

## How to Choose a Wedding Photographer

When planning your wedding, you'll no doubt be spending a lot of money on quite a few different things. While everything else as a whole might total more, the cost of a wedding photographer will always seem a little daunting at first. Though, making photography a big part of your budget is more important than you'd think. This is a day for all of your friends and all of your family to remember, not to mention you and your loved one.

**Where To Look.** One of the best places to look is the internet. Don't stop with a simple google search for "wedding photographer + city name" as this is extremely vague. Try logging onto photo publishing sites such as flickr.com or smugmug. Most of these photo sites are home to a huge array of professionals looking for work. Do a search for "wedding" near your hometown on one of these sites and I'm sure you'll be able to find hundreds, if not thousands, of photographers eager to shoot your wedding.

**How To Choose.** The most important thing you'll need to take into consideration about a photographer is whether or not you like them and their work. Emailing back and forth, looking at randomly chosen portfolio pictures online is generally never enough. You need to develop a relationship. Call each photographer on the phone and talk. A photographer will feel more connected to your wedding and will be a lot more relaxed, and most of the time will be able to produce better results. If possible, visit the photographer's studio. If they don't have one, schedule a meeting at a Starbucks and ask him to bring examples from past weddings - make sure these samples are of one complete wedding and not just highlights from multiple events they've covered.

**Digital Versus Film.** While many photographers still use film (and can produce equally good results), you're most likely going to want to make sure you're looking into one who's using digital. In this day in age, digital has surpassed film for multiple reasons. On top of being much more immediate, the creative freedom digital has lets photographers shoot much more quickly. Being able to check and make sure the image is good gives photographers a second chance if they've missed something. And there's never any worry about whether or not something could go wrong in post processing. If a photographer insists on using film, it's most likely because he's never tried digital.

**What To Ask.** Many professional photographers either have their own studio or work for one. Since building a relationship with your photographer is key to getting great results, the most important thing to ask them is if they're going to be the actual photographer shooting your wedding or if they're going to be sending someone else. If the latter is true, see if you may meet with the person shooting. Secondly, make sure that there will only be one photographer. Having multiple photographers means your guests won't know which lens to look at. One photographer is generally able to turn out anywhere from 500 to 1000 images on their own, so you can imagine how hard it would be to look through double that amount.

**Can I Get Reprints?** As soon as a professional photographer snaps a shot, he owns the copyright to that image. Even if you pay a fee to get your high resolution digital files from the wedding, the photographer has a legal right to charge you if you ever want any reprints later on. Usually, if you are paying for the digital negatives, a photographer won't mind if you get your own reprints, but make sure you talk to them about it first. If you can, get it in writing.

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### About the Author

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