

A woman with long, wavy blonde hair is wearing a wide-brimmed white hat and a brown, textured coat. She is leaning over the back of a white horse, holding its mane. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green field.

JACQUE O
PHOTOGRAPHY

Wedding Timeline Templates



Answer these questions:



WILL YOU BE HAVING A FIRST LOOK?

HOW MANY GUESTS DO YOU HAVE?

HOW LARGE IS YOUR WEDDING PARTY?

HOW LARGE IS YOUR FAMILY?

WHAT TIME IS YOUR CEREMONY?

WHAT TIME IS SUNSET ON YOUR DAY?

ARE YOU HAVING A GRAND EXIT?

DO YOU HAVE MULTIPLE GETTING READY LOCATIONS?

HOW MANY HOURS DO YOU HAVE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER?



Things to consider

FIRST LOOK: A first look lets you see each other before the ceremony and allows us to photograph many of your portraits ahead of time. Most couples need about 30-45 minutes for the first look, couple's portraits, and wedding party photos. It also means you'll spend more time celebrating with your guests during cocktail hour instead of taking photos.

GUEST COUNT: The more guests you invite, the more time you'll need throughout the day. Larger weddings usually mean longer family photo lists, more time greeting guests, and a little extra time moving everyone from place to place.

SIZE OF WEDDING PARTY: A larger wedding party usually means adding a little extra time for portraits. More people means more organizing, fixing details, and making sure everyone is looking their best before each photo.

SIZE OF FAMILY: Family photos are one of the biggest factors that affect your timeline. Keeping your list focused on immediate family makes this part of the day much quicker. If you'd like extended family photos too, be sure to allow a lot more time at this point.

CEREMONY TIME: Your ceremony time is the anchor for your entire wedding timeline. Once that's set, you can build everything else around it.



SUNSET TIME: If you love those warm golden hour portraits, sunset is the perfect time to sneak away for photos. I recommend setting aside 20 minutes around golden hour for some of the prettiest light of the day.

GRAND EXIT: Planning a sparkler exit or send-off? Keep in mind these usually happen near the end of the night and may require additional photography coverage. If you'd rather not extend your coverage, you often can stage your exit earlier in the evening, and no one will know the difference.

MUTIPLE GETTING READY LOCATIONS: If you're getting ready at separate locations, or your ceremony and reception are at different venues, don't forget to factor in travel time. I recommend adding a 10-15 minute buffer for traffic, parking, and any unexpected delays.

PHOTOGRAPHY COVERAGE: Your photography coverage should reflect everything you want documented. Most couples want getting ready, the ceremony, portraits, and part of the reception. If you're planning multiple locations, have a larger guest list/family, or lots of special events/vendors, you may want to consider adding additional coverage.

Things to consider



APPROX. 8 HOURS COVERAGE
WITH A FIRST LOOK

Sample Timeline



2:30 photographers arrive / getting ready photos
3:00 get dressed
3:15 (optional) first look with family or wedding party
3:30 first look / couple portraits
4:00 wedding party photos
4:30 family photos
5:00 pre ceremony break / shoot details / guests arriving
5:30 ceremony
6:00 ceremony ends / cocktail hour begins / sign marriage license
6:15 grand entrance / first dance
6:20 special dances
6:25 join cocktail hour with guests
6:45 dinner and mingle (photographers break)
7:30 sunset couple portraits
8:00 toasts
8:25 sunset
8:30 cake cutting
8:45 other special reception event or activity (optional)
9:00 dancing/party
10:30 couples grand exit / photo coverage ends

APPROX. 8 HOURS COVERAGE
NO FIRST LOOK

Sample Timeline



2:30 photographers arrive / getting ready photos
3:30 get dressed
3:45 (optional) first look with family or wedding party
4:00 pre ceremony break / shoot remaining details / guests arriving
4:30 ceremony
5:00 ceremony ends / cocktail hour begins
5:00 family photos
5:30 wedding party photos
6:00 couple portraits
6:30 grand entrance
6:45 first dance
6:55 special dances
7:00 dinner (photographers break)
7:45 sunset couple portraits
8:00 toasts
8:25 sunset
8:30 cake cutting
8:45 other special reception event or activity (optional)
9:00 dancing/party
10:30 couples grand exit / photo coverage ends

APPROX. 6 HOURS COVERAGE
WITH A FIRST LOOK

Sample Timeline



3:30 photographers arrive / getting ready photos

3:45 get dressed

4:00 first look / couple portraits

4:30 wedding party photos

4:50 family photos

5:10 pre ceremony break / shoot details /

guests arriving

5:30 ceremony

6:00 ceremony ends / cocktail hour

begins / sign marriage licence

6:15 couple portraits

6:45 grand entrance

6:50 first dance

6:55 special dances

7:00 sunset

7:05 dinner

8:00 toasts

8:30 cake cut

8:40 dancing

9:30 grand exit / photo coverage ends

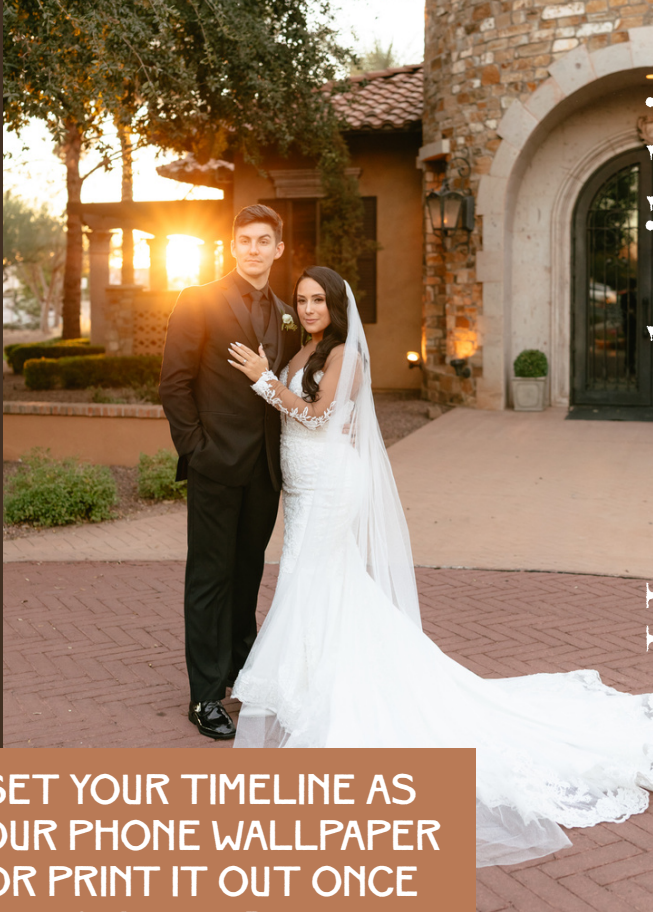
APPROX. 6 HOURS COVERAGE
NO FIRST LOOK

Sample Timeline



3:30 photographers arrive / getting ready photos
4:00 get dressed
4:15 pre ceremony break / shoot details /
guests arriving
4:30 ceremony
5:00 ceremony ends / cocktail hour
begins 5:00 family photos
5:30 wedding party photos
6:00 couple portraits
6:45 grand entrance
6:50 first dance
6:55 special dances
7:00 sunset
7:05 dinner
8:00 toasts
8:30 cake cut
8:40 dancing
9:30 grand exit / photo coverage ends

**NOTIFY FAMILY BEFORE THE
WEDDING WHEN FAMILY
PHOTOS BEGIN.**



**SET YOUR TIMELINE AS
YOUR PHONE WALLPAPER
OR PRINT IT OUT ONCE
YOU'VE MADE IT!**

How to build it.

1. Start with your ceremony time.
This is the one thing that usually can't move, so use it as the anchor for your entire day.
2. Decide if you're doing a first look.
This determines whether most of your portraits happen before or after the ceremony and can completely change your timeline.
3. Work backward.
Once you know when your ceremony begins, schedule getting ready, hair and makeup, detail photos, travel time, and your first look (if you're having one).
4. Work forward.
After the ceremony, plan family photos, wedding party portraits, couple's portraits, cocktail hour, dinner, dancing, and your grand exit.
5. Group similar events together.
Keep portraits together whenever possible instead of splitting them up throughout the day. It saves time and keeps everyone in one place.
6. Add travel time.
Moving between locations almost always takes longer than expected. Add at least a 10-15 minute buffer for driving, parking, and getting everyone where they need to be.
7. Don't forget sunset.
If golden hour photos are important to you, set aside 10-20 minutes around sunset. They're often some of my couples' favorite images from the entire day.
8. Leave room to breathe.
Not every minute needs to be scheduled. A little extra buffer keeps the day relaxed and gives you time to actually enjoy your wedding.
9. Compare it to the sample timelines.
Once you've built your own schedule, compare it to the sample timelines in this guide. If yours feels much tighter, consider adding more time or adjusting your priorities.