

Wedding Ceremony Format

(Compliments of R.J. Mitchell – www.PerfectWeddingCeremonyMusic.com)

This is a general guideline of a typical wedding ceremony. Your officiate will be able to help you customize your ceremony and decide which parts you would like to include in your special day. Save this helpful information and pass it along to a friend.

Seating

When facing the stage, the Bride's family and friends are seated on the left and the Groom's family and friends on the right.

Pre-Ceremony Music (Gathering Music)

Music should start when your guests start to arrive, generally 10 to 15 minutes before the Bride enters. The music should create a pleasant, happy atmosphere but not dominate the setting.

Welcoming of Guests before the Processional

A brief welcoming of the guests by a friend or family member will signal that the ceremony is about to begin.

Seating of the Bride and Groom's Mothers

Mothers of the Bride and Groom are escorted to their seats by a Groomsman.

Entry of the Bridal Party (Processional)

There are different ways to do this:

Music for Processional: One piece can be played for the entire Bridal Party and Bride or there can be separate pieces, one for the Bridal Party and a different piece for the Bride.

The Clergy/Officiate, Groom, Best Man and sometimes Groomsmen enter from the side of the stage or altar.

The Groomsmen can also walk down the aisle by themselves or accompany a Bridesmaid.

The Maid of Honor is next (with or without and escort) followed by a Flower Girl.

The Bride will be the last to enter escorted by her Father, someone special or alone.

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Look of typical wedding standings when facing the stage

Minister
Bride----Groom
Maid of Honor-----Best Man
Bridesmaids-----Groomsmen

Greeting the Couple

Once the bride is standing at the altar, the guests are invited to sit down. The officiate will greet the Bride and Groom. The bride's father or escort “gives away” the Bride to the Groom.

Greeting the Guests

The officiate will sometimes greet the guests and maybe acknowledge special family members.

Invocation

This is the first place in the ceremony where the spiritual content can be brought in. Like all other aspects of the ceremony, brides and grooms choose the spiritual content of their ceremony. Ceremonies can be anything from strictly civil to very religious.

The Asking - Declaration of Intent

For a marriage to be legal, the Bride and Groom must be asked something like: “Do you wish to be joined to this man/woman in marriage? Hopefully, the answer will be, “I Do”.

Reading, Poem or some Expression of Love

This is an excellent place to add a song, a poem, or words meaningful to the Bride and Groom. This is also a good place for a live song to be sung.

Words on Marriage

This is a brief statement by the officiate about love, nurturing, and sharing leading towards the actual vows.

Marriage Vows

Vows are where you, as a bride or groom, publicly state your promise to your partner.

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Blessing and/or Exchange of the Rings

The couple will exchange rings.

Symbolic Acts:

This is an optional portion of the ceremony. Here, couples can light a Unity Candle, Exchange a Rose, add another Reading or a Song.

Blessing or Prayer

Declaration Of Marriage

To be legal, the officiate must acknowledge that the Bride and Groom are married.

The Kiss

Introduction

The Bride and Groom will face their guests and will be introduced for the first time officially as husband and wife.

Recessional

The Recessional Music will start and the Bride and Groom will exit the ceremony site followed by the remainder of the wedding party.

Receiving Line

Sometimes, the Bride and Groom, Parents, and Bridal Party will greet the guests as they leave the ceremony.

Don't forget to have your witnesses sign your marriage license!!

You can purchase the beautiful “A Wedding By The Lake” CD and the new “White Lace” CD along with sheet music at www.PerfectWeddingCeremonyMusic.com.

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Composer R.J. Mitchell has performed at over a thousand weddings as a musician and DJ.