

WHEELHOUSE



ON THE HILL

PHOTOGRAPHER

**NIALL
READ**

CONTENT

4-5

W E L C O M E

6-11

G E N E R A L

12-19

W E D D I N G T I M E L I N E

20-23

W E A T H E R

24-29

B R I D A L P R E P

30-33

C E R E M O N Y

34-41

C O U P L E S P O R T R A I T S





WELCOME

First of all, CONGRATULATIONS! I really hope you're enjoying all the planning so far! If I can give one piece of advice, it would be; don't stress over small details. Prioritise what is most important to you both and once those things are organised, just consider anything else a bonus!

Remember why you're having the wedding in the first place. It's to celebrate your love and commitment to each other. Whether that be in front of friends and family or just yourselves and a celebrant. On a sandy beach, in your garden or local church, followed by a formal dinner, barbecue under the stars, or a relaxed pub dinner.

There is no such thing as a rule book when it comes to planning a wedding. The BEST weddings are those which are a true reflection of the couple, so take a moment to figure out how you want to spend your wedding day.



LIGHT

I am ALL about the light! Beautiful, soft, natural light. Whilst this may be one of the last things on your mind when planning your wedding, it is the basis of all photography and will make or break an image. So, I have compiled some tips and tricks to help you in this daunting, yet exciting process of wedding planning.

CEREMONY LOCATION AND TIME

You'll want to make sure you've left plenty of time for portraits and reception details after your ceremony. Think about the time of year and day your ceremony takes place. It gets dark early from October onwards, so consider this when booking your ceremony. Churches tend to be dark and venues have certain artificial lighting so try to have your ceremony early in the day when you have a better chance of natural light streaming through the windows. If you want to have your portraits after the ceremony (as is usual) think about whether it will still be bright outside.

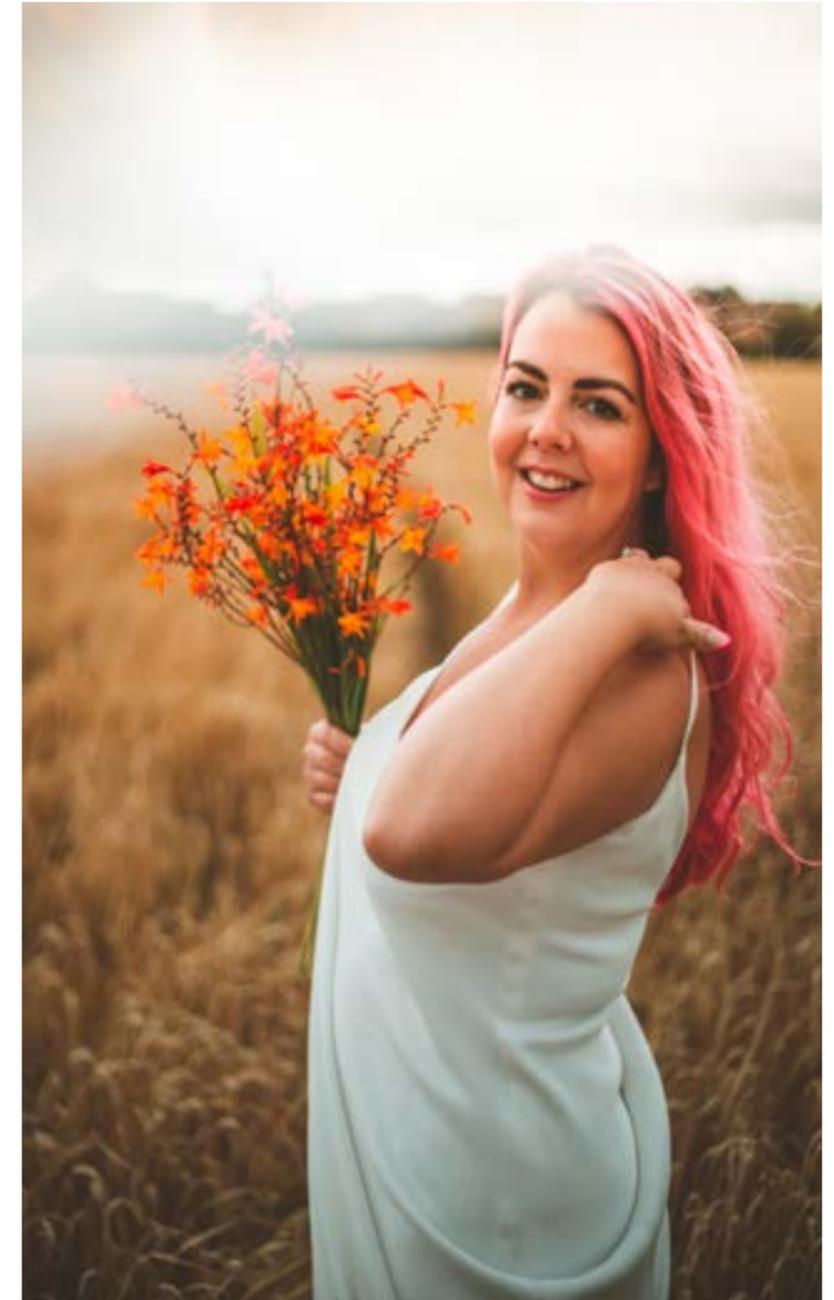
I'd recommend a 12noon ceremony in Winter, to maximise the daylight hours for couple and group photos. If you're having a late ceremony, you may want to consider the option of a 'first look' (I'll talk about this in a moment).

If you're planning an outdoor summer wedding, I would recommend having it a bit later in the afternoon, as you don't want the sun to be too harsh for your guests, or your photos! Alternatively, see if it's possible to hold the ceremony under a nice shaded tree. Also, keep in mind the position of the sun. You want the sun to be lighting you both from the front, otherwise you risk one of you being in shadow. When choosing a ceremony venue, try to avoid dark rooms with few windows. Basically, look for as much light as possible.



IMPORTANT COORDINATES

When giving location information to us and your videographer, be sure to give both GPS coordinates and a map of the various locations of the day including; prep/ ceremony/ photos/ venue.



LIST OF CONTACTS IMPORTANT COORDINATES

It is worth circulating to everyone involved on the day a list of contact information: Photographer/ videographer/ makeup artist/ hair stylist/ best man/ celebrant/ maid of honour.

YOUR GUESTS

Maybe consider asking guests to refrain from picture taking during the ceremony. There is a growing popularity for un-plugged weddings - for good reason. The last thing you want is the professional shot blocked by an iPad coming up the aisle, or streaks of distracting flash! It also means your guests are truly present in the moment.

WEDDING DAY TIMELINE

Timing plays an important role in every wedding and setting a timeline really helps the day run smoothly, and with no stress for you two. Give a copy of your wedding timeline to each supplier and to a few key family and bridal party members, so everyone is on the same page. The list should include your photographer, wedding planner, maid of honour, best man, driver, and any musicians, bands or DJs.



RULES AND RESTRICTIONS

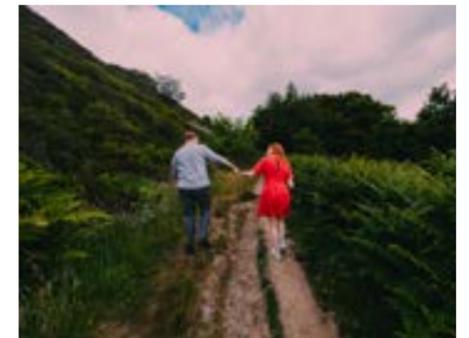
Find out what the rules are for photographers at the ceremony location. All venues are different, with some restricting the location of photographs and even the times in which they are permitted. Before booking your church, ask if photos are allowed during the ceremony. It's very rare that a priest forbids photos during the ceremony, but they do happen, unfortunately.





YOUR GUESTS

Maybe consider asking guests to refrain from picture taking during the ceremony. There is a growing popularity for un-plugged weddings - for good reason. The last thing you want is the professional shot blocked by an iPad coming up the aisle, or streaks of distracting flash! It also means your guests are truly present in the moment.



WEDDING DAY TIMELINE

Timing plays an important role in every wedding and setting a timeline really helps the day run smoothly, and with no stress for you two. Give a copy of your wedding timeline to each supplier and to a few key family and bridal party members, so everyone is on the same page. The list should include your photographer, wedding planner, maid of honour, best man, driver, and any musicians, bands or DJs.



KEEPING TRACK OF TIME

Speaking from experience, the two biggest causes for lateness are hair, make-up and group shots. Both can be easily prevented. Hair and make-up are undoubtedly an important element of your day, but it is very easy to lose track of time. This part of the day often overruns which makes you late for everything else to follow and causes stress - which is the last thing you want! I have two suggestions that may help. Firstly, have a dress rehearsal, which gives you a chance to time how long the process is likely to take. Secondly, and this may sound sneaky, give your stylist a deadline that is 30-45 minutes earlier than when you actually need to be ready. That way you've left some wiggle room for any slight delays that might occur. It also allows you more time to get into your dress and get some lovely photos before the ceremony.



Another thing that throws a schedule off is the greeting line after the ceremony. On average, 40 minutes is spent greeting approximately 120 guests after the ceremony. Some of our couples choose to skip the greeting line in favour of mingling with their guests back at the drinks reception. By the time we've gone back to the venue, and taken the couple photos (if you've chosen to do these after the ceremony), you'll be just in time to enjoy the start of the drinks reception. Most of your guests will have arrived and checked in at this stage, so the party is well and truly ready to kick off.

KEEPING TRACK OF TIME

I encourage my couples to keep group photos to a minimum, as they always take far longer than you might think. It normally takes about half an hour to do ten photographs of small groups. This might seem like a hugely long time, but by the time it takes to find people, pry them from the bar, for people to totter over in heels, granny/granddad to make their way over and the inevitable chatting and congratulations between the people in each group, these photographs always take much longer than you think. Normally I advise keeping them to the immediate family such as:

- + Couple with each set of parents
- + Couple with each set of parents & siblings and partners
- + Couple with each set of grandparents
- + Couple with bridal party

That list alone takes minimum 20 minutes. If planning additional photos, please allow 5 minutes for groups of less than 6 people, and for larger groups allow 10 minutes. Also, please bare in mind that if you want a large group photo of all the guests will take half an hour by the time you've found people at the bar/bathroom, to get them into place etc. The less time I spend doing formal group shots, the more time I have to run around capturing lots of natural candid and impromptu group photos, and the more mingling you get to do. Ultimately, the key to a fabulous and stress-free wedding day is flexibility. By factoring in some 'buffer' into your timeline, will ensure your day runs exactly as you hoped it would.





CREATING YOUR TIMELINE

What time does the sun set for your wedding? Be sure to schedule enough time for wedding portraits in the winter months. The sun sets so early at this time of year, and it is something to be acutely aware of if you want outdoor portraits in natural daylight. You'll want to get out at least an hour before sunset.

Distance between ceremony location and reception venue. Will you be travelling to your venue during rush hour or when children get out of school? You want to ensure you leave plenty of time to enjoy your drinks reception. Don't forget – when people arrive, they will want to check into their rooms before joining the drinks reception.

If couple photos are important to you, you need to factor at least 45 minutes for these. The average wedding meal lasts 2 hours. The average wedding speeches last 30 mins. If you plan on having your speeches before dinner, ensure that everyone giving a speech keeps it to a maximum of 10 minutes. Any more, and there is an awful long time that people are drinking, but not eating.



If you plan on having your first dance at 9.00pm-9.30pm, this must be communicated with the musicians. Check with both the venue and the musicians if it is possible for the band to set up either before or during the meal. If not, there can be up to 90 minutes post-meal/speeches where the evening 'lags', before the dancing can commence. Average religious ceremony: 60 minutes. Although some more traditional priests choose the longer 90 minute ceremony for weddings. It is worth checking with your officiant as to his timescale.

RAIN

This is the UK– there’s a good chance there will be rain on your wedding day! However, the stunning Yorkshire landscape truly comes alive when it is raining. The greens are greener, the skies are gloriously moody – and it’s all crying out for you to come be photographed within its beauty! Bring some comfy footwear and a warm blanket to snuggle into. I love nothing more than traipsing through daisy filled fields and being blown away by the insanely gorgeous landscape, and my couples are always glad they went the extra mile to get “that” shot.



Some little tips to making the most of the rain:

- + If you’re wearing heels, bring some flats or a pair of funky wellies. Boys – that goes for you too! You don’t want to ruin your new suit shoes
- + Bring a warm coat or blanket to keep you toasty between locations.
- + Get some disposable hand warmers from the pharmacy – instant cosiness!
- + Don’t forget the tissues!
- + Waterproof mascara was made for wedding days! Especially wet ones.
- + Have a flask of hot chocolate in the car, to be sipped on before heading out for photos.
- + Don’t forget an umbrella. Either a clear or a white one.
- + After that, I get you to snuggle up close and enjoy the moment! You’ll both be floating on that wedding day cloud! So enjoy every second.

However, if it really is utterly torrential, I will of course not be asking you to go out in it. We’ll head indoors, slow things down and do some more controlled shots inside. Be prepared to run outside for a few minutes if there’s a break in the weather though!





TROPICAL HEAT!

It doesn't happen often, but the UK has been known to have it's blistering days of close heat. So, here's a few tips to minimise the impact of the heat.

If where you're getting ready doesn't have air conditioning, don't get dressed too early! And be the last to get your makeup done. Open some windows to get a cross wind blowing through.

Make sure you have some blotting tissues in your go-to bag.

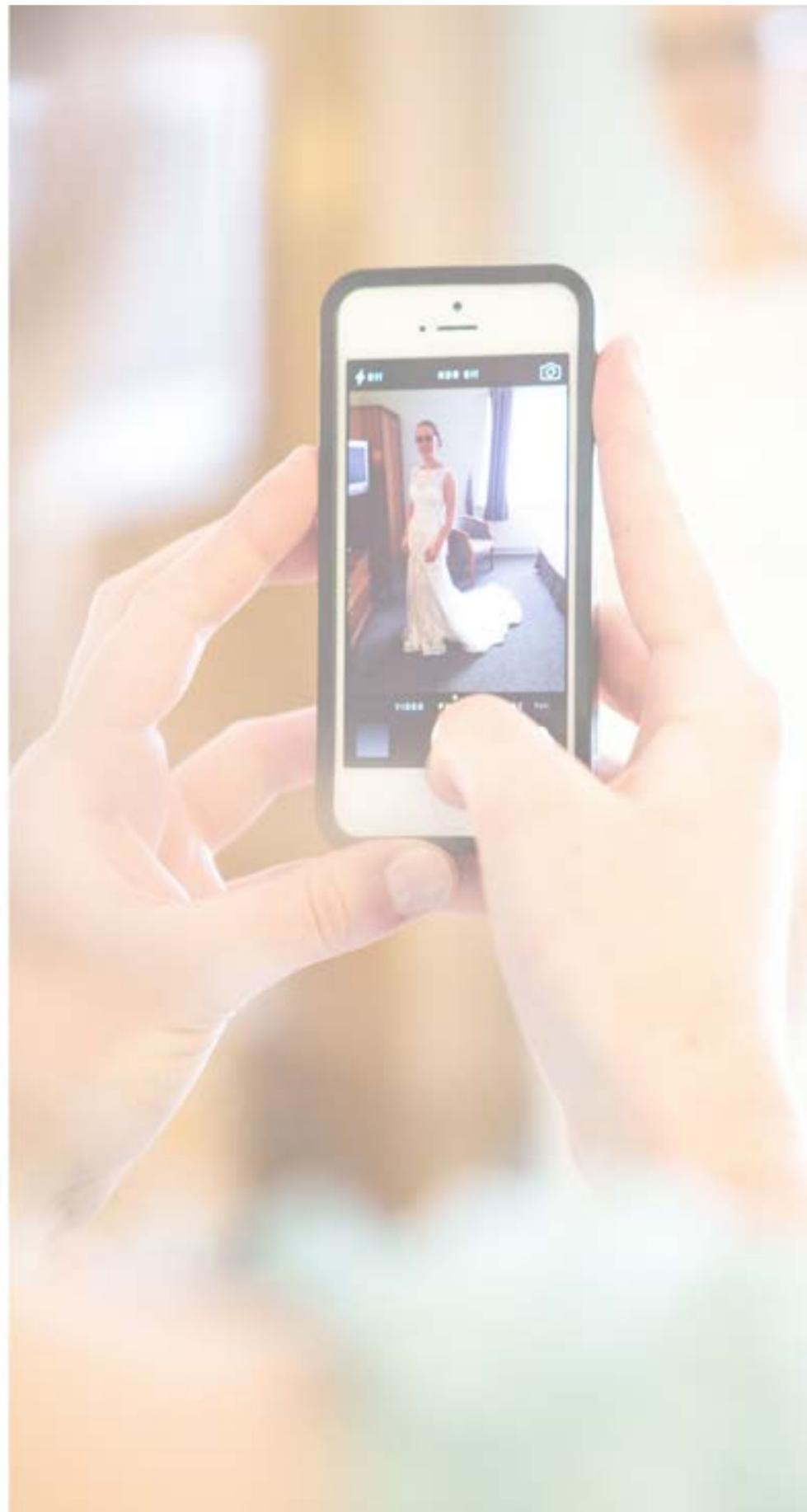
Be sure to drink plenty of water. I always recommend drinking some dioralyte in the morning, to ensure you stay hydrated throughout the day. Make sure there's a bottle of water by your chairs in the ceremony, and also in the wedding car.

BRIDAL PREP!

So, you already know to allow plenty of time for getting ready with your girls, but what about getting the best out of your photos during this time? Wherever you are getting ready, try to find a room with plenty of space and light. Not only will this make your photos look softer and more flattering, but your stylists will thank you for it too. Try and set up as close to a window as possible. Windows act as big softboxes and will create soft, flattering light. The same thing applies when putting on your dress – please try to remember to face the window. If possible, make sure the room you are getting ready has plenty of space, as a small room will make it difficult to get the best photos.

Try and have the room you're getting dressed in kept clear and clean. Designate an area of the room to 'dump' any clutter: handbags, toiletries, shopping bags, fast food wrappers and energy drink cans, and anything else that you don't want to see in the background of your photos!





I will more than likely be using this room for detail shots of your dress and shoes while you're getting hair and makeup done. This is the first thing I usually do when I arrive. Make sure your dress is out of its wrapper and easily accessible, so that it can be moved if necessary. Traditional locations to hang your dress are in doorways or in front of windows, unless you want to get creative (it's not unheard of for dresses to be photographed in trees or on fences!). It's well worth investing in a nice fabric hanger, if your wedding dress designer didn't supply one already. It's easy to overlook that black plastic hanger but it will make a world of difference when you see your photographs. Also set aside any other details you would like photographed at this time: shoes, rings, flowers, jewellery, invitations.

Buy yourself and your bridesmaids some nice silky dressing gowns for when you're getting ready – they will look great in your photos and it's a nice gift too.

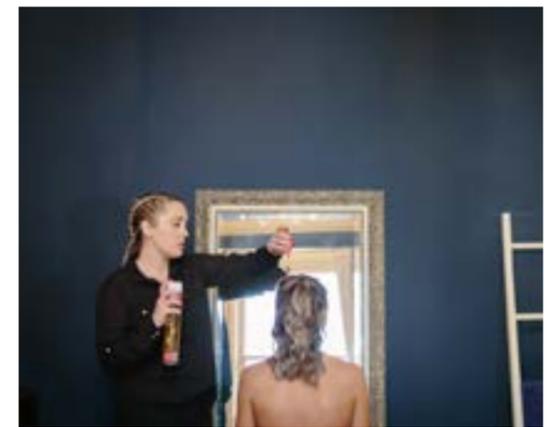
Have food delivered to your room. It may be hectic, but take the time to have a bite before the wedding since it will be a while before you have the opportunity to nourish yourself during the reception. If your husband/wife to be has given you a gift, if you can, try and wait until I've arrived so I can get some great shots of you opening it. Try and avoid having a fake tan, as they tend to make people look orange, unfortunately. Speak to your make-up artist about achieving the right colour for your skin tone and something that will give you a healthy glow rather than going down the fake tan route. In the photos I want to aim for nice creamy skin ones, rather than unflattering orange hues.



When having your hair trial and, in particular, if you want to wear your hair down, speak to your hairdresser about trying to keep your face visible. Think about when you are exchanging your vows – all of your guests want to see your face.



I like to spend an hour and a half at the bride prep. This gives me ample time to capture details and lots of getting ready moments! Be sure to give yourself plenty of time. Allowing 50% more time for hair and makeup than you originally anticipated alleviates the number one reason wedding schedules end up running late. Believe me, that last hour zooms by! You want to be happy and excited getting into the dress, not frantic and stressed. It'll also allow you a little extra time for some shots with family before I leave ahead of you. Prepare an emergency bridal kit with clear nail polish, mints, a sewing kit, stain treatment, eye drops, safety pins, bobby pins, pain reliever and mini deodorant. I will leave 30 minutes before the bride so that I can get to the ceremony and have a chat with the officiant.





BRIDAL PROCESSION

Make sure your bridesmaids walk slowly, and allow enough space between each other so I can capture a lovely photo of each person individually. Wait until the last bridesmaid is seated before walking down the aisle yourself. Take your time, and enjoy this moment.



THE VOWS

The best ceremony photos are when the couple face each other during the vows. Ensure the officiant is not standing between you and your guests. Ask if the bridal party can remain in their places at the pew, rather than join you at the altar. It makes for a much cleaner photo. Also, as you stand up to exchange your vows, ask the bridal party to remove your chairs from the aisle. It means we get to see all of your outfits, rather than from the waist up. Finally – don't be shy!! When your celebrant announces your new status as spouses, go in for a nice long kiss. It's an important moment to photograph, so please give us more than a quick peck!

GRAND EXIT

Firstly, make sure someone has the doors open at the end of the aisle before you make your exit. Take your time! Enjoy this newly-married status. Soak it up as you walk past your beaming and applauding guests.

CONFETTI

Confetti is always a fun idea at a wedding. If your church or venue won't allow the use of confetti, think of an alternative. Bubbles maybe? Or dried rose petals. I often whisk the newlyweds to the side of the church and arrange the guests to form a path, which the newlyweds walk through and have confetti thrown on them as they pass. It's a great opportunity for some wonderful photographs, and gives your guests a chance to see you up close and personal, but without taking as long as a traditional greeting line.



GROUPS & FORMALS

I've said before to try and keep group photos to immediate family. Decide beforehand when and where these should happen. Have a designated member of both families whose responsibility it is to have everyone at the location on time. Make sure they both have the photo list in advance.

CANDIDS

After portraits are done, I'll float around and take candid photos of your guests. I love capturing these images as the guests usually don't notice me and it's a great opportunity to get genuine reactions.

COUPLES PORTRAITS

Relax and enjoy it! I love emotive photography that truly captures the feel of the day and the love between my couples. For the most part, I work in a very unobtrusive documentary style, capturing the day as it unfolds naturally. For the couple portraits, I draw on my knowledge of composition and light, and offer gentle guidance and direction to help make you and your photographs their most beautiful. My aim is to capture the spark between the two of you and I like to keep it natural, relaxed and uncontrived.

*All I ask is that you trust me and just be in love,
be in the moment, be sincere, be happy &
be with each other*

I will be looking at the light and what it is doing to your faces, and I'll ensure that you are positioned at the right angle to each other so you both look AMAZING. I'll prompt you to tickle, snuggle, whisper and cuddle. You've already said you love my photographs, but each and every one has been carefully considered and composed, yet still looks beautiful and natural. Because it is. Because the love and sweetness between each couple is genuine; I just have a hand in the composition.

PERMISSION TO PHOTOGRAPH

If you want to have your photos in a public place (park/castle etc) or a venue where you're not holding your reception, check to see if you need permission first. A quick email or phone call to the local council, or venue is all it usually takes. However, they may require a copy of my public liability insurance, so it's worth checking out beforehand.





FIRST LOOK

There are a million and one wedding traditions and superstitions you could choose to follow on your wedding day. Most couples will pick and choose which traditions they will include in their wedding day, but one of the most long-held and common ones is that you shouldn't see each other before you're walking down the aisle at the ceremony. In recent years however, some couples have opted to break that tradition in order to do a 'first look' photo session, and you've probably had people ask if you're going to do the same. What they're really asking is whether or not you'll be taking a few minutes together, and seeing each other before the ceremony. There are a few good reasons to break this particular tradition, so, to do a first look or not to do a first look? That is the question. Here are three common benefits couples who do a first look say they got out of it!



1. You can experience one of the most romantic moments of your day in private

The 'big reveal' moment can be one of the most romantic moments of your wedding day, and sometimes couples would rather experience that together, and alone! There'll still be a big reveal for your guests when the bride walks into the ceremony, but you'll have had an intimate moment to experience it together beforehand. Also, many couples say that they enjoyed having a few minutes to themselves right at the start of their wedding. Chances are the one person you want to spend time with on your wedding day is your other half, but once the day gets going, friends, grandparents, and even distant cousins will be pulling you in a million directions. A first look is one of a small number of moments where you can just be together, and it gives you a chance to soak in what you're about to do, without everyone gawking at you while you do!

2. You'll quell any nerves

A lot of couples who do a first look will often say that one or other of them was particularly nervous and they chose a first look as a way to help each other calm down so they could enjoy the ceremony more. Even if your nerves have nothing to do with the temperature of your feet, plenty of people experience huge nerves around crowds, or the idea of being the centre of attention, and if so, then this is a great option for you. Worried you'll ugly cry when you first see each other? Not a problem when it's just the pair of you – you've probably seen the ugliest of sad cries so you can handle the happy tears, without a crowd. You're each other's people – it makes sense that you would want to be there for each other before you go do this big, crazy thing!



3. You'll have more time for photos, and you'll look your best

The traditional wedding day order puts your portrait photo session together after the ceremony, which puts you on a clock of sorts. You want to enjoy your cocktail hour with your guests, and you also don't want to leave them standing around waiting for you all day. Plus, rallying the wedding party troops once the party has started can be harder than you think, which can cut into the time you have to get photos of just the two of you. A first look solves that, and then some. You have plenty of time to capture gorgeous photos of just the two of you, and there's an added bonus. You'll be fresh out of the hair and make-up chairs so you'll be as fresh and photo-ready as you're going to be all day. Waiting until after the ceremony means you'll have been hugged and kissed by every person you know before your photos are taken.



FIRST DANCE

Please let me know 5-10 mins in advance that you'll be having your first dance so I can get into position. Try to have the first dance between the two of you for the majority of the song to give me ample time to get some good shots before the bridal party hits the floor! I like to stay for around 3 songs after the first dance to get some classic shots of the guests having a blast. Any more after that and things get messy and no one wants those shots!

Again, if you could please ask your band or DJ to use neutral lighting for your first dance, I promise it will make all the difference to your photos.

After that, simply ENJOY!



P H O T O G R A P H E R

**NIALL
READ**