



HELPING WEDDING COUPLES NAVIGATE THEIR WEDDING DAY

TIMELINE

WEDDING TIMELINE PLANNING

WEDDINGS & ADVENTURES

ESCAPE THE ORDINARY



PLANNING YOUR BIG DAY

DEREK HALKETT PHOTOGRAPHY

The wedding day timeline is probably the single most important document on your wedding day, other than your marriage license. The timeline will also have a significant impact on the type, quality and quantity of images you receive. Even more, the timeline will greatly impact your appearance in those images. If your timeline was poorly prepared, you will surely show the stress and time constraint in each and every image. If you are stress free, well planned and leave ample time, your images will reflect a properly planned timeline.

There are other things that are outside of your control that may impact the look and feel of your images, such as weather conditions, location and available light and the overall quality of the light. I will attempt to make the planning process as smooth as possible and give the best advice I can so that you can enjoy your wedding day as much as possible.

GETTING READY

Brides often think that the photographer should arrive at the time their makeup artist arrives. I think a more judicious use of my time is two to three hours prior to the ceremony start time. In other words, I think it is best for the photographer to arrive 30-60 minutes prior to their makeup and hair professionals projected finish time. For larger weddings, it can take several hours for them to finish their work with all of the brides maids and the bride. An ideal amount of time for me to capture the getting ready process is 90 minutes.

This time frame is typically enough to photograph all of the details as well, to include the wedding dress, shoes, rings, bouquet, jewelry, invitations and any other important wedding day details. And don't forget, try to grab a wooden hanger for your dress and don't forget to bring TWO sets of invitations. This allows me to photograph the front and back at the same time. If you are sensitive about your address being on the stationary, you can have one prepared with a false address.

PREPARE THE SPACE

This is your time with your girls and the guys to to engage in their bromances. With that said, it is important that the room or space you are getting ready in is not trashed. Often times I enter a hotel room and there is clothing, bags, open food containers and all sorts of clutter all over the room and the beds are not made.

When I get to the area you are getting ready in, please keep a few things in mind. I will be looking for the best light and often times that equals window light or a space with high ceilings and large open space if available. If that area is a mess, that is time that I will have to take to clean the space to make it presentable for a portrait.

Same goes for the wedding dress, shoes and floral. Make sure the tags, stickers, pins, dress forms, plastic wrap and any other hindrances are removed. The cleaner the room the more time and better the image will look.

FIRST LOOK

One of my favorite things at any wedding I photograph, is when my couples opt for a first look. These intimate moments capture the emotion, connection and reaction of the bride and groom in such a raw and unscripted way, I am surprised that not every couple is choosing to do a first look. By having a first look, the couple is able to share that moment in a stress free environment when they are the freshest they will be for the entire day.

The bride most likely just finished getting the final touches done with her makeup and hair professionals and the groom hasn't begun to sweat profusely under that dark colored tuxedo just yet. It allows the wedding couple to enjoy their cocktail hour in the company of friends and family and gives the photographer time to capture detail photos of the wedding venue, reception space, wedding cake, table settings and center pieces and any other details at the venue.

Even better, uncle Bob from Florida is not hanging off my shoulder with his iPad to capture some professional images after I set up each and every shot in perfect light for him. No one likes an audience when they are being photographed and I prefer the same when I am working with my wedding couples. Immediately after the first look, I most often like to photograph the bridal party and capture all of the bride and groom formal portraits before the ceremony. Typically, 90 minutes is sufficient for all of this to be accomplished.





BRIDE & GROOM PORTRAITS

If you would rather go without a first look, typically 60 minutes is the absolute minimum amount of time needed to capture Bride & Groom, wedding party and family portraits. If we are talking about just formals for the Bride & Groom, 30-45 minutes should suffice. For most traditional weddings, this time frame takes place between the ceremony and reception, in what is often called the cocktail hour.

The important thing here that is often overlooked is, when moving from a church location to a reception venue at a different location you need to account for travel time and leave a little extra time in for any unexpected delays (i.e. traffic, transportation services showing up late or getting lost, deciding to have a receiving line without planning for one in the timeline, uncle Bob from Florida disappearing just prior to family photos).

And yes, all of these things have happened at weddings I have photographed.





"WHERE THERE IS LOVE THERE IS LIFE."
— GHANDI

WEDDING PARTY PORTRAITS

I always photograph the family first, then the wedding party, followed by the Bride & Groom portraits. There is a method to this madness and a very good explanation. By doing this, the wedding party can join the cocktail hour and get back to their significant other is most likely riding solo inside the venue. This prevents the occasional drunk groomsman from heckling you as you get your photos taken as well. I also insist on your family and friends retreating from the area we are using for portraits to avoid any distraction as well.

You should be comfortable and at ease during your photo time with me and I need your best you and you need my best as well and I can't be my best unless you help me help you. One thing that brides often overlook is the need to have some time prior to the ceremony. It is important that you leave yourself some space to retouch makeup, get briefed by the venue coordinator or DJ and line up the wedding party and go over some last minute details.

**"AND IN THE END, THE
LOVE YOU TAKE IS
EQUAL TO THE LOVE
YOU MAKE."**

- THE BEATLES



THE RECEPTION

THE VENUE & RECEPTION

Very important for me to mention. Often times a venue will not completely set up the reception room until just prior to the cocktail hour. With that said, wedding couples often fail to leave me time to photograph the inside of the venue prior to guests being let into the room. I need to get into the reception space before any of the guests do in order to capture the space untainted.

Please be sure to have a conversation with the venue and ask when the room will be completely ready to be photographed and we will have a discussion about that and how to make sure it gets captured properly.

Let the fun begin! I often tell my wedding couples that the best use of my time and their money is to allow for more time for photography at the front of end of their wedding than at the back end. There is absolutely no need to have a wedding photographer present at a wedding reception for five plus hours in my opinion. After all of the formalities such as the first dance, parent dances, speeches, cake cutting, bouquet/garter toss and any other traditional or ethnical traditions are over, you really only need about an hour of photo time to capture the guests and dance floor. Let's be real, a photographer can only take so many photos of people getting drunk and sweaty before having nothing further to capture that is worth even looking at.

So in review, I ask that you consider having my time front loaded on your wedding day and build in more time to capture the more important moments. If it is the send off you are worried about, you can always do it an hour or two before the reception ends. You are better off doing it this way because I have been at more than a few weddings where a good half or more of the guests have left the wedding before the send off and I end up having 20 people to hold sparklers. You want your exit to be grand and experienced by all the loved ones you invited, so do it at a time before they leave.