

Wedding Photographers

Don't err on the side of politeness... or economy...when friends or relatives volunteer to take your wedding photographs. Get a professional, one who thoroughly understands lighting techniques and one who is skilled at creatively capturing the tender, joyous and humorous moments of your wedding and reception. Interview photographers early, at least 12 to 18 months in advance. Visit their studios, review their portfolios, and talk about the pictures you envision of your wedding. Be sure to inquire about special effect photography and decide if you want it included in your wedding portfolio.

Determine your photography budget clearly at this meeting. Do not forget to budget for additional prints you might want to give as gifts later. Agree on a firm figure for both the deposit and the final payments; pay both promptly.

Discuss with your photographer the type of wedding you are planning, the location and time of both the ceremony and reception. Be sure the photographer reviews considerations regarding lighting. Some locations do not allow extraneous lighting during the ceremony.

One very important issue to discuss with your photographer is where, when and how to capture the formal portraits. After the ceremony is the traditional time; but many photographers feel that there is not enough time between ceremony and reception to allow for all group pictures and the beautiful, romantic shots which you will surely wish to have. Besides, this is the time you want to spend with your guests. Taking all formal groupings before the ceremony seems to be a better choice when a large formal wedding

party is involved. This allows time after the ceremony for more relaxed photos with family and friends in attendance. Discuss this question thoroughly with your fiancé and your photographer to understand everyone's preferences. Considering your wedding day schedule and the size of the wedding party, the three of you will reach the right decision about the best time for this important photographic session.

If your wedding party is large, or you have large families, you may want to appoint a photographic assistant for both families. They should know everyone in your family by sight and be able to assist the photographer by making sure all essential family groupings are taken.

Do not forget to inform your photographer of any sensitive situations in your respective families, such as recently deceased grandparents or divorced parents, stepparents, etc.

The photography contract is a complex one; be sure you understand exactly the quantity and size of prints you will be buying, when proofs will be available, the type of proofs provided, when the finished work will be ready, and how long the negatives will be kept in the photographer's filing system.

Once you are satisfied that you have conveyed all your wishes to the photographer, relax and let him/her fulfill those wishes. A professional photographer will gently control the formal posing, unobtrusively capture the candid moments and produce an album that genuinely reflects the love and happiness you and your families share on your wedding day.