



# creating your wedding timeline

The purpose of creating a time-line for your wedding day is to ensure everything that will happen from start to finish is included and timings calculated so your day unfolds as smoothly as possible. The timeline is a guide so that everyone has a plan to follow, and knows what's happening, by who, and when. Even for couples who want a relaxed wedding, a time-line is vital to ensure this occurs.

When creating your timeline always start with the time your ceremony will begin, and work backwards and forwards to schedule everything taking place and allocate the timings.

This task may seem daunting but work through it carefully on a spreadsheet and it will start taking shape. Ask your suppliers for advice about timings and once you've finalised the timeline, distribute this to your key suppliers and people involved in your wedding. Keep in mind the timeline is intended as a guide to work towards and your wedding will not fall to pieces if the timings don't go exactly as planned. If you're working with a wedding co-ordinator they will keep an eye on timings and communicate with suppliers and make adjustments as necessary. Otherwise this can also be a task your MC can manage.

## HAIR & MAKEUP

Your hairdresser and makeup artist will confirm their start time, based on how many ladies require hair & makeup, and the time you need to be ready for first photos and/or your ceremony start time. Often this begins between 7-9am. As a guide allow 45mins per person and one hour for the bride. Usually the bride is last. For larger groups often assistants ensure they complete everyone on time.

## BREAKFAST

It's going to be a long day, and you may not feel hungry but it's very important to eat. Organise a light breakfast, ideally finger foods so you can easily eat while getting ready, or have breakfast together early. Bubbles, mimosas (prosecco & juice) is a refreshing start to celebrate your day.

## BRIDE GETTING DRESSED

Allocate at least 15mins for the bride to get dressed then have photos with bridesmaids, which can be up to 30mins.

While you're getting ready your photographer will often take beautiful detail shots. Both parties should unpack and have these ready for the photographer to choose what to photograph. Place your wedding invitations, jewellery, bouquets, any special items on a table, hang your wedding dress, bridesmaids dresses and accessories, line your shoes up.

## **FAMILY REVEAL**

If you're having a reveal once you're dressed as a special moment with parents and siblings, allocate at least 15minutes, including photos.

## **FIRST LOOK**

For a first look with your partner as a beautiful, private time to emotionally connect, allocate up to 20mins. Choose a place that's special for you. Ensure you include the travel time to/from the first look location and work out timings for both of you to arrive and get into place, ensuring you don't see each other. Your photographer can help with this.

## **TRAVEL TIME**

Calculate the travel time from getting ready locations and the ceremony, for both parties. You can do this using google maps. Also check if there is anything taking place that day that could delay traffic and include some wiggle time, especially if busy routes on a weekend.

We recommend the grooms party arrives 15mins prior to the ceremony start time to mingle with guests. The brides party should arrive 5mins before the ceremony start, to arrive and compose herself before the bridal entrance. This can also vary depending on your ceremony location and number in the bridal party. Keep in mind you don't want to arrive too early or late.

## **YOUR CEREMONY**

The ceremony will take 20-30mins, depending what's included, so ask your celebrant to confirm how long you should allocate.

## **CONGRATS**

Immediately following your ceremony we recommend you include 10-15minutes of congratulations before family photos start.

## **GROUP AND FAMILY PHOTOS**

Immediately after the congrats is the perfect time for your MC to introduce themselves and ask everyone to gather for a group photo, then family photos. We suggest allowing around 20minutes, but this depends on the amount of family photos you want. As a guide each photo should take around 2 minutes per shot, but double check the timings with your photographer.

We recommend asking a 'bossy' friend to gather people in their groups so they are ready for each next photo, so these are taken quickly.

## **BRIDAL PARTY PHOTOS**

Bridal Party photos are typically between 1-2hrs depending on the destination/s for the photos and type of photos you want.

## **RECEPTION DINNER**

Your caterers will let you know timings based on the type of meal service you have chosen.

## **SPEECHES**

Decide if your speeches will happen before meal service or between courses. We'll often split the speeches to before and after the main.

Consider asking caterers to stop service so the speakers have undivided attention. Also discuss whether glasses are to be refilled for toasts, or bottles placed on tables. For all speeches your MC should introduce each speaker.

## **CAKE CUTTING**

Traditionally cutting the cake takes place after dinner, but we often schedule this when the bride and groom are introduced into the venue or after the first speech. This also allows the caterer (or whoever is cutting the cake) time to remove, cut and plate the cake.

## **GOLDEN HOUR/SUNSET PHOTOS**

I recommend including this purely because it's a very special time to connect, enjoy time together and have romantic photos. Allocate 20mins and check the time sunset will take place, or ask your photographer.

## **ENTERTAINMENT**

This is another key area to work backwards, to ensure you get value for money (and maximum entertainment). If your band charges for 3hrs, and your venue close is 11.30, ideally you want to adjust your timings so that band starts at 8.30.

Download our excel timeline spreadsheet and adjust and create your own wedding timeline.