

Wedding Ceremony Resources

Welcome to your ceremony planning guide! This resource is designed to help you craft a personalised and meaningful wedding ceremony, specifically if you are having a traditional/personal wedding. You'll find options for each part of the ceremony, from vows to rituals, so you can tailor your day to reflect your unique love story. For those who are doing legals-only or a micro-wedding/elopement, the process is much easier, and the Celebrant will send you the pre-made script for these.

This is not an exhaustive resource and can be used in conjunction with other resources which we can personally create or source.

The following resources have specifically been designed in line with the legal obligations for a civil celebrant.

Ceremony Structure

Below is a typical structure for a civil wedding ceremony. We can customise it to suit your preferences:

1. Welcome Guests
2. Bridal Procession
3. Parental Encouragement or Blessing (optional)
4. Official Welcome & Introduction
5. Monitum
6. Prayer (Optional)
7. Reading or Ritual (Optional)
8. Brief Personal Message from the Celebrant
9. Promise of Intent / The Asking
10. Vows (Legal & Personal)
11. Exchange of Rings
12. Pronouncement of Marriage
13. Signing of the Marriage Register
14. Closing Words & Presentation
15. Party! You're married!

1. Welcome Guests

As the celebrant I want your guests to feel comfortable and welcome. Once everyone has arrived, I provide a brief welcome, and share any important details, such as if you don't want people on their phones!

Here is an example:

"Welcome everyone to the wedding of _____. My name is Lewis, and it is my privileged to conduct this ceremony and stand alongside them as they make this commitment to each other.

This is an unplugged ceremony, and the couple has asked that all phones are turned off or put away on silent. Be in the moment! We have professionals capturing the day.

The bride and bridesmaids are about to arrive, but I'll let you know when we will officially begin. I'll also let you know when to stand for the bride. For now, enjoy the company of those around you we'll get these two hitched shortly."

2. Bridal Procession

This is a moment to remember! Often the groom is in tears as he sees his bride for the first time. The music plays and the procession begins. This will generally include flower girls (optional), ring bearers (optional), the bridesmaids and the bride. Some couples even come up with fun ideas! If you need inspiration you can watch the wedding scene from 'the office' or find crazy ideas like 'beer boys' on YouTube.

3. Parental Encouragement or Blessing (optional)

You may have seen 'the giving of the bride' in movies! This is an optional extra, but many decide to make the moment more inclusive by including all sets of parents.

Once the Bride has arrived front, the Celebrant would usually say something like:

"Absolutely beautiful, could I please invite the parents of _____ to stand"

Depending on your needs and beliefs you could pick from the following options:

- a) As the parents of ____ and ____ do you support their commitment to each other and offer your blessing to their ongoing relationship in marriage? **(WE DO)**
- b) As their parents, do you give your support to ____ and ____, and promise to do everything in your power to encourage them in their marriage? **(WE DO)**
- c) Who brings these two individuals to be married today **(I DO/MY WIFE AND I DO/WE DO)**
- d) No parental encouragement or blessing

4. Official Welcome and Introduction

As the celebrant I will now do a personal welcome tailored to your needs. This may include an acknowledgement of country, an acknowledgement of people who can't make it to the ceremony, and if you are religious, you may want an acknowledgement of the presence of the divine.

Here is an example:

"Welcome everyone. We are here today on these ancestral lands, in the presence of God, friends and family to witness the marriage of _____ . Today I am their celebrant; but after meeting with them to plan their ceremony, and after hearing their love story, I consider them friends. This marriage commitment is between two people who love each other and wish to share each other's lives, who will grow and change in the years to come, welcoming each other's growth with mutual love and respect.

The couple would like to acknowledge members of their family who can't be with us _____ we know they are smiling down on us today."

5. Monitum

The Monitum is required at all marriages in Australia according to the marriage act 1961.

"I am duly authorised by law to solemnise marriages according to the law. Before you are joined in marriage in my presence and in the presence of these witnesses, I am to remind you of the solemn and binding nature of the relationship into which you are about to enter. Marriage, according to the law in Australia, is the union of two people to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life."

6. Prayer (optional)

You may like to include a prayer at this moment. This is a great way to involve others in your ceremony. Of course this is optional.

7. Reading or Ritual (optional)

You may like to include a reading, poem, bible passage, or song at this moment. You may also wish to add a cultural ritual. This is a great way to involve others in your ceremony and to bring a personal touch. Of course this is optional. Other examples include:

- **Unity Candle Lighting:** Symbolising two lives becoming one.
- **Sand Ceremony:** Blending two colours of sand as a metaphor for your unity.

8. Brief Personal Message from the Celebrant

I love creating personal moments and sharing elements of your love story with your guests! I believe this is a great way to make your ceremony personal.

Here are some excerpts from a previous wedding, for context Bree is a seamstress and Matt is a plumber:

Today two become one. You are now in it together. What do they say "Till death do you part". Nervous?

There will certainly be ups and downs or to put it in language you might understand... Bree sometimes there will be needle thread breakage, skipped stitches and sometimes the fabric will tear... And Mat sometimes the pipes will be clogged and the taps will leak...

But in the end it's all worth it, the gown will come together perfectly designed and stitched... and with a bit of hard work the plumbing will work, and the taps will stop dripping.

In marriage, may you both experience the best year of your life. Saturated in Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness and self-control. Don't be nervous, it will be wonderful.

Seven years ago these two met in a bar and have been in-separable. Over the seven years of knowing each other they have had incredible adventures along with the 'everyday' moments in between. Over this time, they have both strived and achieved so much in their lives, with the love and support of each other. Time has flown by, holidays have come and gone, there have been ups and downs, yet one thing stands firm- their love and commitment for each other.

With Matt's "laid-back" attitude and the ability to be 'always down for a good time' and Bree's highly organized and efficient lifestyle- they have managed to meet somewhere in the middle to create a perfect balance.

One thing that has been highlighted throughout the planning process is, how productive they can be once they have their eyes set on a goal. Over the last two years, they have managed to sell a unit, buy an investment property, buy a house for themselves, get engaged, plan a three-month honeymoon and now the final step "Tie-the-knot".

Some may say a 'long-time coming', they say 'only God's timing'!

9. Promises of Intent / The Asking

This is the famous “I do” moment. I find this to be a special moment in the service and it can be tailored to your needs and pro-nouns. You could select from the following options:

- a) _____, do you take _____ to be your lawful wedded wife (husband)? Do you promise to love and respect her (him), be honest with her (him), and stand by her (him) through whatever may come, as you share your life together? **(I DO)**
- b) _____, do you take this woman to be your wife (husband), and do you pledge your faithfulness to her (him), in all love and honour, in all duty and service, in faith and tenderness, to cherish her (him), in the bond of marriage? **(I DO)**
- c) _____, will you have this woman (man) to be your wife (husband), and be faithful to her alone? **(I WILL)**
- d) _____, will you have _____ to be your wife (husband), and will you love her (him) faithfully as long as you both shall live? **(I WILL)**

10. Vows (Legal and Personal)

While promises are answers given clearly to the questions of the celebrant, vows are given from one couple to the other. The celebrant usually speaks the vows softly for the couple to repeat, although they could be read or recited.

Couples can choose to use any of the options below. However, this first stanza is a mandatory requirement for Australian marriages:

“I call upon the persons present here to witness that I _____ take you, _____ to be my lawful, wedded wife”, (repeated by the other partner).

The couple may choose, in consultation and with the approval of the officiating pastor, to combine elements of the following or other vows, creating their own personalised version.

- a) I call upon the persons present here to witness that I _____ take you, _____ to be my lawful, wedded wife (husband). I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honour you all the days of my life.
- b) I call upon the persons present here to witness that I _____ take you, _____ to be my lawful, wedded wife (husband). All that I am I give to you, and all that I have I share with you. Whatever the future holds, I will love you and stand by you, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.
- c) I call upon the persons present here to witness that I _____ take you, _____ to be my lawful, wedded wife (husband). I choose you above all others. I love you, and I want you to become all that you can be. I promise to honour this pledge as long as I live.
- d) I call upon the persons present here to witness that I _____ take you, _____ to be my lawful, wedded wife (husband). To share with you in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, and to join with you so that together we may serve God and others as long as we both shall live.

11. Exchanging of Rings

This element of the ceremony can be introduced and explained by the celebrant. As one of the couple places the ring on their partner, they may repeat the words of the celebrant.

- a) I give you this ring as a token of the agreement made between us this day and as a pledge of our mutual love: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Spirit.
- b) _____, take this ring as a sign of my love and fidelity: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- c) With this ring, I wed you, as a sign of the commitment we have made this day and of our mutual love: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- d) I give you this ring, as a symbol of my unending love for you, and as a token of the pledge we have made this day before God.
- e) _____, with this ring, I wed you. Take and wear it as a pledge of my love and as a symbol of all we share.
- f) This ring I give you; in token and pledge of our constant faith; and abiding love.
- g) I give you this ring as a sign of my promise.
- h) _____, I love you, and I give you this ring as a sign of my love and faithfulness.
- i) _____, I love you, and I give you this ring as a symbol of my unending love for you. Take it and wear it as a pledge of my love and faithfulness, and as a symbol of all that we share together.

12. Pronouncement

- a) *“By their promises made, the exchanging of vows, and the giving of rings, _____ have now consented to join in marriage. In the presence of all who gather here today I now pronounce you husband and wife. _____ you may now kiss your bride.”*

- b) *“Ladies and gentlemen, (and children) / Family and friends, _____ and _____ have declared before all of us that they now wish to live and love together in marriage. It therefore gives me great pleasure to pronounce you husband and wife. Congratulations, you may now both kiss, if you wish.*

13. Signing of the Register

“We’ll now be heading over to sign the wedding register along with their witness’s today, Please remain seated (or provide opportunity for photos) and we’ll be returning shortly to walk down the aisle.”

14. Closing Words & Presentation

“Ladies and Gentleman, for the first time I now present to you _____.”