



Down The Aisle

WEDDING SPECIALISTS



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**A2**

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## BUILDING YOUR TIMELINE

Your timeline needs to be customized to your event. Once again a timeline needs to be customized to your event.

It is tough to help you build a timeline without knowing the ins and outs of your wedding day. What we can do, is give you a few 'anchor points' that you will want to keep top of mind when building that itinerary.

For starters, your ceremony start time is going to act as the major anchor point, what time have you finalized?

**CEREMONY START TIME**

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Next, will you be doing a First Look? Even though each wedding is unique there are essentially two timeline formats, the key difference being if you do a First Look or not.

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How about transportation time? Think through your 'to and fro' for the day and record the respective travel time + buffer period below.

- Are you getting ready at the ceremony site?
- Is the reception being held at the same venue as the ceremony?
- Will your portraits take place at a separate venue, like a park or green space?
- Total Transportation Time + Buffer =



## BUILDING YOUR TIMELINE

Now let's move on to the reception celebration and your meal service. Have you planned a buffet or a plated option? For a buffet we will need to consider that not all guests can eat at the same time and the service takes longer from start to finish.

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And lastly, you want to think through your reception program - which traditions do you want to include?

Pro Tip - Your photographer/videographer is contracted for a set time frame and best to organize these activities while they are 'on the clock'.

- Grand Entrance
- Couple's First Dance
- Wedding Speeches
- Family Dances
- Cake Cutting
- Bouquet Toss
- Garter Toss
- Last Dance
- The Grand Exit

Any other activities that you want to make time for? Table visits, trivia game, a special family or cultural tradition?

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## BUILDING YOUR TIMELINE

For this next step you will need to engage your vendors. Below is a list of professionals that we commonly need to consider when building our timeline, be sure to reach out and determine how much time they require come event day.

Pro Tip - Provide each vendor a copy of your finalized timeline to double check that the respective time blocks work for both of you.

On average, how much time does your hair and make up team need to style both a bride and bridesmaid?

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Consult with your officiant - approximately how long will your ceremony will be?

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And how many hours have you scheduled with your photographer / videographer?  
How much time do they want for your ready shots, portraits and family photos?

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The event end time is of course our final anchor point. Does your venue have a strict last call or curfew that you need to be aware of - you would hate to plan your sparkler send off + closing toasts for midnight if last call happens at 11pm.

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## BUILDING YOUR TIMELINE

### THE GUIDING 'RULES OF THUMB'

We cannot stress it enough that you need to build a timeline that is customized to your wedding day and its unique logistics. Transportation time is also another point that we want to drive home as so many couples forget this tidbit and that can be derailing.

To help you work through this step we have made a list of our top 'Rules of Thumb' as a sort of checklist that you can reference when building your wedding day timeline.

Naturally, the more boxes you check off, the stronger your timeline.

- Plan your ceremony start time to match what is on the invitation
- You need to be in your dress at least 90 minutes before the ceremony starts
- If you are planning a First Look be ready at least 3 hours before the ceremony
- First guest arrives 30 mins before ceremony; set up needs to be done by then
- Wedding party needs to be on site and hidden away at least 30 mins prior
- The average ceremony is 30 to 45 minutes in length
- Cocktail hour, aptly named, is planned for one hour before meal is served
- Photographers will want at least an hour for portraits and family photos
- On average a meal service will take 45 to 60 minutes (100 - 150 guest count)
- Toasts should start 10 mins after your last table has received their meal
- Wedding speeches should be approx 30 minutes - 5 mins per person
- Family dances traditionally happen after the meal service
- Cake cutting + bouquet and garter toss are best lumped together (5 min each)
- 15 minute buffer in your timeline is normal and nothing to stress over
- Have you accounted for travel time?? Please say yes.

## CHAPTER SEVEN CHECKPOINTS

We got through it! Building a timeline is a bit challenging as there are a number of moving parts we need to coordinate but you have done great. Don't forget to send a copy to your vendors and the wedding party. We want everyone on the same page.

- Revisit Vendor Contracts for Time Blocks (Photographer + Videographer)
- Finalize your Ceremony Start Time and Reception End Time
- Review Timeline with Vendors for Input + Confirm Itinerary
- Determine Wedding Traditions to Include in Program
- Finalize your Transportation Plans and Determine Travel Time
- Build Your Timeline and Complete Rule of Thumb Checklist

## HOMEWORK + NEXT STEPS

Next we have to think about event logistics - AKA what is it going to take to bring all our wedding plans together in a way that is both efficient and elegant. A bit daunting yes, but take a deep breath and relax, we got you, and even better, we have a plan.

- Review your wedding day timeline and plan a dry run + site walk through
- Read through all of your contracts again - be sure to hone in on fine print
- Consider the season and what that means for weather (hot, cold, wind, rain)
- Revisit your contingency plans - what is the plan for bad weather?
- Who are your helpers? Have you hired pros or relying on family + friends?
- Review your guest list for any special requirements you need to accommodate



# NOTES + TAKE AWAYS

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Thank you

**WE ARE GRATEFUL AND HONORED**  
TO BE A PART OF YOUR WEDDING PLANNING



**LEARN MORE ABOUT US**

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