

WEDDING

DAY TIMELINE



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You have spent countless hours and a lot of money on having a fantastic wedding. The last thing you want is for things not to go smoothly and for you to be stressed on your big day.

The wedding day timeline is your blueprint for a smooth and successful wedding day. It should be a key piece of your wedding planning. In general, the wedding planner will work with you and your vendors to create a timeline for your wedding. A rough draft is usually made a couple of months before the wedding day and then finalized closer to your wedding day.

The sooner you can get a handle on the timeline, the better it will be. You, your significant other, and your planner should sit down and run through your wedding day. Start with getting ready. For example, where will you and your girls, and the boys be getting ready? What time will you be in the makeup chair? When will the bouquets and boutonnieres arrive? What time is your ceremony? What time do you depart to the ceremony? You get the picture, right?

Tell your planner everything regardless of how insignificant you might think it is. I have done so many weddings where the wedding planner gives me a timeline, but on the day of the wedding, one or two events would occur that weren't on the timeline. This is disastrous for your photographer, who was probably preparing for something else before she learns of this event.

If there are significant last-minute changes to the timeline, make sure your photographer knows about it as soon as possible. Having a good plan and an organized timeline will help to keep everything on track.

Now, here is a piece of sage advice from years of experience. Many people will tell you that your timeline is just a plan, and it is OK to run a little late or early (of the countless weddings I've photographed, I've never seen one run early).

Pro Tip

“Try your best to stick to the timeline. Running late throws your vendors off and add unwanted stress to your wedding team and your guests. It affects the overall tone of your wedding. You have worked so hard for this day - avoid being late and changing the vibe.

Five minutes late here and ten minutes late, there all adds up. By the time you get to the reception, you could be significantly later for your dinner, first dance, toast, and other events.

Some vendors will also have an additional fee if you go over the allotted time in the contract.”

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEEESE try to avoid running exceptionally late (45 minutes are more). Running late throws your wedding team off and sets an ominous tone.

Case in point, I photographed a wedding a while back, and the ceremony was over an hour late. That pretty much wipes out the time allotted for the couple's photo session.

We had to drive like a bat out of hell to get to the park, where they insisted on having their couples session. Plus racing against the sunset and total darkness while keeping track of time so that I could get the couple to the reception on time. Talk about been stressed!

A year later, the couple contacts me saying that they didn't get enough photos from their couples session, and I have to gently remind them of the circumstances.

*The point is, by all means possible,
try to avoid running late!*





THE OLD GROVE IN REDLAND FLORIDA

SAMPLE TIMELINE FOR AN ELEVEN-HOUR WEDDING DAY

A Day or Two Before – Ceremony rehearsal and rehearsal dinner

11:00 a.m. – 12:25 p.m. – Photographer arrives and starts taking getting ready photos of the bride's dress, shoes, jewelry, groom tux and jewelry, and any other little sentimental items. Other shots to be taken during this time include the bride getting makeup done, putting on earrings getting button up in the dress, Champagne toast, the groom getting dress, gift exchange, etc.

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. — First look photos. First look photos are primarily done with the bride and groom, but I have done first look with the bride and her dad many times.

1:45 – 2:00 p.m. — Depart and travel to the ceremony.

2:00 – 2:25 p.m. — Bride freshens up for the ceremony.

2:00 - 2:45 p.m. — Guests take their seats.

3:00 – 3:30 p.m. — wedding ceremony. Note that most religious wedding ceremony will take longer than thirty minutes. You want to build a little cushion between the ceremony and the next event so that the newlyweds can sign the marriage certificate.

4:00 – 4:30 p.m. — Family and bridal party photo session

4:15 – 5 15 p.m. — Travel to the reception. If this is a winter wedding here in Miami, it will already be dark, and I would have to use flash for photographing the newlywed if they didn't do a first look.

5:30 p.m. — Bridal party grand entrance.

5:45 - 6:00 p.m. — Newlywed grand entrance and first dance.

6:30 - 7:30 p.m. — Dinner served.

7:00 p.m. — Toasts

8:00 p.m. — Cake cutting

8:30 p.m. — Bouquet garter toss

9:00 p.m. — Photographer departs

9:15 – 10:00 p.m. — Open dance floor

10:00 p.m. — reception ends, the bride and groom grand exit

Once you have the final copy of the timeline, please share it with the maid of honor and the best man. I've done too many weddings where the bridal party didn't know what is going on.

Now let's dive into the wedding day!



*Do You Want Stunning Photos That Reflect
The Intimacy And Beauty Of Your Elegant
Wedding But Feel Challenged Because You
Are Not A Model And Don't Know Anything
About Professional Photography?*

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