

David A. Best, Photographer



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**Everyone keeps telling me that I should have my formal pictures done before the ceremony. I thought it was bad luck to see the groom before the wedding. Is this true? Should I wait to have all the posed pictures after the wedding?**

Traditionally it is said that the bride and groom shouldn't see each other before the wedding. However, times have changed and realistically it is more feasible if the bride and groom do see each other before the wedding. Otherwise, your guests wait at the reception for you to get all your pictures done after the wedding. Many couples decide to see each other before the wedding but plan an intimate moment where they see each other for the first time in a private setting. If you are dead set on not seeing him before the ceremony, plan a cocktail hour at your reception first so guests can get some appetizers and drinks while they wait

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for you. You should also take photos of the bride's side and the groom's side separately before the wedding so there are as few pictures as possible needed to be taken after the ceremony.

**Where do I get a marriage license? Do I need to get a blood test? How far in advance do I need to do all this?**

If you are getting married in Oregon, you can get an application for a marriage license at any Oregon county marriage license department. The Multnomah County office is located at 501 SE Hawthorne off the first floor lobby. The phone number is 503.988.3027. You do not need to have a blood test in Oregon. With \$60 cash and a completed application, you just turn it in and the license is valid three days later. Remember, that the application is only valid for 60 days.

**My best friend is a man and I want him to be in my wedding party. My fiancé doesn't care but his family thinks it is weird. Should I choose all women because traditionally that is what brides do?**

Remember that even though it is nice to think of others' thoughts and feelings, it is your wedding and you should be able to feel good about making a decision based on what you and your fiancé want. Today brides and grooms are not entirely following tradition, rather they want to start their own traditions. A wedding should reflect the couple's wishes. If your best friend wasn't in the wedding party, then I would say that is not reflecting what you want for your wedding. When it comes to the wedding day, you should be able to have your best friend standing by your side. Explain your feelings to your groom's family and ask them to try and understand that this is something that is important to you. Hopefully in all the planning, they will forget that they even cared and I can guarantee that it will not be the focal point on the wedding day.

**My family keeps asking me if I plan on having a program. I don't even know what is supposed to go in a program or if it's something I have to have. How do I determine if I should have a program produced and if so what do I put in it?**

Having a program is a personal decision between the bride and groom and possibly whoever else may be giving input. It's nice

to have something to hand your guests as they walk into your ceremony. Some of the guests may not know who your wedding party is, what your groom's parents names are, or who is reading the poem that is so dear to your heart. A program can simply outline who is in the wedding party or it can go into great detail about the ceremony. You can also give information about the reception in the program including directions in case someone didn't bring their invitation. Also, sometimes included is a thank you from the bride and groom to their guests for coming to their wedding and helping them celebrate their special day. I recommend getting your program produced by the same company that produces your invitation so that there is continuity between them. The program can be a keepsake that you and your family will keep as part of the wedding memories.

**I am going to have assigned seating at my wedding reception and I am wondering if I should seat children with their parents or all together at a special children's table. What will work better to keep them well behaved? And how old do the children need to be before they can sit by themselves?**

Having a separate table for the children is a good idea, especially during a sit down dinner. You can have child-friendly food served to them, you can decorate the table more casually, and if they are all together they will hopefully entertain themselves. You might want to make sure that the parents of the children are seated at a table nearby so that they can keep an eye on their kids. I would say that it is hard to say how old children should be before sitting by themselves. It's probably going to depend on the child, but you might want to ask the parents if they prefer the kids be seated with them or if they feel comfortable enough to have them seated at the children's table. Another idea, if you plan on having a lot of children at the wedding, is to have a separate room for the kids to hang out. Hiring a professional babysitter or asking a friend of a friend to watch the children is a good idea. Load up the room with napping supplies, games, snacks and a VCR for movies. **PBC**

Send your wedding planning questions to: Ask\_Molli@PortlandBrideAndGroom.com