

A full-page photograph of a wedding couple standing on a rocky mountain peak. The bride is in a white dress holding a bouquet, and the groom is in a dark suit. They are looking out over a vast mountain range under a blue sky with light clouds. The foreground shows dry grass and rocks. The image is framed by a white decorative border with rounded corners. The text 'WEDDING PLANNING TIPS' is overlaid in large white letters, and 'AUTUMN PINES PHOTOGRAPHY' is overlaid in smaller white letters below it.

WEDDING PLANNING TIPS

AUTUMN PINES PHOTOGRAPHY



GETTING READY

Getting ready for a wedding is a very genuine moment for everyone. Hanging out, getting prepared, and sharing excited laughter and intimate moments with the people dearest to you.

Here are some pointers when getting ready to help the flow of the photography and focus on the moments.

Clutter: There is a TON of things going on in the getting ready stage. Laundry is lying about, empty coffee cups from breakfast; suitcases are lying near the bed. Try to keep clutter hidden in a closet if at all possible. This way while photographing the getting ready stage there is nothing distracting in the photos.



Hair/Makeup: If you are working with a hair and makeup artist they will need the best possible light, and a lot of it. Set up your hair and makeup stage, if possible, near a large window with a lot of light.

Light: Window light is a wondrous thing; it is both beautiful, and soft. The calming effect of the light makes it perfect for getting ready portraits. If possible, make sure that the room you get ready in has a lot of windows.



FIRST LOOKS

I love first looks. I love how simple, genuine and intimate they are. A first look shoot is when the couple sees each other for the first time before the ceremony. The location is generally a quiet private setting where the couple can share a moment together before the events begin.

If you love the idea of a first look I highly recommend them for several reasons:

- It helps set the pace for a smooth ceremony and reception. Seeing each other for the first time together privately before the ceremony and the guests can help calm you. It helps you take a moment to really just take it all in and share what you are feeling with each other at that exact moment.

- They're beautiful. I love capturing the expressions of the couple together when they know that they are the only two there and they can just "be" for a moment.

- It makes the wedding timeline easier to work with. If you decide to see each other before the ceremony, it gives ample time to photograph the family on both sides, the bridal party, and then sneak in a few couples portraits. It keeps everyone in the same place instead of having to corral people away from the cocktail hour or reception for photos.

If first looks are not your thing, and you have always wanted to walk down the aisle for the first glimpse of each other, then do it that way. This is your wedding day; it's a very special day, do it the way you want.





Ceremony & Reception Lighting

CEREMONY LIGHTING:

Outdoor weddings are my favorite. The backdrop of nature behind a couple is simply gorgeous. When getting married outside, the sun is a very important element to consider. Harsh uneven spotty light is not ideal during the ceremony, especially for your eyes. You do not want to be squinting during your ceremony.

If you are going to have your ceremony close to midday, aim to have the ceremony in a location where the sun is behind you and the officiant. This creates an even backlight and can help create beautiful photographs.

The most ideal light for a wedding ceremony is easier in the morning or later in the day where the sun is lower in the sky. If you are having an evening ceremony, just make sure to allot enough time for portraits around sunset.

RECEPTION LIGHTING:

Bold string lights and candles are great for receptions, especially when you provide enough of that light for the photos. Try to stay away from too dim of light or only using candles as dark light makes it harder to focus the camera lens.

PORTRAITS

FAMILY | COUPLES

WEDDING PARTY



Like I mentioned earlier in the First Look portion, the best time for family and bridal party portraits is before the ceremony. Everyone is ready to go and accounted for.

Of course, it is possible to do all these portraits after the ceremony too, but it can be cumbersome tasks to gather everyone back together once the cocktail hour or reception has started.

If you do prefer to do group portraits after the ceremony, then I recommend having someone designated as a “**wrangler**” on both sides of the wedding party. This person’s job is to make sure that the people needed for family portraits are present and accounted for. That way the couple does not have to constantly worry about where their family members are.



Expect 30 minutes to photograph immediate family and the bridal party (unless you have a huge immediate family – like 20 or more people on both sides, then shoot for 40 minutes on the safe side). I do recommend keeping the list short; you do not want to spend the majority of your wedding day smiling and posing in front of the camera with a whole bunch of different groups. It can get pretty tiring.

For couples portraits I recommend two portrait sessions: 20 minutes right after the first look, (or ceremony) and 20 minutes around sunset. Near sunset begins the golden hour, the time where the light is golden and is just beautiful.

If there is not enough time for two sessions, we can join them into one 30 minute session.



TIMELINES

MORNING CEREMONY

EARLY AFTERNOON

LATE AFTERNOON CEREMONY

EARLY AFTERNOON WEDDING

Want to meet somewhere in the middle? An early afternoon wedding is a great compromise between a morning and late afternoon ceremony.

- 9:00am – Getting Ready / Hair and Makeup Starts
- 10:30am – Photographer
- 10:30am – Vendors Arrive
- 11:30am – First Look and Couples Portraits
- 12:00pm – Bridal Party and Family Portraits
- 12:30pm – Guests begin to arrive
- 1:00pm – Ceremony Starts
- 1:20pm – Ceremony Ends
- 1:30pm – Cocktail Hour begins / additional family photos
- 2:30pm – Lunch Starts
- 3:00pm – Toasts
- 3:30pm – First Dance
- 3:35pm – Couples dance with family
- 3:45pm – Dance floor opens/ lawn games begin
- 5:00pm – Cake Cutting
- 6:30pm – Guests depart
- 6:30pm – Photographer Departs

LATE AFTERNOON WEDDING

The most common timeline for a wedding is a 4pm start time and a 10pm reception end time. Of course this is a generic timeline; feel free to add in your own special parts that make your day unique:

- 11:00am – Getting Ready/Hair & Makeup
- 1:00pm – Photographer arrives – getting ready photos
- 2:00pm – Vendors arrive for setup
- 2:20pm – First Look
- 2:30pm – Wedding Party and Family Photos Start
- 3:30pm – Guests begin to arrive- Pre Ceremony Music Starts
- 4:00pm – Ceremony Starts
- 4:20pm – Ceremony Ends
- 4:25pm – Cocktail Hour Begins
- 4:30pm – Couples Portraits
- 5:00pm – Couples Portraits End
- 5:45pm – Move Guests into Dinner
- 6:00pm – Dinner Begins
- 6:40pm – Toasts Begin
- 7:00pm – First Dance
- 7:05pm – Couples dance with parents
- 7:15pm – Dance floor opens
- 8:00pm – Photographs of Couple at Sunset
- 8:40pm – Desert
- 9:00pm – Photographer Departs
- 9:45pm – Last Call
- 9:55pm – Last Dance
- 10:00pm – Guests depart

MORNING CEREMONY

Morning ceremonies can be really awesome. The light is soft and beautiful for the reception and this is generally a very kid friendly time line. This timeline is great if you want to have your own special dinner alone with your partner on your wedding night.

- 7:00am – Getting Ready / Hair and Makeup
- 8:00am – Photographer arrives getting ready photos
- 8:30am – Vendors arrives to setup
- 9:00am – First Look and Couple's Portraits (9:00am can have)
- 9:30am – Bridal Party and Family Photos
- 10:00am – Guests begin to arrive
- 10:30am – Ceremony Starts
- 10:50am – Ceremony Ends
- 11:00am – Cocktail hour
- 11:05am – Additional Family Photos
- 11:30am – Brunch Starts
- 12:15pm – Toasts
- 12:30pm – First Dance
- 12:35pm – Couples dance with family
- 12:40pm – Dance floor opens – lawn games begin
- 2:00pm – Dessert
- 3:00pm – Guests Depart / Photographer Departs