

General Timing Tips

Good planning really helps everyone, and keeping to a schedule helps your day run smoothly and trouble-free. It also gives me the time to capture those important details, groups, candid and so on.

Bridal Preparations

I normally arrive at the Bridal preparation location at least two hours before the ceremony (depending on distance from ceremony). This is a good chance to chat and confirm some of the day with any last minute changes.

I always cover more than the basics, and try to capture as much as possible – dress, shoes, flowers, jewellery, make up going on, hair being done, and so on. I tend to spend an hour with the girls, which gives me plenty of time to get to know everyone a little, and photograph all those important details.

The Boys

The boys (Groom, Best Man & Ushers, and maybe other “suits”) need to be at the location ONE hour before the ceremony. This gives me time for a 15 minute shoot with them all looking at their best, AND time to photograph guests arriving, plus shots of the venue, ceremony room etc. The Groom needs to be either with the Registrar or Vicar 20 minutes before the actual ceremony. The Ushers need to be available to start greeting guests 30 minutes before the ceremony.

The Boys being on time of this stage of the day is VERY important, to ensure I have time to photograph everything else.

Ceremony

Although a Civil Ceremony is often quoted as “it will only take 20 minutes”, this isn't actually ever the case. From the Bride walking in, to the Bride & Groom walking out, is normally around 40 minutes to allow for signings, and getting everyone out of the ceremony room.

Post Ceremony

I like my couple to have a short time to enjoy a drink and appreciate all the congratulations, and it is at this time I often prepare the group shot while everyone is in one place – 10 minutes.

Then the photography begins, starting with the Bridal Party in all combinations, followed immediately by the family groups as listed (see Standard Shot List Form) – 20 minutes plus any other groups you request.

Another quick break for you both, while I check everything with the hotel, and photograph the Wedding Breakfast Room with all the details for you – 10 minutes

The final session is the Bride & Groom photography, which is always done well away from the guests in a private area of the venue, without interruptions. - 20 minutes.

Receiving Line

If you are having a receiving line, please allow for this in your timings, and do let me know. As you can see from the above post-ceremony planning, time is often quite tight, and rushing really spoils the day.

General

Personally I think 90 minutes after the END of the ceremony is about right to cover everything without being rushed and giving you and your guests time to chat. Most venues automatically suggest 2 hours after the START of the ceremony, and without a receiving line, this is probably OK, providing all the people required for photographs are available, and not checking in to their room for example.

Good ushers can really help here, and ensure that the key people from the Bridal Party and immediate family are available for photographs. Bear in mind, I don't know everybody at the wedding, and it is in everyone's interest to help the groups shots run smoothly.

It is a good idea to share this all with your Bridal Party and immediate family so they know what to expect on the day, which saves so much time for those extra groups or candid shots.