



## Wedding 101

### Choosing the Photographer/Videographer



If you read my articles, you will see that I often refer to weddings as similar to a movie production. The main difference between movies and weddings (beside cost), is that movies get second and third takes. Weddings do not, they get one take only. Finding the right photographer and videographer can be challenging (weddings are not easy if you haven't picked up that theme yet). Seeing that receptions are centered around the entertainment, and the entertainment is how guests will remember your weddings most, we are going to focus on how your photographer/videographer influences the entertainment aspect of your wedding.

As with any profession, you will find professional, and not so professional photographers, and you will be able to tell them apart. The pros will promptly return calls and emails, dress well, and overall treat your needs with respect and timeliness. A pro has experience working with other providers, and knows how to capture the special moments of your big day.

One of the first things to consider is time. Your photographer should get your photos (family, wedding party, romantic shots) done in about 45 minutes to an hour. If they take too long, then your guests are left waiting and can get bored. That sets a bad tone for the rest of the reception. It can also back up the food, or leaving it sitting and getting cold, which is also bad news. Be sure to ask how much time your prospective photographer needs to get their photos done after the ceremony. Also, consider how long the photographer may steal the bride and groom for sunset or moonrise photos. The bride and groom being absent for too long may be seen as an invitation for guests to leave early.

How long is your photographer contracted to stay and work at your reception? If his/her ending time is long before the end of the reception, they may miss key moments that you want captured. Sometimes a photographer will ask the entertainment to speed things up, or hold a group type of activity so that they can get their shots. This usually leads to a rushed agenda, which is never a good thing. If you don't want to pay for a photographer to stay the whole time, then at least keep them until you get all the important stuff out of the way, and a little dancing (a few dancing shots and they are good). If you are willing to pay, and can afford to do so, then I say keep them until the end. Lots of fun stuff happens during the last hour or so of a wedding, and often times the photographer is no longer around to capture it.

Be mindful that the lights and equipment that the photographer brings does not interfere with other providers, or your guests. Some lights can be cumbersome, or extra bright, which takes from the quality of other features you more than likely paid a lot of money for. If the lights are too bright, then the photos are washed out, and people will be shy. Sometimes, the videographer has a great big light on his camera as he walks around the dance floor. That blinds people and causes them to go away, we don't want that. The best pros have the best tools, and know how to use them.

This is important, and goes along with the team player mentality. Not only should you be sure that your photographer is willing to be part of the team, be sure they are willing to coordinate with your wedding entertainment to ensure the reception flows efficiently. If your photographer is not a good part of the team, then communication will lapse, and the reception will suffer. Also, make sure that your entertainment will not let anything important happen without your photographer knowing and being ready.

Keep all of these things in mind when considering your wedding photographer. Overlooking important details can be the difference between capturing the memories you want, and simply capturing random moments of the day.

Thanks!

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