



How to Hire the Best Photographer for Your Wedding

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How to Hire the Best Photographer for Your Wedding

By John and Doris Costello

Your wedding.

It is one of the most important, wonderfully happy events you will experience in a lifetime. It is the day you have chosen to celebrate your love and commitment to your fiancé and you will include everyone else to enjoy this special day with you.

It's an exciting and busy time for you, I'm sure. Along with all the planning comes a lot of decisions you have to make and every decision is important. After all, you want the day to be as special and beautiful in every way possible.

But before you know it, the day you worked so hard for will soon be over.

The flowers will be gone.

The dress will be stored.

The tux returned.

The food eaten.

And the last dance over.

That's why one of the most important decisions you're going to make is who you hire to capture the story of the beginning of your life as a married couple.

A good photographer will give you exactly what you need to cherish every moment and enjoy your wedding day over and over again. Forever.

However, we'd like to make you aware not everyone is lucky enough in finding the right photographer. Often it's because the decision to hire a photographer with integrity, expertise, and experience is taken too lightly. Perhaps it's the assumption that all photographers are the same or that all photographers are simply "nice."

Most of us are, ofcourse.

But just like with any professional



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and within any industry...some are better than others.

There are great degrees of differences, for example, in someone who has been photographing weddings for as long as we have and someone who is fresh out of the weekend photography course at a local college.

And sometimes, it's not just the quality of the photography. Photographers are people. And some people, well, aren't as accommodating as others. This is why we thought it made sense to write this report.

To help you make the decision and show you exactly **How to Hire a Great Photographer for Your Wedding.**

At Costello Photography, we have photographed over 1000 weddings. We have been providing professional photography for since 1981. And we are very, familiar with wedding photography process.

It's a process we have perfected over the past 28 years photographing weddings and the primary focus has been on how to make entire the process simple for you. By simply communicating with you and not over promising or giving unrealistic expectations, we always over deliver and provide photography that exceeds the quality other photogra-

phers try to deliver.

You can learn more about our process here:

<http://www.costellophotography.com/process.php>

But we are not here to tell you why you should hire us (although we hope you do).

Instead, we have put together this informational report to help you make an important decision and ensure you too can have a beautiful wedding story in photos.

We hope this helps. And of course we would love to work with you and meet you personally. For now, we hope to prepare you for one of the most important decisions you are going to make for your wedding.

Here are the important rules when hiring your wedding photographer:



You are better off with a photographer who makes you feel good

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Let's be honest. Personality counts. Some photographers are the nicest people in the world and cherish



every wedding they're invited to attend professionally.

Others, on the other hand, might not be exactly friendly and warm. They look at wedding photography as more of a "job" than the art it really is.

It might be that some photographers who offer wedding photography would rather be off in the woods taking photos of trees and birds or pursuing other things.

When a photographer doesn't have the passion, he or she may lack the drive to offer clients top quality results. The thing is, usually you'll still get excellent work.

You are no doubt going to spend a lot of time with your photographer. Usually more than with any other professional who is a part of your wedding. So your best bet is to hire a photographer who is pleasant, friendly, and easy to work with.

It will make a difference and makes communication between you and your photographer much, much easier.

Be sure to meet with your photographer face-to-face if possible. This is one of the best ways to get a real, personal feel for who you'll be working with.

We pride ourselves on being friendly and love being wedding photographers. Of course, we love anything that has to do with capturing images. But our passion is the entire wedding experience and watching the happiness between a bride and groom as they go through one of the most wonderful events you'll ever experience.



Check the Photographers Equipment List and Capabilities

You may hire a "professional" wedding photographer to photograph your wedding and when it's too late, find out he or she doesn't have the right professional equipment. Perhaps using a camera similar to the one your friends may have.

By waiting until your wedding to find out exactly what kind of equipment your photographer will use, it may be too late as you realize you may have hired an inexperienced photographer without the correct equipment.

Without the proper, professional equipment there is almost no way your photos would turn out well. Of course, a good photographer can work with anything and still come out with decent photography.



We recommend you review an equipment list in writing. If you're not clear on what some of the equipment is, then don't be afraid to have the photographer(s) questions to get clarification.

An experienced photographer will have the equipment list prepared and many will have that information available on their brochures.



You want a photographer who communicates and keeps you in the loop

The best photographers understand that your wedding day isn't just an ordinary time or event in your life. This is a special, exciting, and maybe even a slightly stressful time for you.

The most experienced photographers are usually able to make you feel comfortable through the entire process and will keep in touch with you to make sure everything is on schedule.

This is your day.

Most of the photographers we know personally are wonderful, friendly, and courteous professionals. Some are better than others at keeping in touch, so do not ever feel like you are being bothersome or that you're

asking too many questions of your photographer.

It's worth the time to meet with your photographer face to face before making your final decision. This will give you a better comfort level and you can clarify your expectations when it comes to communication and scheduling.



4 Experience is Best

It is rare, but there are times when a wedding album is not completed on time as promised.

Most of the time, it is because something was missed or due to miscommunication between either parties.

An experienced photographer with exceptional credentials will not only have testimonials and client comments on their website or brochures but will also give our contact information for you to hear from their most recent clients.

There is no getting around the fact some photographers are brand new to the business and may not have the management skills to finish the production process for your album. It has happened often and does not mean a photographer is any less professional.



This is why we recommend you work with an experience photographers who has a long history of happy clients to ensure you will get everything you expect.

Here are the 3 simple rules to remember:

1. Ask for licenses and a list of professional affiliations.
2. Stick with experience.
3. Ask for referrals. We recommend contacting at least 4-5 recent clients.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with giving someone new to the business a fair shot, but just be aware there is a certain amount of risk involved when it come to their ability to capture and deliver albums of a once-in-a-lifetime event and opportunity.



5

Your Photographer Should Have “Proven” Problem Solving Skills

For the most part, your wedding will very likely go without any major problems. In fact, many times things happen where the bride and groom never even become aware because of the professionals they’ve hired have the experience

and expertise to take care of things without outside help.

This goes beyond just photographers. From the limo driver dealing with road closures to the florist working with a swing in temperature...the more experience your “team” has the better off you will be.

Usually, it’s the professional who has already made his or her mistakes or dealt with the wide range of problems you can depend on to make things go as smoothly as possible for you.

Of course, this doesn’t mean any photographer without our 28 years experience photographing weddings cannot deal with problems. But you can’t ignore the fact most of us learn from our mistakes and making quick decisions to put out the little fires that will happen throughout your day comes easier with experience.

Here are some things a photographer often has to deal with:

1. **Weather issues:** You have decided to have your wedding pictures taken outside just after the ceremony. The weather calls for sun and your photographer puts his or her faith in the forecast and doesn’t realize there should



always be a plan B and a plan C for your photography session.

A plan B is usually common sense. But years of experience gives a photographer the upfront knowledge to have a third option to make sure nothing Mother Nature can do will affect your wedding photos.

- 2. Uncooperative wedding party members:** Chances are often good that someone in a wedding party might have a couple of drinks (or more) before they've even stepped out of the limo. This often makes for a difficult and often frustrating experience for many photographers.

But an experienced photographer knows how to handle these situations and deal with varying personalities.



National Agencies vs Independent Photography Studios

There are numerous nationwide photography agencies you will come across while searching for your wedding photographer. What turns a lot of people away is the

hard sales approach these services often use.

In fact, often the person you speak may not be the actual photographer who will be present at your wedding. Instead, you may work with a sales person or customer service representative.

In fact, often times you will meet your photographer just days before your wedding or the day of your wedding!

The real problem is some of the larger photography agencies ignore the fact that part of being an exceptional photographer is forming close relationships with clients. The more a photographer gets to know the bride and groom personally, the process goes deeper and a solid relationship is built rather than a pure business transaction.

At Costello, we are the exact opposite of national agency organizations.

We prefer to work with you personally and provide you with a comfortable, friendly experience. In fact, we are proof that a friendly, personal approach with your photographer is always tied to the quality of the finished photos.





Your Photographer Should be Flexible

One aspect most common is the packages and options photographers offer their clients. After all, it is much easier for the photographer to provide a limited number of options and packages. But this isn't always the best for you.

Photographers like us are flexible and offer custom packages, putting their client's interests before their own. The truth is, it is your wedding day and you should get exactly what you want.

Not a "one-size-fits-all" package recommended by their studios.

The best way to find out if a photographer is flexible is to meet with him or her face to face and ask a lot of questions. Usually a photographer who does more listening than talking while providing guidance is someone you should seriously consider.



Two Professional Photographers are Better Than One

Another thing, you should consider when hiring a photographer for your

wedding is to hire a team of two or more professional photographers with equal experience levels.

When you have two equally experienced photographers at your wedding, many of the issues and problems mentioned above are completely eliminated.

For example, you never have to worry about missing the perfect shot when you hire a photography team.

Additionally, having two experienced pros will give varying skills and usually an exceptional team to photograph your wedding. This ensures you will come away with a wonderful story in photos to cherish for the rest of your life together.

In summary, here is what you should look for when you hire your wedding photographer

- *Although there are some very good new photographers, it is safer to go with experience.*

The more experience and history a photographer has under his or her belt, the better chance you have of getting the highest quality and professionalism possible. We've been photographing weddings for 28 years.



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- A legitimate wedding photographer will provide you with a portfolio and samples of work including albums, prints, and digital files.
- Always ask for at least 4-5 references you can contact.
- If you do not hire a photographer with a partner, you should get the name of the backup photographer and ask about their experience. The team of at least two photographers with extensive experience nearly guarantees you will get better quality photos captured throughout the day.
- Attempt to meet with your photographer face-to-face if possible. It may not always be possible if you are located out of the area and having someone you trust meet with the photographer is the next best option.
- Ask for a complete equipment list and the backup equipment. (If it is not mostly professional equipment, this should be a warning sign)
- Review a copy of their insurance and legal business documentation (tax ID and certifications)
- View printed images when you visit the studio. The printed image quality is where the professional photographer will be separated from the amateur.
- Service matters.
Independent Photography Studios will more often than not provide you with better, more personal service. It is better to work directly with the photographer rather than deal with a “middle man” such as a sales person or a National Agency.
- Go with your gut and look for a personal connection. Personality matters and you are going to be working with the photographer(s) as much as any other professional involved in your wedding.





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About Costello Photography

Award-winning photographers John and Doris Costello have been photographing weddings professionally throughout Philadelphia, Montgomery County, Bucks County, Delaware Valley and South Jersey for 28 years. They are members of the Professional Photographers of America (PPA) and hold Certification, Photographic, Craftsman, and Master of Photography Degrees from the PPA.

Costello Photography is located at:

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To find out more about Costello Photography, or to schedule a free wedding photography consultation click the link below:

[http://www.costellophotography.com/
free_consultation.php](http://www.costellophotography.com/free_consultation.php)