



WEDDING PLANNING GUIDE

MY BEST ADVICE FOR YOUR IDEAL DAY



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STYLE, TIME OF YEAR, & LOCATION

My main advice here is to choose options that blend well with three things: 1) location of your wedding, 2) time of year, and 3) style and vibe you've chosen as a whole.

Style, Time of Year, & Location



STYLE

Let's talk about making it cohesive. This probably goes without saying, but it's best if the decor, venue, outfits, etc. all look like they flow well together. Don't overthink this too much! I'll try to give some quick examples:

Tip for florals: Real florals are one of my favorite details of a wedding day. Grab some inspiration from Pinterest (or even better, your florist) based on your theme or color schema. From there, your florist should be able to direct you on bouquet size and style that matches with your dress.

Tip for bridal party wardrobe: if bridesmaids are in boho dresses, it's best to not have groomsmen wearing classic tuxedos. Instead, try something that matches the vibe/style of their dresses, like leather suspenders.



TIME OF YEAR

If your wedding is in the later spring, summer, or fall, you'll have a bit more freedom with color. Obviously, you want the colors to make some sense with the season in which your wedding falls. So especially for fall, it might be best to look at the fall colors and choose something that would blend well with autumnal colors.

If your wedding falls between the months of November-March, I would be extra mindful of your color selections. Oftentimes, winter landscapes are naturally more dull (color-wise) during those months, so it's AMAZING to add some pops of color if your wedding is within that time of year.

However, summer weddings that lean into vibrant colors are some of my favorites to photograph!

LOCATION

When selecting your color palette, think about the backdrop and atmosphere of your venue to ensure your colors complement the space beautifully. Whether your wedding is outdoors in nature or indoors, consider what fits naturally with the surroundings. Some clients are into neutral tones, and others into bolder colors that brighten the vibes and day.



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01

Hello!
& Congratulations



Hey there, I cannot possibly tell you how excited I am that you made your way here, and how excited I am to be the one documenting the biggest day of your life! Instead of dropping breadcrumbs of my expertise through emails here and there, I want to serve you an entire full-course meal!

I take your experience with me, the actual moments of your wedding, and the photos I create for you VERY seriously. Photography is far more than just showing up with a camera on wedding day and hoping for the best. As your new photography bff, I made this guide to tell you everything I know.

As your friend, I can tell you that the quality of a photograph is dictated by two things: 1) the photographer, and 2) what's being photographed.

Let me further explain. The photos with stunning lighting not only had a photographer there to capture the shot, but the light was probably already there. Photos with breathtaking backgrounds were likely shot in breathtaking locations. Relaxed, authentic photos were taken at relaxed and authentic moments. There's a pattern; see what I mean?

As your photographer, it's my job to make anything work. I want to show you my best work and for your jaw to drop when you see your gallery for the first time. Here's everything I've seen that works well from the many weddings I've shot, from the things that make it hard, to the things that make it easy, and everything else too. I want to send you my absolute best version of photography, one that's worth every single penny and every single minute you take to prepare.

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02

Engagement Session

Estimated time: 60-90 minutes

You'll get the best results from your engagement session when you style your wardrobe in a way that fits your personality.

Let's create a session that allows you to be yourselves. My only non-negotiable is timing: I usually shoot engagement photo sessions in the early morning or in the evening before the sun sets. This is to ensure the best lighting for your shoot. Just like with the wedding day, we'll make the most of the location you choose. Feel free to think outside the box!

Engagement Session



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The Details

Estimated time: 20 minutes

When I arrive, the first thing I will ask for is your detail items. These are the items you will mark off in the wedding questionnaire once we get closer to the date.

The Details



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Getting Ready

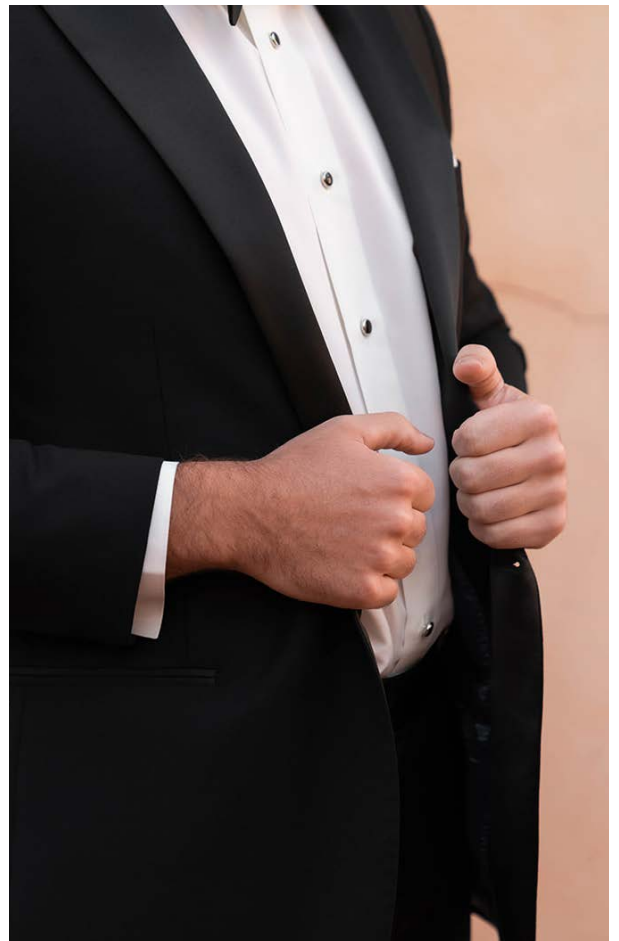
Estimated time: 60-90 minutes



LET'S START AT THE BEGINNING.

It's one of the most special
moments of the entire day.

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Some clients skip coverage of this portion of the day to cut down on time, but I do not recommend doing so. The beginning of your day, when your hair and makeup are just about done, and you're about to put on your dress, suit, etc. is so special. These moments create the most stunning photos with your closest friends and family.

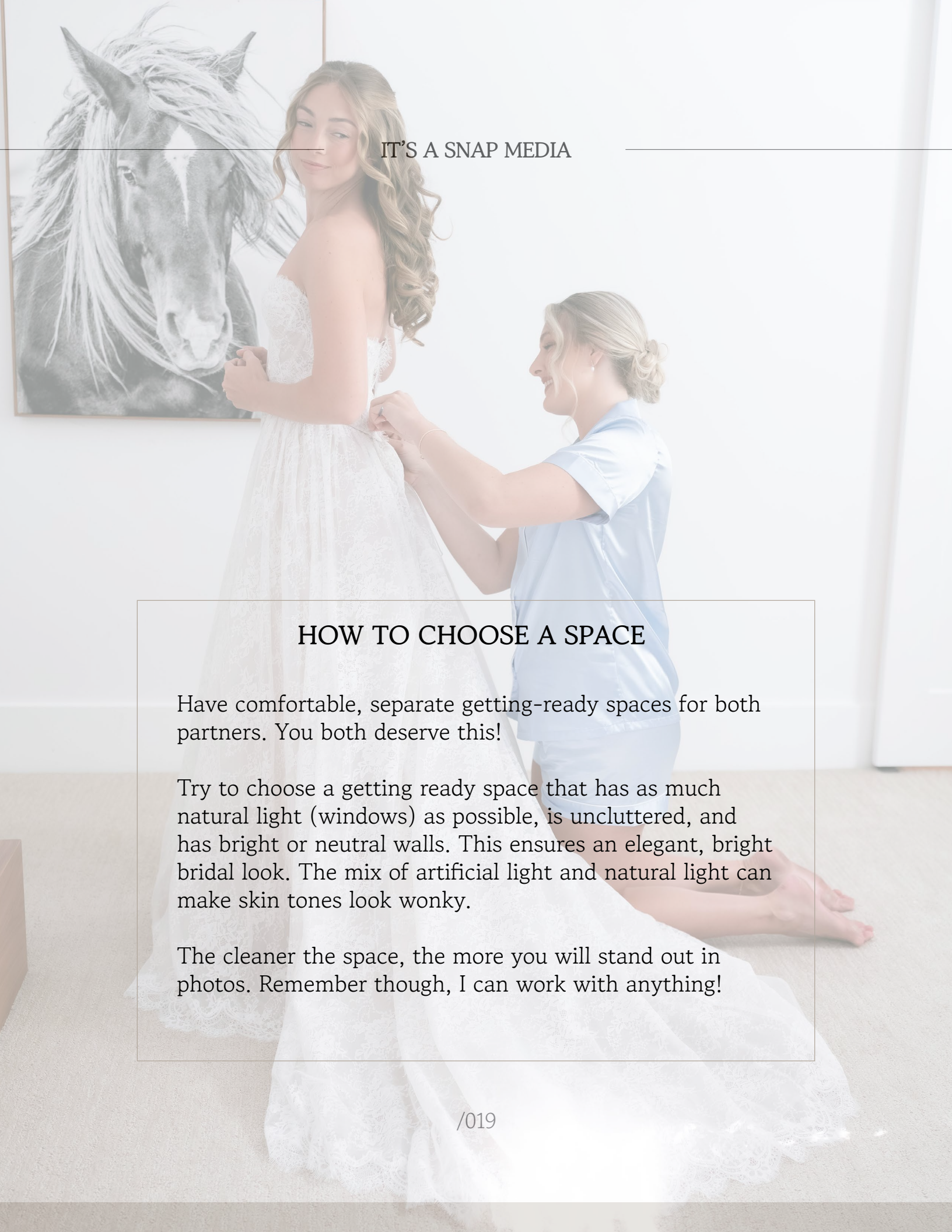
Getting Ready



THE START OF THE DAY

Starting off the wedding day may feel slow and off schedule, so build in enough time for yourselves to feel truly relaxed without major time constraints. This may mean starting hair and makeup a little earlier, but it's well worth it in the grand scheme of things.

If you have booked a collection with two photographers, one of us will capture each of your getting ready moments simultaneously. I will usually be with the bride, and my second shooter will be with the groom. If you've only booked me for the day, both moments are still possible, depending on the timeline.

A woman in a white lace wedding dress is standing, and another woman in a blue shirt is kneeling behind her, adjusting the back of the dress. In the background, there is a large painting of a horse's head on a white wall.

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HOW TO CHOOSE A SPACE

Have comfortable, separate getting-ready spaces for both partners. You both deserve this!

Try to choose a getting ready space that has as much natural light (windows) as possible, is uncluttered, and has bright or neutral walls. This ensures an elegant, bright bridal look. The mix of artificial light and natural light can make skin tones look wonky.

The cleaner the space, the more you will stand out in photos. Remember though, I can work with anything!

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First Look & Couples Portraits

Estimated time: 60-120 minutes



In Arizona, the brightest light often appears mid-day, but no worries, I excel at creating stunning portraits in any lighting situation. While intense midday sun offers unique photo opportunities, I will opt to find shade for softer, more flattering light. This is especially important on hot days or when you have a large wedding party.

FIRST LOOK

A “First Look” refers to a special time where you see your partner for the first time all alone (and with me there to photograph of course!). This moment usually flows directly into our couples portrait session, which is where we take photos of you and your lovey dovey.



SHOULD WE DO A FIRST LOOK?

Whether or not you do a first look is up to you! If you'd like one, I will walk you through this process on the wedding day. I will admit, they create a much easier flow of the day to have your photos before the ceremony, as opposed to cramming in photos after the ceremony and before the reception. On top of that, many brides and grooms are immediately less stressed when they finally see their partner instead of waiting until the ceremony. But ultimately it is up to you!

WHERE DO WE TAKE PHOTOS?

I will be sure and scout the best locations for a first look, couple photos, and group photos, to find the best possible backdrops; however, don't be afraid to think outside of the box with locations either!

If your wedding venue doesn't provide the incredible scenery you're looking for or a background you're too excited about, checkout nearby locations. Maybe there is a gorgeous open field nearby. Maybe there is a beach just 20 minutes away. Maybe the prettiest forest is a 10-minute walk down the road! It's up to you guys.

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Group Photos

Estimated time: 60 minutes



Take it all in! This is one of those rare moments where you are with your absolute best pals, and not just one of them, but all of them at the same place, at the same time! Take a second to enjoy the company, and be your fun selves.

Family photos may not be the most artistic, but they are some of the most important. Clearly communicate with the family members who need to be present for the photos on where they need to be, and when.

LOGISTICS

It's crucial for the entire bridal party to know precisely where and when they should be throughout the wedding day. It's helpful to remind everyone to keep their floral accessories like bouquets and boutonnieres ready. My tried-and-true approach includes formal, fun and candid group shots, as well as individual portraits.

PREPARING FOR FAMILY PHOTOS

To help organize family photos, the questionnaire you fill out before the wedding will ensure we cover capture all the important family groupings, and that we do so in a timely manner.

Prioritize the relationships that mean the most to you. Don't feel pressured to include extended family if those photos may not be used.



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The Ceremony

Estimated time: 30-45 minutes



Here's moment we've been waiting for! The time before the ceremony is a sweet time to calm down, and find some peace and quiet. Keep your favorite people close, take a deep breath, and enjoy the stillness.



BEFORE, DURING, & AFTER

Before your ceremony begins, reserve 30 minutes of 'do-nothing' time for you and your wedding party to relax and stay hidden as guests settle in.

Ceremonies typically last about 30 minutes, though some religious services might exceed this.

Right after you're pronounced husband and wife, the exit is a joy to capture! Let me know beforehand if you will be doing a dip kiss in the middle of the aisle. As I walk out with you, capturing each moment, remember to focus on each other and the joy of your guests around you—what a truly magical part of your day. You just got MARRIED and are sharing your first moments together as a married couple!

INDOOR CEREMONY ADVICE

If you are holding your ceremony at an indoor venue, natural lighting and windows are going to be your best friends. Try to avoid incandescent lighting directly above your head, as this creates harsh, unflattering shadows on the face while you're walking down the aisle or saying your vows. At all costs, avoid any sort of fluorescent lighting. Indoor ceremonies can be beautiful, but natural lighting is really important!

OUTDOOR CEREMONY ADVICE

I love outdoor ceremonies! Planning yours in the late afternoon or early evening is ideal, as the summer sun at a lower angle will create a beautiful, warm glow. Be mindful of the exact placement of your ceremony—direct summer afternoon sunlight can be harsh. Having a backup plan for unexpected rain is also wise. Regardless of the time or weather, rest assured that I'll capture the light in a way that beautifully complements your ceremony, for stunning photographs.



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Reception

Estimated time: 3-5 hours





It's time to paaaaaartay like a [married] rockstar! Dinner usually begins after cocktail hour. Pick a time for reception to start, and stick to it to ensure the best flow for guests. First dances with your spouse and parents are classics for a reason. You will absolutely love and cherish those photos. Lastly, cut that cake! You can have your DJ announce it, or cut it with just the two of you. The photos are always playful and fun. I love cake too, just sayin.

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Sunset Photos

Estimated time: 20 minutes

You know that glowy, soft, romantic light that hits right during the last hour of the day's sunlight? Yeah, it's pretty incredible. Without a doubt, I always recommend sunset photos of the married couple. These are often my past clients' favorite photos.



WHEN IS SUNSET?

It is so nice to take photos at this time of day, not only because of the lighting, but because the responsibilities of the day are over, you both are far more relaxed.

Depending on when the sunset is on your wedding day, this moment of the day is usually about an hour before the sun officially sets on the horizon. If there are tall trees or mountains nearby, the sun will “set” behind those trees about a half hour before it sets on the actual horizon.



WHEN DO WE TAKE SUNSET PHOTOS?

Good question! I will come steal you two away during your reception when people are all busy eating or mingling. I'll find somewhere where we can get some really nice light to snap some stunning photos. If you want to go offsite for these, we will need to be mindful of the time we leave reception, the parking situation at the location, etc. I'm all for an adventure.

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THANK YOU!

Thank you so much for allowing me the privilege to be part of your wedding journey.

Your trust and support mean the world to me. I am incredibly excited for all the beautiful moments we are going to capture together. As we move forward, know that I am here to support you every step of the way and to help make your wedding day as magical and memorable as possible. I can't wait to see all the wonderful things that lie ahead for us.

Here's to the start of a fantastic adventure together, filled with love, laughter, and unforgettable memories!

XOXO, Trâm

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