



Spirit Unlimited Professional DJ Entertainment Wedding Planning Newsletter #18

Videographer Timeline

Keeping track of time is important when planning a wedding...Use the following wedding videography timeline to maximize your schedule...

8-12 months before: Explore different styles of videography. During the busy wedding season it may be necessary to book a wedding videographer a year or more in advance.

Couples having their wedding during the slower season still need to reserve a videographer as early as possible, but you will usually still have a good availability three to four months in advance. Decide on videography style. Determine videography budget. Decide on videography style. Ask friends, family, and wedding professionals for videographer recommendations. Interview videographers and reserve the best your budget can afford. Compile shot list. Select videography package.

3 weeks before: Confirm wedding date, time, and location with the videographer.

Wedding Day: Assign a family member or wedding party member to point out important wedding party guests to the videographer.

2 weeks after: Send thank you note to videographer.

1 month after: If possible, purchase wedding video raw footage from the videographer but be certain to make arrangements before the wedding.

6-16 weeks after: Receive Wedding Video(s).

Glossary

Understanding the various “languages” of certain wedding vendors can be challenging...we’ve provided a videography glossary to help familiarize you with some of the words you may hear...

Boom Mic: A large microphone attached to a telescoping pole. Usually requires a person to hold. Sometimes it is also called a Shotgun Mic.

CCD: Charge Coupled Device that acts as an electronic pickup device. The more pixels per CCD and the more CCDs per camera, the higher the picture resolution and quality. Three CCDs, or “chips”, are ideal.

CD-ROM: Compact Disk-Read-Only Memory. A high-capacity, high-resolution format for video.

Close-up: (CU) A tightly framed camera shot in which the principal subject is viewed at close range, appearing large and dominant on screen.

Cutaway: Shot of other than principal action, frequently used as transitional footage or to avoid a jump cut.

Cuts-only editing: Editing limited to immediate shifts from one scene to another, without smoother image transition capabilities such as dissolving or wiping.

Digital Video: A format that records digital images to a videotape. The digital signal is composed of bits (ones and zeros). Digital information can be manipulated by computers.

Dissolve: Image transition effect of one picture gradually disappearing as another appears. Analogous to audio and lighting cross-fade.

DVD: Digital Video Disk. A highly stable digital video playback format. It is quickly replacing VHS.

Fade: Gradual diminishing or heightening of visual and/or audio intensity. “Fade out” or “fade to black,” “fade in” or “up from black” are common terms.

Generation Loss: Degradation in picture and sound quality resulting from an analog duplication of original master video recording. Copying a copy and all successive duplication compounds generation loss. Digital transfers are free of generation loss.

Horizontal Resolution: Specification denoting amount of discernable detail across a screen’s width. Measured in lines, the higher the number the better the picture quality.

Lavalier Mic: A small electronic microphone that is clipped to the collar or lavalier. Small, easily concealed, unobtrusive and aesthetically pleasing microphone, typically attached to clothing for interview settings.

Post-Production: Any video production activity following initial recording. Typically involves editing, addition of background music, voiceover, sound effects, titles, and/or various electronic visual effects. Results in completed production.

Resolution: Amount of picture detail reproduced by a video system, influenced by a camera’s pickup, lens, internal optics, recording medium, and playback monitor. The more detail, the sharper and better defined the picture. [See horizontal resolution]

Rough Cut: Raw, tentative edit of footage in the approximate sequence, length, and content of finished program. Gives preliminary indication of eventual actual work.

Three Chip: Refers to 3 CCD technologies.

Voiceover: (V.O.) Narration accompanying picture that is heard above background sound or music. Talking typically applied to edited visual during post-production.

Wide-Angle: Camcorder lens with short focal length and broad horizontal field of view. Opposite of telephoto, supports viewer perspective and tends to reinforce perception of depth.

Wireless Microphone: Consisting of radio transmitter and receiver, utilizes low-power radio signal for cable-free operation.

Videography Styles

Understanding and identifying the various styles associated with weddings is important...Here is a look at Videography styles...

There are generally three styles of wedding videography: **Straight-shot, Nostalgic, and Documentary.**

Straight-shot Footage: This style of video is shot with one camera, starting at the beginning of your ceremony and running through the end of the reception. There are typically no interruptions or editing. Because there is only one camera with no editing, it is the most economical option.

Nostalgic Format: This style of video generally has photo and video montages of you as children, romantic images of your courtship, and then the scenes from your ceremony and reception. This option is more expensive since it requires editing.

Documentary Format: This style of video is a chronological documentary of your wedding day. From shots of the two of you getting ready, on through the ceremony and reception, the video finishes up with your departure on your Honeymoon. This is the most popular format and can vary in cost, depending on equipment and editing costs.

Combine the “**Nostalgic**” with the “**Documentary**” styles to get the best of both worlds.

Video Camera Formats

Understanding the different video camera formats will make it easier for you to arrive at the look, style, and quality of your wedding video...Here's a breakdown of the various formats you'll encounter...

There are some formats to consider for wedding videography: **High Definition, Digital, S-VHS, VHS, Hi-8, and 8mm.**

High Definition: This is the best quality video image available. It rivals film in resolution and clarity. This is a new videotape medium so the cameras, tapes, and editing equipment are expensive to work with but the quality is unparalleled.

Digital: This format is quickly emerging as a higher-quality yet reasonably priced option to High Definition. The resolution and clarity is close to High Definition. The cameras are light and nonobtrusive. Also known as DV Cam and DV Pro.

S-VHS: Super Vertical Helix Scan. An improved version of VHS videotape format. It provides separate carriers of chrominance and luminance information which yields a sharper picture.

VHS: Vertical Helix Scan. The predominant half-inch videotape format providing lower quality images.

Hi-8: High-band 8mm. An improved version of 8mm videotape format characterized by higher luminance resolution for a sharper picture. It is a compact “conceptual equivalent” of Super-VHS.

8 mm: Compact videocassette format, popularized by camcorders, employing 8-millimeterwide videotape. A low-quality videotape.

What to Look For

It is sometimes difficult to know what makes a quality wedding vendor...we've provided a guide to help you identify the key things to look for...

Inspecting the work of a wedding videographer is important. Ask to see a demo of his or her work. If possible view a wedding that was at the same venue you are having. A good rule of thumb is if the subjects in the images look happy, comfortable, and relaxed.

Here is some other criterion to judge:

Lighting: The video images should not look murky or have too much glare.

Color: The skin tones should look natural.

Technical Skill: The images should be in focus and the camera moves smooth.

Sound: The voices should be clear and not overpowered by the background noises. The sound should be rich, not hollow.

Editing: The transitions should be clean and there should be a natural flow to the video.

Style: The video should capture the mood of the events without looking simplistic.

New Trends

Wedding trends change and evolve with each New Year...We've provided a run-down of the newest, hottest trends in wedding videography...

Infrared video is the latest trend for the wedding videography, especially for evening receptions that are held outdoors. It creates a memorable image that is very stylish.

Wide-angle lenses enable trendy video images to be taken.

Some videographers are beginning to offer their final product on CD-ROM's and DVD's. This highly stable format will not decompose over time like VHS videotape.

Videographer Team vs. Independent

Determining whether to use the services of an independent or team videographer is a decision you will need to make...Here is a look at both options...

Independent Videography

With an independent wedding videographer it is possible to build a rapport that results in a "personal touch". You're usually working with just one or two people that will be shooting and editing your wedding video. Usually the person shooting your wedding is also the owner of the company, which means, in most cases, they'll take more pride in their work. The risk is if the videographer cannot make your event and they have no backup. Most independent wedding videographers create alliances between themselves in case of such emergencies.

Team Videography

Team wedding videographers will farm out videographers based on experience and availability. The more experienced videographers will be given the higher-end weddings.

The less experienced videographers will be assigned the smaller budget weddings.

It is likely that the person you meet with will not be the one videotaping your wedding. The advantage of using a company that includes a “roster” of videographers is their pricing is usually lower. Plus, if anything goes wrong with the videographer assigned to your wedding, there is usually a built-in backup due to their resources.

If your wedding is large (over 200 guests) then it is a good idea to have more than one camera recording the festivities.

Packages/Options

Understanding the typical wedding videography packages and options is important...Here is a look at what is usually available for weddings...

Package

- ✓ A standard wedding videographer package is between two and six hours. There will be one videographer with backup equipment.
- ✓ Larger packages can include: Videotaping photographs for a montage, up to eight hours on-site, additional camera people, and additional locations.
- ✓ Most packages include two locations, the ceremony and the reception. Additional locations can increase the cost but create more of a storyline for your video.
- ✓ Additional lighting by the videographer will add some costs to your package but the result will give your videos and photos additional depth and quality. CD-ROM and DVD. Inquire with your videographer about which options they can provide.
- ✓ An additional videographer increases the package cost but also increases the coverage of your wedding.
- ✓ A standard package usually includes one edited videotape. Extra wedding videos are usually an additional charge.
- ✓ Overtime is billable.

Options

- ✓ An edited video about your romance is a great thing to show your guests at your reception. This behind-the-scenes look can include your childhood photos and video along with pictures of your romance set to music.
- ✓ Motion picture film is the finest quality image possible. It requires an independent sound operator to record synchronized sound. This is a pricey option since it also requires the film be developed then transferred to videotape. Not all videographers can provide this.
- ✓ Most wedding videography packages include one VHS tape upon delivery. If you want more than that, make certain to address that in your negotiations.
- ✓ You may have a choice of formats besides VHS to watch your video on like Video CD, CD-ROM and DVD. Inquire with your videographer about which options they can provide.

Keys to Success

Here are some expert tips to make sure your wedding videography experience is the best it possibly can be...

- ✓ When deciding on a wedding videographer you should interview two or three candidates and then make your choice from there.
- ✓ When checking the references of a particular videographer, don't just rely on a hotel/resort/country club's reference. Sometimes, a videographer will pay a commission back to the venue for the work assignment. Check with his or her past clients to see what they say about the Videographer's services.
- ✓ The emotional worth of your wedding video will increase substantially throughout your lives. Video makes a wonderful medium to capture the essence of relatives who eventually pass on. Real-time footage of your grandparents and parents celebrating your wedding day will mean more with each passing year. Don't cut too many corners on your video budget if you think that this will be something very important to you years from now.
- ✓ Communication between you and your videographer is critical to the overall success or failure of your videotaped images. Good rapport with your wedding videographer can result in better, more relaxed video settings and allow for smoother handling of any problems that may arise at any point in the process.
- ✓ Make sure you let your videographer know who is the photographer for your wedding.
- ✓ Since they will be working closely around each other, it is important that they meet.
- ✓ This will allow the videographer to work with and around the photographer during the day with fewer hassles.
- ✓ The cameras and editing equipment that the videographer is using should be no more than three to five years old.
- ✓ No matter how new or old his or her equipment may be, every videographer should bring backup equipment.
- ✓ Consider having the videographer and photographer "film" the special preparations for your wedding day like fixing your hair, fitting your gown, buttoning up your tux, etc.
- ✓ These images will be worth their weight in gold.
- ✓ Have one of your bridal attendants or family members point out the "V.I.P.'s" of your wedding to the videographer. By communicating your desire to get footage of these special people at your wedding, the videographer will be more prepared to videotape the guests.
- ✓ If your wedding reception has 200 or more guests, it may make sense to have your videographer bring a second cameraperson. The result will be better coverage of the event for your albums.
- ✓ Communicate in advance your desire or aversion to interviews with your guests.
- ✓ Some couples like the whole deal with lights and hand microphones, others like low profile video coverage where the guests aren't "recruited" to say something about the bride and groom.
- ✓ Be patient with your videographer. They work very hard to capture the essence of your wedding day. By respecting their skills and needs, they will likely want to give their very best effort to your images.

- ✓ Make certain none of your venues have videography or photography restrictions and if they do, put them in contact with your videographer and/or photographer to discuss some alternatives.
- ✓ Have fun. Be sure to learn the techniques in e-Wedding Pro's Relaxation segment—a genuine smile can speak a thousand words.
- ✓ After it's finally over and you've received your wedding video, purchase the raw footage from the videographer from their archives. Most companies won't need the footage and welcome the chance to make some more money on their efforts.
- ✓ Make sure to address this issue ahead of time so that there could be some room for negotiation and it might motivate the videographer to really get creative.

Videographer Questions

When you meet with your prospective wedding videographer, you'll want to ask all the right questions...We've provided a list of what you should make sure to ask when you first speak with them about your wedding...Their responses, as well as attitude, will tell you volumes about whether you'll want to include them in your "Dream Team"...

1. What is the primary style of the videographer: Documentary, artsy, or direct?

2. What is his or her experience? How many weddings has the videographer done or how many does he or she average a year? We recommend the videographer has at least three years of wedding experience and that they shoot 30 or more weddings a year.

3. Is he or she a member of W.E.V.A.? Active participation in this professional association gives the videographer exposure to the latest in techniques and technology. We recommend choosing a videographer who regularly attends these national conferences.

4. What is their philosophy when it comes to videotaping a wedding?

5. Do they know the photographer you are using?

6. Do they try to coordinate with the photographer before the wedding?

7. Have they ever shot at your ceremony and/or reception location before? If so, may we view the tape?

8. How many other weddings will they be doing on your wedding day and weekend? Depending on timing, we recommend choosing a videographer who limits the number of weddings to two per day.

9. Will the videographer you're meeting with be the one who will shoot your wedding?

10. What types of cameras will he or she plan to use? How new are the cameras?
How many cameras? We recommend the cameras be no more than five years old and that the videographer has quality backup equipment on site.

11. What other types of equipment will they bring like microphones, lights, backup gear, etc.?

12. What kind of editing system do they use to edit the videos? Do they use nonlinear digital editing equipment?

13. How noticeable is the video crew? Do they plan to use bright lights and put the camera in people's faces?

14. Do they offer different levels of wedding video packages for different budgets?

Things to Avoid

Knowing the pitfalls and traps ahead of time can help save you money, time, and your sanity...Here's a list of things to avoid when planning your wedding videography...

- Running behind your planned schedule. Stick to your timing for the day.
- Shooting video of you right up until the ceremony. Make certain to schedule a 30- minute "downtime" directly before the ceremony where no videos are taken. This will allow you to handle any last minute details without interference.
- Darkly lit ceremonies and receptions are difficult to shoot, especially those without lights. If you want great videos, consider brighter lighting options for the ceremony and reception venues.
- The attire of the videographer sometimes can be an issue. By communicating with your videographer before the ceremony, you can express your dress code expectations.
- It is a good idea to include this provision in your contract with your videographer.
- Weather is the greatest concern for outdoor weddings and receptions. It is vital to have a contingency plan in place that can serve as a backup for the wedding ceremony and reception. If the weather looks threatening, don't compromise great video and the guests' comfort in order to stay with your original plan. Flexibility is the key!
- Certain churches, synagogues, temples, and private facilities restrict or do not allow videography or photography. It is imperative to make certain what, if any, restrictions may need to be addressed before arriving on-site.
- Be aware of Videographer's shooting style. The cameras, bright lights, and microphones distract the ceremony or reception activities. A good videographer blends in with the festivities.

References

Checking the reputation, credentials, and service record of a prospective wedding videographer is important before you hire them...

There are several resources available to check the references of a particular wedding videographer:

- Family and friends who have recently been married.
- Professional Associations like the Wedding and Events Videographer Association (W.E.V.A.).
- Better Business Bureau (B.B.B.).
- Local Resorts/Country Clubs.
- Other local wedding vendors.

Videographer Shot List

Most qualified wedding videographers have their own individual style and won't need a "shot list" per se...This is to give you ideas of shots to share with your videographer so that they don't miss your shot of a lifetime...

Pre-Ceremony

- Bride's clothes hanging over a chair
- Bridesmaids doing bride's hair and makeup
- Bride and bridesmaids getting dressed
- Mom helping bride with one last detail
- Full-length shot of bride in gown checking herself out in mirror
- Touching shot of bride with sibling(s)
- Bride hugging honor attendant
- Bride with bridesmaids
- Bride with all the women
- Groom getting ready with Dad and pals (tying the tie is a classic)
- Touching shot of groom with parent(s) and/or stepparent(s)
- Touching shot of groom with sibling(s)
- Groom with his arm affectionately around best man
- Groom with all the groomsmen
- Groomsmen putting on boutonnieres or bowties
- Intimate shots of bride and groom chatting with/crying with/hugging parents and siblings pre-ceremony
- Dad whispering last-minute advice to groom
- Groom ready to go
- Bride ready to go
- Bride and groom separately making their way to the ceremony

Ceremony

- Guests streaming into the site
- Ushers escorting guests to their seats
- Ushers escorting moms to their seats
- Close-up of groom's adorably nervous mug waiting for his other half

- Bridesmaids and groomsmen walking down the aisle
- Flower girl and/or ring bearer entering
- Honor attendant walking down the aisle
- Grandparents walking down the aisle
- Wedding party waiting at the altar
- Groom walking down the aisle
- Bride and Dad/escort/parents walking down the aisle
- Close-up of bride just before she makes her entrance
- Bride and groom at the altar
- Altar or canopy from the back during ceremony
- Wide shot of audience during ceremony, from bride and groom's point of view
- Faces of bride and groom as they exchange vows
- Close-up of bride's and groom's hands as they exchange rings
- The kiss
- Bride and groom proceeding up the aisle
- Bride and groom outside ceremony site
- Congrats shots: bride and groom hugging, laughing, and crying with good friends and family
- Bride and groom leaving ceremony site
- Bride and groom in limo backseat

Pre-Reception

- Bride and groom together
- Bride with her happy, proud parents and/or stepparents
- Bride with her entire immediate family
- Groom with his happy, proud parents and/or stepparents
- Groom with his entire immediate family
- Bride and groom with all parents
- Bride and groom with immediate family members from both sides
- Bride and groom with groomsmen
- Bride and groom with bridesmaids
- Bride and groom with whole wedding party

Reception

- Shot from outside reception site
- Reception details
- Bride and groom arriving
- Receiving line moments
- Bride and groom at head table
- Parents' table
- Guests' tables
- Close-up of friends and family toasts
- Bride and groom sipping champagne
- Bride's and groom's parents whispering
- Bride and groom chatting up the guests
- Bride and groom's first dance
- Parents dancing
- Bride and Dad dancing
- Groom and Mom dancing

- Wedding party dancing
- Grandparents dancing
- Kids playing or dancing
- Musicians or DJ doing their thing
- Guests dancing
- Bride laughing with bridesmaids
- Cake table
- Bride and groom cutting the cake
- Bride and groom feeding each other cake
- Dessert table
- Bouquet toss
- Tossing and catching of the garter
- Bride and groom leaving

Contract/Payment

Knowing what to include in a contract with a wedding videographer is important...We've created a list of important points to consider...

Contract

- Name and contact information for you and the videographer.
- Date, exact times (number of hours), and locations (home, ceremony, and/or reception) where the videographer is expected to shoot, including the exact addresses.
- Name of the videographer who will shoot your wedding video, number of assistants, and assistants' names.
- Number and types of cameras to be used.
- What type and amounts of backup gear will be standing by.
- Number of videos you'll receive, and other package options (special editing, etc.) if you opt for one.
- Date your unedited video will be available.
- Date you'll receive your complete edited video.
- Total cost, itemized if possible.
- Overtime fees, if applicable.
- Re-order price if you order additional videos later.
- Deposit amount due.
- Balance and balance due date.
- Cancellation and refund policy.
- Name of acceptable substitute in case of emergency.
- Videographer's signature
- Your signatures.

Payment

Most wedding videographers require full payment before your wedding day. Some will ask for a 50% deposit upon booking and the remaining 50% due before your wedding day.

Confirm the cancellation policy with the videographer before signing the contract and putting down a deposit.

Backup Plans

Having a “Plan B” is always a good idea when it comes to planning your wedding...Here’s a look at some ways to cover your bases...

- ✓ It is important to have contingency plans in place for backup equipment, videographers, and locations.
- ✓ Backup Equipment: Each videographer, whether they are independent or part of a team, needs to have additional cameras in case of equipment failure.
- ✓ Backup Videographer: Each videographer, whether they are independent or a team, needs to have an emergency plan in case they are unable to work your wedding.
- ✓ Backup Location: Give your videographer your backup location plans in case of inclement weather if your venues are outdoors.
- ✓ Be sure to address the contingency plans in your written contract.

Checklists

Timeline

- Select Wedding Date
- Select Wedding Location
- Book Videographer
- Confirm with Videographer
- Assign Family Member
- Receive Wedding Videos
- Purchase Raw Footage

Styles

- Straight-shot Format
- Nostalgic Format
- Documentary Format
- Combine Formats

Camera Format

- High Definition Format
- Digital Format
- S-VHS Format
- VHS Format
- Hi-8 Format
- 8mm Format

What to Look For

- Good Lighting
- Natural Skin Tones
- Images In Focus
- Smooth Camera Moves
- Rich Sound
- Clean Editing
- Capture Event Mood

New Trends

- Digital Video
- Infrared Video
- Wide-angle Lenses
- CD-ROM Output
- DVD Output

Packages/Options

- 2-Hour Package
- 3-Hour Package
- 4-Hour Package
- 5-Hour Package
- 6-Hour Package
- Additional Locations
- Additional Lighting
- Additional Video Camera(s)
- Additional VHS Tapes
- CD-ROM
- DVD
- Add Childhood Photos
- Add Couple Photos
- Use Motion Picture Film
- Additional VHS Copies
- Video CD Format
- CD-ROM Format
- DVD Format

Keys to Success

- Interview Videographers
- Double-check References
- Consider Future “Worth” of Video
- Build Rapport with Videographer
- Introduce Photographer
- Check Age of Video Equipment
- Bring Backup Equipment
- Videotape Special Preparations
- Identify Important Guests
- Consider 2nd Videographer for
- Large Wedding
- Interviews or no interviews of
- Guests for the Video
- Be Patient with Videographer
- Check Videography Restrictions
- Relax and Have Fun
- Purchase Raw Footage
- Schedule Pre-Ceremony Quiet Time

Things to Look For

- Check Lighting Conditions
- Check Weather

- Check Videography Restrictions
- Address Videographer Shooting
- Style

Contract/Payment

- Review Contract
- Revise Contract
- Sign Contract
- Pay Deposit
- Pay Remaining Balance

Backup Plans

- Backup Equipment
- Backup Videographer
- Backup Location

Videographer Budget = _____

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This guide is provided by Spirit Unlimited Professional DJ Entertainment to assist new couples as they navigate their way through the year leading up to their wedding day. Included are only suggestions and ultimate decisions need to be made by the couple. Spirit Unlimited Professional DJ Entertainment is not responsible for negative outcomes as a result of following guidelines.