip: Start hair & makeup early. The bride should be done at least 1 hour before the ceremony or first look!

First Look & Portraits (90 minutes)

- First Look with Your Partner
- Couple Portraits
- Wedding Party Photos
- Immediate Family Photos

Pro Tip: Doing these before the ceremony = more time for mingling later and no makeup meltdowns!

Ceremony (20-40 minutes)

- Guests arrive 30 minutes before
- Ceremony begins (timing depends on traditions)
- Hugs & happy tears!

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Pro Tip: Consider having an 'unplugged' ceremony to keep the focus on you two - and your pro photographer!

Cocktail Hour (60 minutes)

- Guests enjoy drinks & apps
- We capture extended family photos & couple sunset portraits
- You can enjoy cocktail hour if most photos are done pre-ceremony!

Reception (3-5 hours)

- Grand Entrance
- First Dance
- Dinner Service
- Toasts (plan 3-5 minutes per speech)
- Parent Dances
- Cake Cutting
- Open Dance Floor!

Pro Tip: Schedule 15-20 minutes for a Golden Hour portrait sneak-away!

Coverage Timing Cheat Sheet

Event	Recommended Time
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Detail photos	1 hour
Getting dressed	30-45 min
First look & portraits	60-90 min
Ceremony	20-40 min
Family formals	30 min
Reception coverage	3+ hours

Final Tips from Haley:

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- Build in buffer time throughout your day in case anything runs behind.
- Tell your VIPs when and where they're needed for photos.
- Golden hour portraits are always worth it - trust me.
- And most importantly... soak it all in. This is your day.

Want a personalized photo timeline?

Let's chat! I create custom timelines for all my couples so we never miss a moment.

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