

## T I M E L I N E   P L A N N I N G

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STEP 1 - If you are planning to have your ceremony in the afternoon or into the evening, I recommend you first find out the sunset time. You can do this by searching the following on Google:

“Sunset time [Wedding Date] [City/State you’re getting married in]”

STEP 2 - A good rule of thumb is to have your ceremony start an hour and a half before your sunset time at the latest. And two hours before sunset for your invitations. This will give your guests 30 minutes to arrive and find their seats.

Ex:

Sunset Time on October 9th in Seattle, WA is at 6:30 PM, so the latest the ceremony could start would be at 5:00 PM. However, the ceremony can start at an earlier time if desired.

STEP 3 - After figuring out the ceremony start time, we can backtrack to when we would like to have the photography start time. This will depend on the things that you would need captured, such as:

### Flatlays & detail shots (Approx. 45 minutes)

- The bridal dress hung up
- Shots of wedding day accessories (Earrings, bracelets, wedding rings/boxes, invitations, envelopes, bouquets, perfume, etc.)

### Getting ready shots (Approx. 30 minutes)

- Bride and bridesmaids in robes
- Final hair & make-up
- Getting ready candids of bride, groom & bridal party
- The groom reads a letter / opens a gift from the bride

### Bride in the Dress / Bridal Session (Approx. 45 minutes)

- Mom/bridesmaid “helping the bride zip/button up her dress”
- Mom/bridesmaid helping the bride put her veil on
- Full-length shots of the bride in her dress
- The bride reads a letter / opens a gift from the groom

### First Looks / Touch (Approx. 30 minutes)

- Bride dress reveal with bridesmaids
- Bride’s first look with Dad, Grandparent, or a Sibling
- Groom’s first look with Mom, Grandparent, or a Sibling
- Bride & Groom first look/touch
- Private vow reading

### Venue shots (Approx. 15 minutes)

- Exterior/interior venue shots
- Reception set-up shots
- Shots of the dessert table, signage, decor, place cards, etc.

### Bridal Group/Solo Shots (Approx. 30 minutes)

\*\*\*\*These shots can be done before or after the ceremony

\*\*\*\*Larger groups might take longer

- Bride individual portrait with each bridesmaid
- Bridesmaids group photo
- Bridesmaids bouquet shots
- Groom solo portraits
- Groom individual portrait with each groomsman
- Groomsmen group photo
- Bride solo portraits

### Couple Pictures (Approx. 20 to 30 minutes)

\*\*\*\*These shots can be done before or after the ceremony and can replace sunset photos if were in a time crunch.

- Private Bride & Groom photo session throughout the venue/property or offsite location.

\*\*\* If your ceremony and reception are not at the same location, \*\*\*  
\*\*\* please factor in the drive time \*\*\*

## STEP 4 -

### Ceremony Duration:

Most ceremonies last around 20-40 minutes. If more than 40 minutes, please factor it into the time you'll need before sunset. After the ceremony, we shoot family group pictures. This can last about 15 to 20 minutes. My golden shot list below can help speed things up if followed in this order:

### BRIDE SIDE

- Grandparents
- Grandparents, add: Parents & Siblings
- Parents & Siblings (Grandparents are done)
- Siblings, Add: sibling's spouses/kids (Parents step to the side)
- Parents (Divorced parents can take turns if it applies)
- Both the Bride & Groom's set of parents

### GROOM SIDE

- Parents (Divorced parents can take turns if it applies)
- Parents, add Grandparents & Siblings
- Grandparents (Parents & Siblings step to the side)
- Parents & Siblings (Grandparents are done)
- Siblings, Add: sibling's spouses/kids (Parents are done)

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## WEDDING PARTY

Bride & Groom with Flower Girl & Ring Boy  
Bride & Groom with Bridesmaids  
Bride & Groom with Groomsmen  
Bride & Groom with Full Wedding party

\*\*\*\*Extended family (Uncles/Aunts, Cousins, etc.) & friends \*\*\*\*  
\*\*\* will get a picture opportunity during the Smile & Dash Game \*\*\*

### STEP 5 - SUNSET PHOTOS (Approx. 20 minutes)

If you don't plan on taking pictures before the ceremony make sure to include a 20-minute slot for sunset photos in your schedule. Ideally, you'd like to take pictures before and after the ceremony but if you had to only choose one, I'd recommend doing the sunset pictures over the pre-ceremony couple portraits. If you have a late sunset, you can also "sneak out" for pictures after you've had dinner. Please let your coordinator/planner know about this so they can include it in the schedule.

### STEP 6 - Now we can plan the reception. Here you can customize it however you'd like or you can ask the DJ to guide you. Here are a few of the most common events to plan for and their average duration:

#### Reception

- Wedding party & Newlyweds special entrances (10 Minutes)
- First Dance (5 Minutes)
- Smile & Dash Game (3 minutes)
- Prayer / Serve Dinner (45 Minutes)
- Sneak out for Sunset Photos (25 minutes)
- Father/Bride and Mother/Groom dances (10 minutes)
- Toasts & Speeches (Try to limit speakers to 2 minutes each)
- Cake cutting (5 Minutes)
- Bouquet / Garter Toss (10 Minutes)
- Dance Floor & Mingling (2 hours)
- Private last dance (5 Minutes)
- Bride and Groom exit (10 Minutes)

### SMILE & - DASH GAME

Try doing this game right after your grand entrance (it can serve as a fun ice breaker and you'll get to catch everyone before they start to leave)

Your DJ or announcer of the night will explain how this game works. First, they need to make sure everyone is seated at their tables. Then they will say: The objective of this game is for the Bride & Groom to run and take a picture with each table before the song I will play runs out! Fun poses are highly encouraged! Can we do it?  
\*Plays song of your choice\*

## ROUGH TIMELINE EXAMPLE

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- 11:00 AM - Photographer arrival, detail shots & dress shots
- 12:30 PM - Robe/gown shots/ getting ready pics
- 1:00 PM - Bride and bridesmaids start getting dressed, groomsmen portraits
- 1:30 PM - Dress zip-up with Mom and/or Maid of Honor
- 1:40 PM - First look w/ bridesmaids, father, groom
- 2:00 PM - Indoor group shots with wedding party, gift exchange pics, bridal shots
- 4:30 PM - Guests begin to arrive
- 5:00 PM - Ceremony starts
- 5:30 PM - Family Group shots/cocktail hour
- 5:45 PM - Outdoor Wedding party/couple pictures
- 6:00 PM - Private sunset photo time (sunset is at 6:30 PM)
- 6:30 PM - Grand entrance
- 6:35 PM - Smile & Dash game
- 6:40 PM - Start dinner
- 7:10 PM - Speeches / toasts
- 7:30 PM - Cut the Cake | Dancing | Bouquet toss etc.
- 9:00 PM - Sparkler exit/bubbles etc.