

DOROTHY MAY PHOTOGRAPHY

WEDDING GUIDE

2024

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WELCOME



LETS GET STARTED

I have created this guide with helpful tips to assist you throughout your wedding planning. My goal is to create an experience that's easy and efficient because I know how much work it is to plan a wedding! Over the years, I have come up with certain tricks that I will be sharing with you through out this guide so it will help to level up with your wedding day photos!

I can't wait to be a part of this whole experience with you!

dorothy mary

WHERE TO *START*



YOUR VISION

It's your day, you get to plan the most stunning celebration to start your marriage the way YOU want it! I always tell my couples to grab a journal and write every little detail you think of in this book! Also reflect and jot down thoughts like "what mood do you wish to convey", "how do you want to feel on your wedding day as a couple" or "what is one thing each of you want for the day that is a non-negotiable". This will help with your priorities as a couple before you even start the planning process! The next step (if you haven't done this before even getting engaged) is start that Pinterest board to start pinning visual examples of styles you like. This is great when you have picked other vendors and need to show them photos of aspects you would like recreated for your day!

MOOD BOARD

A mood board is when you make a collage of photos, graphics and colours that best describes what you are trying to portray for your wedding day. I recommend doing this to keep your family and friends on the same page if they are helping you plan. You can do this by making a project on Canva or just cutting and pasting photos on a physical Bristol board. Start by picking a colour scheme of 4-6 colours/tones. This allows for colours to stay consistent between vendors as well! Then throw any photos that fit the feel, the theme or ideas you have for the wedding into the project.

This just a great reference to keep so everyone stays on theme throughout the whole planning process!



MONEY SAVING TIPS

PICK A NATURALLY AESTHETIC LOCATION

You will save money on rentals and decorative items if you choose a location that does not require much decoration!



IN SEASON FLOWERS AND FOOD

When chatting with your caterer or florist, ask them what is in season for the time of your wedding! If you pick options that are popular that time of year, the supply cost is usually lower because of the popularity!



ETSY IS YOUR BEST FRIEND

You can find templates on templates that are modern and fit your theme of the wedding without having to break the bank! They are always customizable so you can change details to be more tailored to you. This includes welcome signs, seating charts, invitations, table numbers, etc!







FIRST LOOK

VS. AISLE LOOK

This question is something that really sets the tone for your timeline because it is the deciding factor on when you will be doing the bulk of your photos on your wedding day.

There is no personal preference as your photographer, it's just a decision the two of you need to make together!

FIRST LOOK

This is when you and your partner see each other before the ceremony. You can do this by tapping on the others shoulder and they turn around or you can go back to back and turn around at the same time to ultimately be the moment you see each other for the first time that day! If you choose this option, it allows for you to get all of your photos done before the ceremony so you can attend your cocktail hour with your guests!



AISLE LOOK

This is traditionally how weddings take place, where you will see your partner at the ceremony as you walk down the aisle. This is also a great option if you are having an earlier ceremony time! You then would proceed with the rest of your wedding party / couple portraits after the ceremony during cocktail hour!

WEDDING



TIMELINE

OVERVIEW



One of the most important things you can do for your vendors is come up with a detailed, hour-by-hour wedding day timeline to help insure that the day runs smoothly! Share this wedding timeline with your wedding party, wedding coordinator, photographer, caterer, florist and other vendors who will be a part of your wedding day plans to keep everyone on the same page!

Most weddings follow the same format, you can also customize your timeline to be uniquely yours! There are no set rules to how the day should go, just to what YOU want it to look like!

One tip while writing your timeline, consider if there is travel time in between locations that should be accounted for or time set aside just the two of you so you can be alone to take in the day without being disturbed! If this is something you would like to do, be sure to add it to the timeline!



TIMELINE *Details*

Something that always helps me when writing a timeline is knowing how long each thing will take to be photographed! So I thought I would create a cheat sheet for you to use when wiring your own timeline!

GUYS GETTING READY - 45-60mins
GIRLS GETTING READY - 60-90mins
BEFORE CEREMONY CANDIDS - 30-45mins
COUPLES PORTRAITS - 45-60mins
WEDDING PARTY PORTRAITS - 45-60mins
FAMILY PHOTOS - 30-45mins
SPARKLER EXIT - 15-30mins

TIMELINE EXAMPLE

WITH FIRST LOOK

- 11am Guys Getting Ready
- 12pm Girls Getting Ready
- 1:30pm First Look + Couple Portraits
- 2:15pm Wedding Party Portraits
- 3pm Prepare for Ceremony
- 3:30pm Guests Arrive to Ceremony
- 4pm Ceremony
- 4:30pm Cocktail Hour and Family Photos Begin
- 5pm Enjoy Cocktail Hour
- 5:30pm Guests are Seated for Reception
- 5:45pm Grand Entrance + Introductions
- 6pm Dinner Begins
- 7:30pm Speeches
- 8pm Sunset Photos (Look up the sunset time on google for your specific wedding day)
- 8:30pm First Dances + Dance Party Begins
- 9pm Sparkler Exit
- 9:30pm Photographer End Time



TIMELINE EXAMPLE

WITH AISLE LOOK

12pm Guys Getting Ready

1pm Girls Getting Ready

2:30pm Guests Arrive To Ceremony

3pm Ceremony

3:30pm Family Photos

4pm Wedding Party / Couples Portraits

5:30pm Grand Entrance + Introductions

6pm Dinner Begins

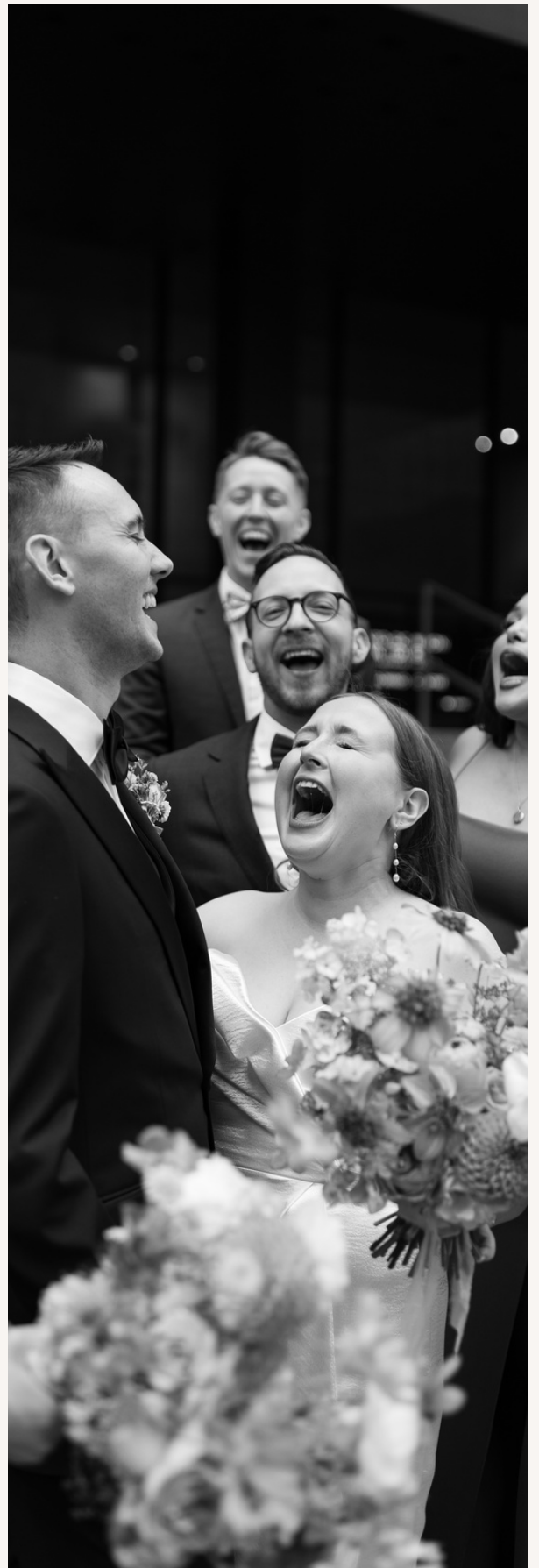
7:30pm Speeches

8pm Sunset Photos (Look up the sunset time on google for your specific wedding day)

8:30pm First Dances + Dance Party Begins

9pm Sparkler Exit

9:30pm Photographer End Time



FIVE TIPS FOR *Getting Ready* PHOTOS

FIND A WELL-LIT BEAUTIFUL LOCATION

Maybe consider renting an airbnb instead of a hotel, so that we can get surroundings that speak more to your personality than a hotel room. Even if you can think of a home you'd like to use that suits your vibe, let us know and we will be there! The best strategy for this tip is to think "what place has the most natural lighting and fits the theme of my wedding day?"

KEEP A CLEAN AND CLUTTER FREE SPACE

I always do my best to do a run through the room before starting to photograph the day, but there won't have a lot of time once I get there! Things to check for before getting ready are clothes hanging over the back of chairs, bottles from last night and shoes that are laying on the ground. I am ALL about the fun, but the camera gets every detail and we don't want a stray bottle to ruin the moment!





GET THOSE DETAILS READY THE NIGHT BEFORE

Put all of the details you want photographed in a box the night before to make sure they are ready for me!

This includes rings, vows, garter, jewelry, shoes, clutch, perfume, a wood hanger, invitations, socks, watch - anything you may want captured before the fact!

PICK THE BEST ROOM TO PUT YOUR DRESS ON

I am soooooo excited to see it, and I want the camera to capture every moment! The best place for this is somewhere tidy with plenty of natural light. Also! Light coloured walls look best against your white dress, with plenty of space so your squad can help you get ready!

GET THE TUNES GOING

Have upbeat and fun music playing alllll morning long!

The music and good energy will help you shake out those jitters - or dance them out! Your wedding party will be happy and naturally living in the moment for you, and the camera will catch the vibes your music will create. This helps get those happy candid shots!





THE
Detail
PHOTOS





You have or will be spending hours planning every detail for the wedding, including what earrings, perfume you're going to wear, the invitations to hand delivered, etc. That being said, I have made a checklist for you to go over to be sure you have everything you need for the morning detail shots so you don't need to worry about forgetting anything!

THE BRIDE

Shoes
Rings
All Jewelry
Headpiece
Perfume
Bouquet
Garter
Dress Hanger
Wedding Invitations
Envelope
Loose flowers

THE GROOM

Shoes
Tie/Bow-tie
Belt
Socks
Cologne
Cufflinks
Watch

THE EXTRAS

Vow Books
Ring Box
Sentimental Items





Six TIPS
FOR A SMOOTH
CEREMONY

KNOW WHERE TO STAND

All the more reason to have a rehearsal- know where to stand on the altar / arch so that I can catch you front and center for the first official newlyweds kiss! A tip for this is to mark in the rehearsal where to stand with tape or stones, so that at the official ceremony, there's no stress about where to stand so we can catch your best angles and have you centered in the arch!

PRACTICE LINKING ARMS

Your bridal party (and yourselves) should practice linking arms with their partner so when they are walking up and down the aisle, it is totally natural and we can get some aesthetic and beautiful photos of everyone!

HAVE A REHEARSAL

No matter the location, you will want some sort of rehearsal! Your ceremony will go much smoother if everyone has an idea of what is expected from them beforehand, and no one is running around wondering where they are supposed to be! That being said, if things don't go to plan on the day of your wedding - DON'T SWEAT IT! That's life! The day will still be amazing and we are ready to catch all the positive moments of the day!

PICK THE BEST MUSIC

One way to really set an intimate and meaningful feel for you is picking the songs you want to hear during your wedding ceremony. Make sure the DJ doesn't pick their selection from a Top Picks List - your music should mean something to you! That way, the day is more intimate, and whenever you hear it on the radio after the big day, there's more connection to the music! I also highly encourage having music being played 30 minutes before your ceremony starts, otherwise your guests will be arriving in somewhat awkward, cricket silence.





MAKE YOUR CEREMONY YOURS!

I cannot stress this enough! Your ceremony does not need to be traditional or drawn out. Have your officiant or close friend talk about how you met, or about the quirks of your relationship. Remind everyone who they are celebrating! A story personalizes the day for your guests and you guys, and makes it all the more fun! (This is a great alternative to some distant aunt reading a poem from hundreds of years ago that you can't even understand or relate to!)

ROCK THE EXIT

Our last tip is to have a fun ceremony exit. **YOU GUYS ARE FREAKIN' MARRIED!** Have guests throw confetti, petals, blow bubbles or even set off smoke bombs - anything that personalizes the exit and helps capture the happy energy of the day! Halfway down the aisle, stop to kiss as newlyweds - hands up and lips puckered because it's time to celebrate! Before the wedding, make sure you have a timeline figured out for what happens once you walk back up the aisle - family photos on site, getting in a sweet retro car or having a receiving line. Smooth transitions will help keep the schedule on track and make for easier sailing throughout the big day!



FAMILY PHOTOS

As much as we love you, we don't know who all is in your family! Creating a family photo list before the wedding day helps us know exactly who to call for pictures! We will call names, snap photos, and mark it done to ensure that no one is missed from your list!

It would be a MASSIVE help if 1 - 2 people from the wedding party were designated to track down family members - we hate to waste time hunting down who's next in line because they wandered off to talk to other guests or found themselves having a lot of fun at the bar!

Another way to ensure smooth sailing is to send the schedule you create to your family members to let them know that they will be needed for the photos on the big day, and to ensure our team knows of any limitations to the list (parents are divorced and shouldn't be photographed together, someone has limited mobility, etc) so we can plan accordingly and make sure your photo sessions are stress-free! Another helpful tip is to write down the status and who they are - i.e Laura, Mother of the Bride.

We have attached a basic list you can template yours off of, or, if we don't get a list (it happens!) then we will stick to this template:

- Bride / Groom + Mom
- Bride / Groom + Dad
- Bride / Groom + Mom + Dad
- Bride / Groom + Bride / Groom + Mom + Dad
- Bride / Groom + Bride / Groom + Mom + Dad + Siblings
- Bride / Groom + Bride / Groom + Mom + Dad + Siblings Spouses
- Bride / Groom + Mom + Dad + Siblings
- Bride / Groom + Siblings
- Bride / Groom + Bride / Groom + Maternal Grandparents
- Bride / Groom + Bride / Groom + Paternal Grandparents





One of the most common phrases I hear as a wedding photographer is “we’re so awkward in photos”... when this is brought up it usually means that you have never had professional photos before or you feel nervous being in front of the camera. But I’m here to tell you that it truly doesn’t matter because I will guide you through the entire process of exactly what to do while looking natural and candid in every photo! I specialize in guided posing that isn’t stiff and awkward! If you trust me, I can lead you into stunning portraits! You will leave with hundred of photographs capturing your love for each other. Believe me when I say you’re going to look amazing!

One tip I recommend doing is asking your friends and family to give you space during your portraits. Most people find it easier to relax when they aren’t in front of an audience - but if you’re the type to want your personal hype team there, the more the merrier! It also helps to bring a bluetooth speaker with your favourite playlist queued up so you can loosen right up!

WEDDING PARTY PHOTOS

This is such a fun part of your wedding day because your wedding party will be just full of energy and it's always so awesome to photograph! I usually start by photographing the full wedding party in a variety of different guided poses. Then I will break it off as just the guys and just the girls - this way we can get all of the photos done at the same time and then they are free to party after!

The girls should know when this time is happening on the schedule that they should all have their bouquets in hand and the guys should all be ready to go with their boutonnières!



UNPLUGGED & CEREMONY

Picture this, you're walking down the aisle looking at your future spouse at the end and having this intimate moment. You're so excited to look back on this by looking at your gallery and you see your Aunt Karen in the aisle with her iPad blocking the photographers view from getting the perfect shot. YUP. Not cute!

With that being said, I recommend having an unplugged ceremony to prevent all of this! There are a few ways you can inform your guests that you are having an unplugged ceremony:

1. You can mention it early on your invitation
2. Put up a sign for when your guests arrive to the ceremony they can see it right away
3. Your officiant can make an announcement before the ceremony starts to remind guests to silence their phones and keep them away to be more present in the moment with you!





PREFERRED
VENDORS

VIDEOGRAPHERS

DIMISTUDIOS
AARONDANIELFILMS

PLANNERS

LQ EVENTSV

OFFICIANT NAME

MAECK WEDDINGS

SINGER

BIANCA BERNARDI

FLORISTS

STICK AND STONES
BILLIEFLOWERCO

MUA + HAIR

NIKYLA HLADIO ARTISTRY