



Photographers Wedding Day Cheat Sheet and Shot List

A Comprehensive Checklist to Ease Those
Wedding Shoot Jitters



By Ryan Oakley of
www.weddingphotographygig.com

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*This "cheat sheet" is dedicated to my first clients.
Thank you for seeing my potential and for taking a chance on me.*

When I got my first wedding gig a few years back, one of the first Google searches I made was "wedding photo shot list". Being hired as a wedding photographer, I knew I had the skills to take great shots - I just didn't know what shots I was expected to take! I didn't want to miss anything and disappoint my clients. There are no second chances when you're shooting a wedding.

So with quite a few mouse clicks, I was able to get enough information on various websites to get my first shot list together. The effort was worth it and having that list in my back pocket on my first shoot gave me a significant confidence boost. With a good list I knew I wasn't going to miss any of the important shots.

And as I found success and got more jobs, I started to develop my own shot list - which I quickly turned into a complete wedding day cheat sheet. The information on my cheat sheet allows me to stand out as not only a great photographer, but a very skilled, very professional, (and worthy of repeat business) photographer.

I only hope this free cheat sheet and shot list helps you on your journey to become a successful and profitable professional wedding photographer. To all of my subscribers, followers, friends and clients out there, thank you for the gift of your support.

A blue rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. Oakley."

The information contained in this guide is for informational purposes only.

I am not a lawyer or an accountant. Any advice that I give is my opinion based on my own experience. You should always seek the advice of a professional before acting on information or advice that I have published or recommended. Users of this document are advised to do their own due diligence when it comes to making business decisions and all information that have been provided should be independently verified by your own qualified professionals. By reading this guide, you agree that myself and my company is not responsible for the success or failure of your business decisions relating to any information presented in this document.

Root Cause of the Wedding Day Jitters

One word...

FEAR

Here is a list of just a few things that can go wrong during a wedding shoot:

- 🕒 You forget the directions to the ceremony and now you're lost and very late.
- 🕒 You forget the father of the brides' name, and now refer to the gentleman writing your paycheck as "Hey you".
- 🕒 You forget the grooms cell phone number, there's been a change of plans, and now you can't communicate with a VIP.
- 🕒 You forget to take a shot of _____ (fill in any number of shots here). You only hope the couple won't notice.
- 🕒 You forget to turn down your ISO settings after moving the bridal party into a sunny area, and now you have 50 great (and grainy) shots.
- 🕒 You forget to eat (yes, this happens!), you're starting to feel exhausted and there's still 5 more hours to go.
- 🕒 You forget to have fun (yes, this happens too!), so you've lost your connection with the couple, the bridal party, and any chance of getting new clients from the hundreds of people watching you work.

OMG! Should I Really Say "Yes" to Shooting this Wedding?

It's true that any combination of these fears keep many great photographers from experiencing the joy (and profits) of shooting weddings.

The good news is, most of these fears are minimized and often eliminated with just one piece of paper in the photographers back pocket.

Introducing: The Wedding Photographers Cheat Sheet and Shot List

A cheat sheet and shot list is an incredibly simple yet powerful tool.

By having key information about the wedding day on a simple piece of paper, your mind is free to focus on:

- 🕒 Taking amazing shots
- 🕒 Doing the little things that improve your couples experience of the day and make you look like a hero
- 🕒 Getting excited instead of nervous and frazzled
- 🕒 Being (and looking) organized, confident, and professional.

Do You Know Why You've Been Hired?

You may know this already, but it's worthy of a reminder...

Yes, you were hired because your couple adores your photos. But you were also hired because your couple adores YOU. Or at least, if they don't now, they will after the wedding.

So as you arrive at the boutique where the bride is getting ready, take a moment to remember that your service goes beyond taking pretty pictures.

If you use this check list you will exceed your couples expectations, and very likely will land referral clients because everyone will want you to be their photographer.

It's not just about pretty photos. If you can remember that, you'll do great – at this wedding, and in your career as a professional photographer.

A Few Notes About Using the Shot List

1. Make sure you review the shot list with your couple to ensure you're getting the shots **they** want. Don't be surprised if they just want you to just "do what you do". In either case, the shot list below will be a good guide but it is not a "one size fits all". Review and revise it for every couple if needed.
2. Some of the items in the list are more "valuable" and "must haves" than others. It's your job to know the difference. But here's a hint --- whatever your couple has put time and energy into (flowers, dress, cake, wedding party, family etc.) is likely something important to them and they will want a memory of. So pay attention to what they are paying attention to – and shoot it. If your couple puts more emphasis on the people and less on the "stuff", then shoot more people. And vice a versa.
3. Don't be overwhelmed by the list during the wedding day. Use it as a tool, but don't get caught checking things off the list when a moment that should be caught on "film" is happening right in front of you. There are always lulls in the day and that's the time to have a quick glance at the list to make sure you've got everything covered.
4. The "sections" in the list are also how I organize my photos in Adobe Lightroom. Breaking up the day like that helps me to manage my files, plus it's the chapters I use in the wedding photo book. The sections also help me prepare and anticipate the shoot.
5. One last reminder that the shot list is not comprehensive. Even if the list has been "approved" by your clients, be prepared to take a lot of shots in addition to what's shown in this guide.
6. It's best to print this document "double-sided" so the cheat sheet and the shot list are on the same page.

Thank You So Much!

I really hope you use this cheat sheet and shot list and that it provides real value to you and your business.

I couldn't have made it to where I am today without the help of others. So I appreciate the opportunity now to share my knowledge and experience with you.

One of the great things about living in the digital age is that I can get feedback from my readers and make improvements to this document and other services to you over time.

I would love to hear what you think about this cheat sheet. If feel so inclined to help me out a bit, click the link below to go to a quick 4 question, 2 minutes survey on my website.

www.weddingphotographygig.com/cheatsheet

Or if you'd rather reach me in private, don't hesitate to send me an email.

Lastly, if you haven't already, you can follow me on Twitter ([@weddingphotogig](https://twitter.com/weddingphotogig)). Be sure to say hello.

Thanks again, and I wish you nothing less than success!



Ryan Oakley

ryan@weddingphotographygig.com

Client Information

Bride (B):

Cell:

Groom (G):

Cell:

Special Info:

VIP List

Maid of Honor:

Best Man:

Mother of the B:

Father of the B:

Mother of the G:

Father of the G:

Bridesmaids:

Groom's Men:

Other VIP's:

Venue Information

Ceremony Address / Directions

Reception Address / Directions

Don't Forget The Little Things

1. Go above and beyond (literally and figuratively)
2. What is special to this client? Pet, kids, outdoors, etc?
3. Check your camera settings continually – especially ISO
4. Shoot LOTS of photos - get everything
5. Never delete a photo in camera
6. Anticipate the day
7. Remember to shoot “the others” (including the groom)
8. Get your “classic” shots and then get creative
9. Are you hungry or thirsty? Eat and drink lots of beer water
10. Be invisible when possible
11. Be bold when needed, but in a friendly way
12. Be professional, but not stuffy
13. Pay attention to the background - get it out of focus or move
14. Get shots of all the details
15. Expect the unexpected and use it as an opportunity
16. HAVE FUN!

Getting Ready

- ___ Wedding dress on a hanger or lying on a bed
- ___ Zipping up or buttoning the wedding dress
- ___ Mother of the B fastening the B's necklace
- ___ Stills of rings, garter, veil, shoes, jewelry, something old, new, borrowed and blue.
- ___ A close-up of the B's shoes peeking out from under the dress
- ___ B looking into a mirror or out a window (it's ok to tell her how amazing she looks – hint hint)
- ___ B full-length
- ___ B and bridesmaids putting on makeup and getting hair done
- ___ B pinning corsage/boutonniere on mother/father
- ___ Mother/father handing B bouquet
- ___ B hugging parents
- ___ B touching up
- ___ B and parents leaving for ceremony
- ___ G tying tie
- ___ G looking into mirror
- ___ G having an adult beverage with buddies
- ___ G pinning corsage/boutonniere on mother/father
- ___ G hugging parents
- ___ G with Best Man and Groomsmen
- ___ B and parents leaving for ceremony
- ___ **Lots of candid's of everyone!**

At the Ceremony

- ___ Ceremony site inside and out
- ___ Guests walking in
- ___ B's mother and father entering site
- ___ Parents being seated
- ___ Grandparents being seated
- ___ Maid of honor walking down the aisle
- ___ Bridesmaids walking down the aisle
- ___ Flower girl and ring bearer walking down aisle
- ___ G waiting for B
- ___ Ceremony musicians
- ___ Officiant (Minister / JP)

- ___ Altar or canopy during ceremony
- ___ Close-up of B, just before she makes her entrance
- ___ B and father walking down aisle
- ___ G seeing B for first time (from behind G if possible)
- ___ The back of B and father walking down the aisle – with the G waiting in the distance
- ___ B's father and B hugging at end of aisle
- ___ Shot of the audience from the B and G's point of view
- ___ The unity ceremony
- ___ Close-up of B and G saying the vows
- ___ Wide shot of B and G saying the vows
- ___ Exchanging the rings
- ___ Close-up of hands
- ___ The kiss
- ___ B & G walking up the aisle
- ___ Receiving line
- ___ B & G outside on steps
- ___ Guests throwing confetti/rose petals/birdseed
- ___ B & G hugging guests, laughing, getting congratulations
- ___ B & G with everyone from the ceremony
- ___ B & G getting in car
- ___ B & G in back seat

Posed/Formal

- ___ B alone (full length)
- ___ B with Maid of Honor
- ___ B with bridesmaids
- ___ G with bridesmaids
- ___ B with parents
- ___ B & G together
- ___ B & G with parents
- ___ B & G with families
- ___ B & G with entire wedding party
- ___ B & G with flower girl and ringbearer
- ___ G with parents
- ___ G with best man
- ___ G with groomsmen
- ___ B with groomsmen

Keep it quick:

Start with big family group and work down to smaller groups till it's just the bridal party and then just the B and G.

Reception

Get a guest-seating chart with special VIPs circled.

- ___ Outside of reception site
- ___ B & G arriving
- ___ B & G greeting guests
- ___ Table centerpieces
- ___ Table setting
- ___ B & G's table (head table)
- ___ Musicians or DJ
- ___ Guest book
- ___ Place card table
- ___ Close-up of B and G's place card
- ___ Wedding cake
- ___ G's cake
- ___ Gift table
- ___ Decorations
- ___ A shot of B & G with guests at each table (only if requested by B & G. Some couples don't like this)
- ___ B with college alums
- ___ G with college alums
- ___ The food (preferably while it's "plated")
- ___ B & G's first dance (how's your ISO?)
- ___ B & Father dancing
- ___ G & Mother dancing
- ___ Guests dancing
- ___ B & G cutting the cake
- ___ B & G feeding each other cake
- ___ Toasts
- ___ B & G drinking champagne
- ___ Signing the marriage license (might happen at ceremony)
- ___ B throwing bouquet (get high!)
- ___ G retrieving garter
- ___ G tossing garter
- ___ Garter/Bouquet dance
- ___ The getaway car
- ___ B & G leaving party
- ___ B & G driving away
- ___ **Lots of candid's of everyone!**

You survived! Well done. Now get some sleep.