



The essential guide to your big day's photography

We hope you'll agree just how important your wedding day, and of course, your photography is to you. With that in mind, we've created this guide which we hope you'll find invaluable. It also addresses all those How? What? When and How much? questions you'll have both before and after your big day. The emphasis is very much on having lots of fun on the day, being totally relaxed and at ease with us; enjoying the whole photographic experience and getting the best out of the day having been armed with all the tricks of the trade.



Booking and payment

£250 secures your booking providing we are able to attend your wedding. The remainder is due 2-3 weeks before the wedding. The album can be chosen after your wedding. (don't forget styles do change and it may be 2-3 years after first seeing us that you finalize your album). You will also need to complete and sign two copies of our "agreement". The price of the basic package (excluding albums and reprints) will be guaranteed despite any further price increases. The cost of albums and reprints can be viewed via our website and subject to change.

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Top Tips!

Make sure you meet the actual photographer(s) who will be shooting your big day; you'll be spending much of your day together! Sharing a good rapport with them is essential, so that you're totally relaxed and look fantastic. Some photographers (like us!) offer a complimentary shoot before the wedding ; a great excuse to take lots of fun, informal photos and an invaluable ice-breaker!



Ensure you view at least one complete wedding by the photographer. It's easy to take ten good pictures , but what about the other 500 or more? View their online weddings and check for consistently high quality throughout their work.

Will you have exclusive use of the reception venue or are there other weddings taking place? Are the grounds open to the general public? Busy gardens can restrict your photography.



Watch out for any 'hidden' extras. How many pictures do you actually get? How much are reprints? VAT? Are deposits included?

What happens in case of inclement weather?

What happens in case of technical problems? Is there a second photographer /back-up equipment? Is he/she insured? Is your photographer qualified or a member of a recognised professional body (eg. BIPP, MPA)?

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More Top Tips!

Is your photographer spontaneous or does he/she work from long-winded lists? Will he/she play 'the sergeant major' or contribute to the fun and entertainment? How much experience does your photographer have, look beyond their perfect show albums and hard sell.



You don't want to spend all day glued to your photographer; leave enough time to mingle with guests and to soak up the real excitement of your big day. Allow three hours from the ceremony time to 'sit-down' as a very general guide, but longer is often advisable dependent on number of venues, travelling time etc. We shall be happy to discuss this with you.



Do your photographers love what they do... or is it just a job?

The Schedule is one of the most important factors in creating a successful day, take advice on timing from people without ulterior motives, and give yourself plenty of time,

Delegate! Stress as much as you like before the day then delegate all your tasks to other people so that everyone may enjoy the day, especially you!

Reduce the number of formal shots to the ones that really count, and don't suddenly add extras on the day,

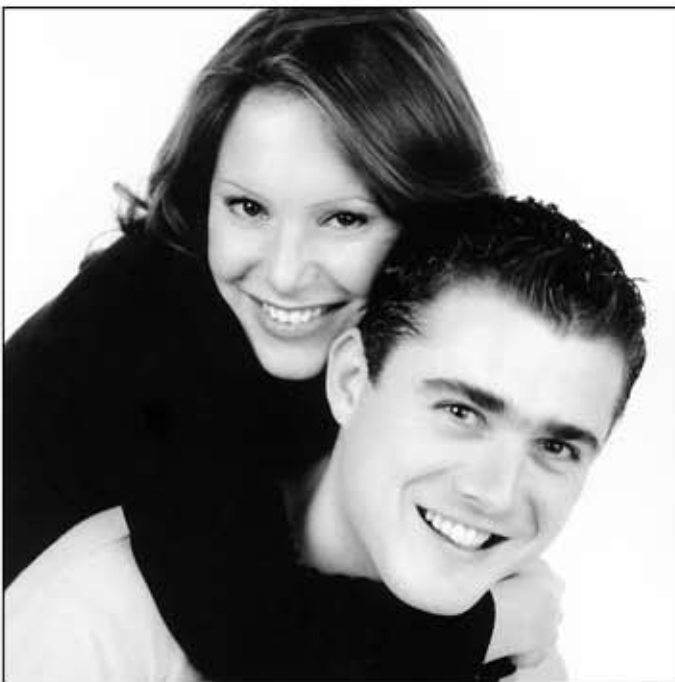
Have fun and don't be afraid to show it! Listen to advice from the key people involved in the wedding. However remember it's your day, forget how you have been told your wedding should be, the only real rules are the ones you make up.

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Pre-wedding shoot and chat

This contemporary sitting and chat normally takes place in our Redditch studio 2-3 weeks before the wedding. It is designed to "break the ice" and show you how we work. The sitting and CD of images taken are complimentary. You may wish to use a print for your invitations or for use on your table plan/tables or on a large piece of card for guests to sign on the day, which you may choose to frame at a later date. Casual, plain clothes work best. The sitting is very relaxed. Our chat is based on a short questionnaire which we ask you to complete and bring with you. It details the day, schedule, timings, bridal party, special requests etc and of course it is an invaluable opportunity to get to know each other better, so that we can share a close and fun rapport on the day – the best way to achieve fantastic images on the day! Allow 1.5 hours for this session; Please email or phone for a suitable appointment. We try hard to accommodate clients outside normal working hours for your convenience, and generally open Tuesday to Friday with one late evening per week (yes, we do work at weekends but are normally out photographing a wedding!!)



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Directions for the Big Day

PLEASE ensure that we have HIGHLY accurate, water-tight directions and maps to ALL the venues being used. Eg to the parents house; house to church; church to reception. This is probably the MOST useful preparation we request and is essential! Directions from the internet are as useful as chocolate fireguards! Inaccurate directions have caused delays and tears in the past! Postcodes, phone numbers and addresses are essential; we don't rely on 'satnav' – you can't beat good old fashioned directions (left at the pub, 2nd right at Tesco's etc is just the ticket!).



Timings on the wedding day

We aim to spend at least an hour at wherever the bride is getting ready to photograph all the 'detail' shots (eg dress, shoes etc). Real-life photos work best – so photos of you being made up, general 'faffing', putting on your shoes, doing up your dress etc are great! Photographing it as it happens, works best, so call us back into the room when you're decent but not quite ready!!

It also saves lots of time if you can have all the bridal shoes, flowers, perfume, jewellery etc together for photographing.

We then aim to arrive at the ceremony 30 minutes before the ceremony time. Please ensure that the guys (best man, groom, ushers etc) arrive in good time to be photographed before vanishing into the clutches of the registrars etc. Whilst it might be fashionable for the bride to arrive late, this inevitably means that your schedule will suffer and the photography will be compromised. If you value your photos, please allow us enough time, throughout the day. The impossible we can of course do, but miracles do take a little longer!! When planning your day, PLEASE allow a little longer for everything! This is no ordinary day – there are lots of things which will slow you down: your dress, powder room breaks, not to mention a natural desire to chat with guests, drinking and having a great time!!

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Civil-ceremonies: please remind your registrar (at the pre-meeting) that you value your wedding photographs and wish to cherish them for many years. Sadly, some registrars have added a new meaning to the term "jobsworth" and will only allow the photographer(s) to pose the signing of the register. Others are very obliging and let you photograph anything from the exchange of rings to the whole ceremony from the front. We do not use flash during the ceremony nor do we "fidget" or wonder around! The attitude of registrars is very inconsistent even within the same area. Pressure on the registrars may finally clean out this dictatorial and unfair practice. As for church weddings: beware of any weddings before or after yours – some "factory churches" will cram in as many weddings on a Saturday as their wallets will allow, not considering time for photos before or after the ceremony.

We normally leave when you sit down for your wedding breakfast having posed the cake-cutting and photographed the (empty) tables. This is normally our final task.



Again, please leave enough time for your photographs when planning meal times. We can discuss this with you before you commit yourselves. Remember that if you want a line-up before your meal this will take anything from 20-45 minutes. Knowing how long these take, your venue may ask you to do your line up BEFORE your photos. This ensures that the meal is not spoilt but can be absolutely disastrous to your photography. During our `wedding from hell' the line-up was done before the photographs; this took 50 minutes which left us with just 10 minutes to shoot ALL the photos.

The most important question we will ask you is "What time do we need to finish taking photos, in order for you to eat on time? Remember you may have to do a line-up before eating or perhaps even do your speeches. Unless we suffer unexpected circumstances or bad weather etc, we will finish taking photos within 5 minutes of the agreed and allotted time. PLEASE double check this time with the caterers/organiser/MC/venue etc. Although you may agree a particular time with us beforehand this is rarely the time that the venue adhere to, so it is paramount that we all work to the same time.

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It never ceases to amaze us how many times we are approached often 30 minutes before the agreed time by the function manager to ask us to stop. Poor communication is normally the reason. We pace ourselves critically to the time agreed and finishing early WILL severely handicap your coverage. Just as important is the extra time in which to enjoy your wedding and talk to your guests. We normally do the larger shots first and leave the bride and groom shots until last – it is these shots which will suffer if we have to finish early. PLEASE double-check these timings. If you tell us we have until say 4.30pm then this is the time to which we will adhere, not 4.15 and not 4pm!

Some hotels will advise you of a time they suggest you should sit down, they do not always do this for your benefit, so ensure you have the optimum time for your day. We often advise a minimum of an hour and a half between the end of your civil service (or arrival at the reception), till the start of the line up / sit down (whichever is first). It is important you communicate this information to your venue, and stress to them it is for your benefit not the photographers. Don't be fobbed off by tales that your guests will get bored, 'its your day'; we're sure your guests can entertain themselves for 90 minutes in the bar!



Bridal party duties

It is customary for the best man, ushers and bridesmaids to assist you to ensure the smooth running of the day. Most ushers think their roll is to prop-up the bar! Whilst we don't want to curtail anyone having a fantastic day we would remind you that bridesmaids are "maids to the bride" and there to assist you (eg attending to your dress, especially when the ground is wet or uneven). It's amazing how often the bride is deserted when she most needs help. The guys' help is also invaluable in coordinating and locating guests when we do group shots – we hope you will convey this message!! It will save a lot of time and hassle.

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Inclement weather

In case of bad weather, we shall endeavour to stay inside and use flash photography. Ideally, what works best is the EXCLUSIVE use of a room (lounge/library etc) so that we can safely erect lamps on stands with limited disruption. Please ask your venue if they have such a room - many thanks. Rain is the obvious challenge, but it rarely rains ALL afternoon. In the case of intermittent rain we request that you ask the ushers/best man to keep an eye on the weather and let us know when we can sneak out for some shots. This is where the fast, organizational skills of your bridal party really come into their own.



Large Group shots

Herding cats is easy peasy compared with gathering your guests together. We normally try and get the large group shots done first to enable the large majority of people to go back to the bar and enjoy themselves! We shall ask you to recommend an upstairs window from which we can shoot all the large groups (groups consisting of more than 15 people) who will be down below hopefully on the lawn. We suggest the large groups are as follows:

1. Shot of everyone
2. Anyone related to the bride
3. Anyone related to the groom
4. All friends (non family)
5. Any groups over 15 people (eg friends from work; stag- do, hen-do etc)



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Directly after taking the large groups we will photograph the Bride and Grooms immediate family, parents, siblings (partners and kids), grandparents and children. After this, please specify any special requests. Any groups with over 15 people **MUST** be requested before or whilst we do the 'aerial' shot from the upstairs window. Large groups at ground level rarely work.

If you are all staying at your venue please ensure that key people don't vanish during the photocall, (eg by checking into their rooms, feeding children etc, especially on arrival straight from the ceremony).

To ensure the smooth running of the day it is **IMPERATIVE** that your best man and ushers are familiar with how we are going to shoot the groups. Their help in clearing the bars and getting people together quickly is paramount. Otherwise these shots go on forever and will slow down your big day and fun. Please also ensure your parents are aware of the groups that will be taken. Although it really is your day, parents may have other ideas about the photography, so it is best to sort out any politics before the day.

For a more comfortable and relaxed day it is best to keep formal shots to a minimum.



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After the wedding:

Please ring us when you return from honeymoon to organize collection of the following and to discuss album choices and layout.

1) Thank you cards:

Choose ONE photo you want for your thank you cards. Choose from either the photos published on our website or wait until you collect your CD from us. If you order from the internet, you'll need to actually 'order' the print as if you are purchasing a reprint. You won't need to pay for the prints, just write "thank you cards" in the additional information box and state if you want b/w, colour, sepia or hand tinted. Pick a portrait (upright) photo to best fit the card. Extra cards are available; price as advertised. You should already have the blank cards to write out - these are given to you at the pre-wedding chat. Once you receive your prints, simply pritt-stick them onto the front of the card.



Your CD

Your CD contains nearly all the photos taken on the day and this will contain hundreds of images. It is yours to keep and you don't ever need to return it.

We pride ourselves on the time and care we take to produce only the highest quality prints from your CD. All the images will appear in colour on the CD but these original Your Big Day images can be printed in B/White, colour, sepia or hand-tinted to your specification and often manipulated or 'air-brushed' at no extra cost.

We respectfully ask you not to copy the images on the CD which are unsuitable for reproduction at this stage, a high resolution CD is available for purchase on request.

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Web Photos

Unless otherwise agreed, a selection of your photos will appear on our website (in our on-line photo section) the Friday after the wedding. Delays may occur at peak times. You may wish to email your guests with our link (www.yourbigday.net) . Perhaps your best man could kindly mention the website during his speech. Please remember that these are only the highlights of the day and will not include all the variations of shots/groups taken. Your CD will include a comprehensive selection of the photos taken on the day (typically 750 to 1000 images) and as your close family and friends will no doubt view it, we don't go overboard with these on the internet. There will be hundreds more photos on your CD and you may of course order reprints from your CD later. Prints can be ordered using the reprint price list given to you when you collect your CD. There isn't really a time-limit on ordering reprints but we often run special offers if you order within 6 weeks of your wedding.



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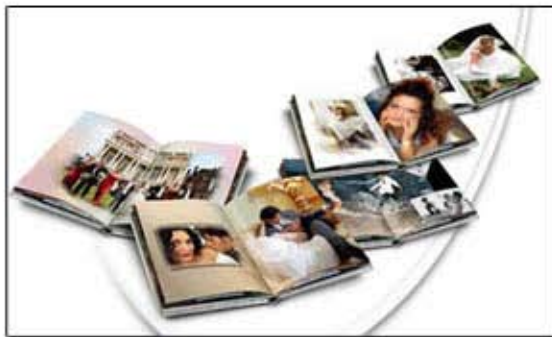
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Designing your album

Our very unique albums and our intrinsic designs really do bring your images alive and set us leagues apart from our colleagues. Even the best images look so much better finished well in a good album. Below are a few general reminders of how to progress. This process does vary depending on the particular album chosen. Designs and specifications do change over time to what you may have viewed when you first booked us.

The first step is to choose exactly which album you want. A selection of our albums are viewable online. In a nutshell there are two different kinds of albums;

1 The magazine style album eg. graphistudio or Italian designer album. as the name suggests this consists of multiple images on a single page without the use of lots of overlays/mounts.



1 The magazine style album



2 Multiple aperture albums: eg. Jorgensen albums. This is a modern - looking yet more traditional album in its approach, whereby each photograph has its own individual 'window' within a card mount,



2 Multiple aperture album



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Having established which album you want, make a short-list of the shots you like. Everything that appears on the internet will also be given to you as a 6"x4" proof and a thumbnail. Use these as a starting block for your design. Cut up the thumbnails and discard what you dislike editing them down to a sensible number. REMEMBER: less is more! Be brutal in your selection. Pick only the best and try not to pick shots that are too similar (unless you wish to create the occasional sequence – eg throwing confetti). Supplement these with images with extras from your CD. It is best to print these as thumbnails and add them to your selection. The thumbnails MUST include the full file reference number (eg A110345AA), (select a maximum of 100-120 photos).

Put your pictures into chronological order, you may find it easier to lay them out in lines on a large table. Then sort them into chapters (eg: bride's detail shots, bride getting ready, guys arriving at ceremony, the ceremony, group shots, reception etc). Now simply layout the chapters into the pages of the book. If you are having a forty page album take ten sheets of A4 paper and fold them in half to create an A5 booklet which will now have 40 sides. Glue your thumbnails to the appropriate page of the booklet. If you have preferences please let us know. eg. size of photos, colour or b&w; positioning etc. and we will do our best to accommodate them, album and design permitting. Write your instructions on the page next to the thumbnail.



To get the best out of your album you may wish to have your favorite images on their own pages. Don't be afraid to have one image on one page and a group of images on the following page, this will add variety to your album. Also think about the first and last pages. The first page can often work as a title page maybe with your flowers or perhaps the venue, and possibly your names and wedding date. Similarly you can give the album more impact by finishing with your favorite image. Finally consider what images are on opposite pages, ie. have a double spread of the boys followed by a double spread of the girls.

Delivery times for all services

CDs will be available shortly after your return from honeymoon (please ring first). Parents' albums take 3 to 4 weeks. Main albums take 6 to 12 weeks depending on workload and delivery by our suppliers. Please be patient at peak times. We can never anticipate our work-flow and when our clients will return with their album-requests; This varies enormously from 4 weeks to 2 years. Please remember that like all fashion items, trends, styles and albums do change and evolve all the time. We cannot guarantee that the album/style you originally saw when you booked us will be identical to that available when you finally decide to confirm your album details. The time lapsed may be anything up to 4 years! Mid summer is very busy and Christmas is a nightmare! This is also our busiest time of year for reprint requests (xmas presents) and a great number of couples choose December to request their album. Unfortunately, one single album can take over 40 hours to design and mount, which means that we cannot sadly meet all 'late' requests. Most work is done by hand and in-house and there is only a finite number of hours in a day! So, please allow enough time!- thanks . Deadline for Christmas delivery is November 5th.



Please always quote your wedding date (especially the YEAR!!) when writing or ringing – it saves any confusion and lots of time! Thanks