

Couples

Creating your Dream Wedding Ceremony

Guide

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About Me

As a Celebrant I love to create personalised ceremonies & rituals to make that precious event one to remember.

I love helping people with the most important events in their lives.

As a creative I am famous for my innovative ideas.

My highest value is to make your event all about YOU and to make your day as relaxed as possible.



Have a read through your guide which will lead you through the steps to creating a great ceremony. With my help of course. On the last page is a CHECKLIST of what I need from you so you don't get overwhelmed. We will go through all of this in person this is just a copy for you to keep on hand.

Contact me on: **Lisahuntwotton@gmail.com** and check out my socials below.

You will find more resources on my website.



lisahuntwotton.com



[@lisahuntwotton](https://www.instagram.com/lisahuntwotton)



[@lisahuntwottoncelebrant](https://www.facebook.com/lisahuntwottoncelebrant)

01: Legal Requirements

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding, what an incredible time for you both. These are the legal requirements of an Australian wedding. They are non-negotiable and required by law according to the Marriage Act 1961.

- Your wedding must be conducted by a Commonwealth Registered Celebrant
- You must have two witnesses who are over the age of 18.
- At some point in the wedding ceremony we have to use the name that is documented on your birth certificate or passport. This can cause some frustration but unfortunately we need to do this to validate your marriage.
 - Your full legal name needs to be used on all the legal documents.
 - I need to quote the monitum before the vows. This states the nature of Marriage in Australia and establishes my authority to officiate your wedding. The following is from section 46(1).

Monitum:

- "I am duly authorised by law, to solemnise marriage 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 you are now 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".
- The Marriage Act 1961 also states that each person must say to the other, in the presence of the marriage celebrant and the witnesses, these words - Section 45 (2) :
- "I call upon the persons here present to witness that I..... take you to be my lawful wedded wife (or husband)". - or words to that effect.
- Both parties and the legal witnesses sign the marriage documents.

There are a total of five legal documents that you need to complete.

- The Notice of Intent to Marry which needs to be completed before the wedding and at least 31 days before the wedding date.
- The Declaration of No Legal Impediment to Marry. This also needs to be completed before the wedding - as close as possible to the wedding date.
- The other three documents are signed during the ceremony.

After the ceremony I send your documents to Births Deaths and Marriages for them to register your marriage.

02: What I need from you

- YOUR FULL NAME INCLUDING YOUR MIDDLE NAME *as found on your birth certificate or drivers license*
- YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS
- YOUR OCCUPATION
- YOUR DATE OF BIRTH
- HAVE YOU BEEN MARRIED BEFORE: NO, DIVORCED, WIDOWED
- TOWN AND STATE AND COUNTRY YOU WERE BORN IN
- FULL NAME OF YOUR FATHER
- FULL NAME OF YOUR MOTHER (*MAIDEN NAME PLEASE*)
- COUNTRY YOUR FATHER WAS BORN
- COUNTRY YOUR MOTHER WAS BORN
- DATE OF DIVORCE
- DATE OF DEATH OF SPOUSE
- IF YOU ARE DIVORCED OR WIDOWED I WILL NEED TO SEE A COPY OF YOUR DIVORCE OR PROOF OF DEATH PAPERS.
- ARE YOU RELATED TO YOUR PARTNER
- ARE YOU OVER THE AGE OF 18
- NAMES OF YOUR TWO WITNESSES *as found on their drivers licenses.*
- I WILL NEED TO SEE A COPY OF YOUR PASSPORT OR DRIVERS LICENSE AND ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATE.

****Please:** scan and email all of this information to me including photos of your legal identification.

lisahuntwotton@gmail.com

All of the documents you need can be obtained from Births Deaths and Marriages. <https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au>

03: What to Include

Do you have some **special music/songs** you would like to use?
Consider booking live music for the ceremony - it takes the ceremony to the next level of amazingness. I can give you lots of referrals.

Please send list of songs to me.

You will need to choose a minimum of three songs for the ceremony.

Songs:

- ENTRY
- SIGNING
- EXIT

- Do you want to include an acknowledgment of traditional owners of the land?

- Do you want to include an **acknowledgement** of people who can't be present? This works well for grandparents of immediate family members who may have passed away.

Please send list of names to me.

- *Are there special cultural or faith based elements that you wish to include?*

- *Have a think of 6-8 people who are close to you that we could involve in the ceremony? Not necessarily your bridal party. If you give me the names I will arrange how to include them.*

- *Would you like to **thank your parents** in the ceremony? Would you like their blessing?*

- **Readings** when chosen well, add a great addition to the ceremony. Are there one or two people that you think could do this. I will find the reading so don't stress about that.

- Ask me about a meaningful **Ritual** we can add to the ceremony to make it unique to you.

04: An Order of Service

The Welcome:

This is the opening of the ceremony and where friends and family are welcomed. We can ask people to:

- Turn phones to silent and or Please do not take photos during the ceremony.

The Presentation of the Bride:

Traditionally this was where the Father would give the Bride away. These days this is still very popular, it is also okay if it is your mother, children, or you can walk down the aisle by yourself if you like.

Acknowledgment:

This is a good place to acknowledge the love and support of family, children or mentors, and to acknowledge loved ones who are deceased or who cannot make it to the wedding.

Parental Blessing:

This is often used instead of the traditional giving away of the bride or can be placed before the vows. It is an opportunity for parents to pledge their support, love and commitment.

Authorisation:

This is the monitum as mentioned above in the legal requirements. This must be said before the vows.

Reading (s):

A poem, reading, verse can be read by a family member, friend or the celebrant. *Highly recommend.*

The Vows:

These are the personal commitments that the couple make to each other.

04: An Order of Service

Exchange of Rings:

Although this is not a legal requirement, it is a ritual that is commonly used world wide. You do not have to use rings, you can use anything that is symbolic of your love and union.

Blessing of the Rings:

It is a really lovely touch to say a blessing over the rings. Either the celebrant or a significant person can do this.

Signing of the Marriage Documents:

This is where the bridal couple, the two witnesses and the celebrant sign the legal documents. It is good to have a significant piece of music or reading happen at this stage.

Declaration:

This is the Declaration of the marriage and where the kiss comes in. In thinking of the declaration, how do you want to be presented, as Mr and Mrs Smith, or as Mr Smith and Mrs Jones or Brad and Caroline? Maybe Georgia and Samantha Mrs and Mrs.

Closing: This is usually where words of congratulations are given, a blessing or maybe a prayer. This is followed by the recessional. An upbeat funky piece of music that you walk out to and receive the congratulations of your family and friends.



05: HOMEWORK

I ask you to do homework so that the majority of the service is you speaking. This helps me represent your heart and your vision. It is also important for your guests to hear the answers to these questions.

Once you answer these questions and send them back to me I can start crafting your wedding ceremony. Each of you need to answer these questions.

- **Tell me what marriage means to you?**
- **Tell me what love means to you?**
- **List 5 - 8 things that you love about your partner.**

*most asked
question*

**HOW LONG DOES THE CEREMONY
GO FOR?**

*Average ceremony goes
for about 25 min.*



06: The Vows

It's a good idea to start writing your vows early.

You're likely to become more distracted as you both get closer to the big day. Do what lots of professional writers do: compose a quick rough draft early on, without worrying whether it's good or bad. Then you'll have plenty of time to change and revise it to make it perfect. Most people who write their own wedding vows choose to read them to make sure they get it right. If you decide to say traditional wedding vows, a simple way to add a personal touch is to write your own declarations of love to say before reciting the traditional vows.

Part 1: The Declaration of Love

Make a simple statement about who s/he is to you. For example:

- “Aisha, you are the most amazing woman I've ever met.”
- “Matt, you are the one I want to spend the rest of my life with.”
- “Sam, you are my very best friend.”

Say a few things about why s/he's so wonderful.

Things like:

- “You are kind and caring, and one smile from you brightens my whole day.”
- “You are dependable, yet full of surprises, and you are beautiful inside and out.”
- “You make me laugh, you make me think, you make me pancakes, and you make me happy.”

06: The Vows

Part 2: The Promises

Make promises about what you will do for your partner. Think about the ways love shows itself, day in and day out...through support, trust, words, actions, gifts, time and attention. If you are religious, you'll probably also want to include language about your faith.

Here are some examples:

- “In front of God and our friends and family, I promise to stand by you and to stand up for you, to laugh with you and never laugh at you, and to do everything I can to make you happy.”
- “I pledge to accept you as you are, to respect you as an equal and to encourage your dreams and passions.”
- “I promise to be loving, patient and faithful. I will be the very best husband I can be to you and the very best father I can be to Jacob and Taylor.”

Now think about some of the things you will do with your partner.

- “With you, I'll create a peaceful, happy home and a loving family.”
- “I will grow old with you—and never stop growing with you.”
- “I'll be your partner on all of life's adventures.”
- “When you're sad, I'll comfort you, and when you're happy, I'll share your joy...”

07: The Ring Exchange

Choose what to say when you exchange rings:

- Take this ring as my gift to you. Wear it and know that I love you.
- Louise, I give you this ring as a symbol of my love for you.
- This ring is my precious gift to you, as a sign that from this day forward you shall be surrounded and encircled by my love.
- This ring is a token of my endless and abiding love. Just as this circle is without end, my love for you is eternal.
- Michelle, this ring symbolises the depth of my love for you and with it, I give you all that I am and ever hope to be.
- I give you this ring as a sign that I choose you to be my lover, my partner and my best friend, to the end of my days. Wear it, think of me, and know that I love you.
- You are the love of my life And you are my very best friend. I give you this ring as a reminder that I will love, honour, and cherish you, all ways, forever.

When you have chosen or written your ring exchange, please send it through to me so that I can add it to your draft.

08: After the Wedding

HOW TO APPLY FOR YOUR REGISTERED MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

In a couple of months, once your marriage has been registered by BDM you can apply online for your registered wedding certificate. This is the document you will need to change your name on your passport and drivers license should you wish to.

It used to take 4 weeks but now due to all of the COVID disruptions its more like a couple of months.

- To apply for your online marriage certificate you will need to prove your identify.
- You will need to email certified copies of your passports and drivers licences

<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/proving-your-identity/which-identity-documents-can-i-use-option-1>

They will ask you for the following information during the application process:

1. Details of the marriage
2. At minimum, you'll be asked for:
 - The given, middle and family names of both parties
 - Place of the marriage
 - Date of the marriage.
3. Proof of your identity

This link provides a list of people who can certify your identification:

https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/certifiedcopies#List_authorised

A legal certificate costs \$34.30.

CHECK LIST

things you need to do now



LEGAL INFORMATION

Please send me all the information that I asked from you on Page 02. WHAT I NEED FROM YOU

Please scan or photograph and send me copies of your identity documents.
OR you can show me at our next meeting.

HOMEWORK

Please send me the answers to your homework on page 04.

Once I get your homework then I can start the fun job of creating your wedding ceremony.

YAY! Hooray!



STAY IN TOUCH

Don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or queries. It is my job to make your special day everything you hoped it would be and more.

Remember your wedding ceremony drafts are just that - **Drafts**. We can change and edit anything except the legal components.

