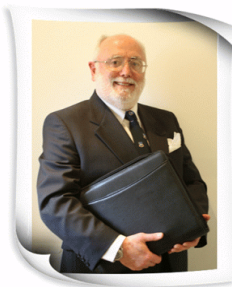




## So, you want a Less-stress Wedding?



*A properly planned wedding can eliminate enormous amounts of stress. I hope this article assists you in achieving that.*

Sorry to disappoint you, but there's no such thing as a stress-free wedding! By its very nature, you are going to worry about your wedding. Even if you don't, there's your mother, AND your father. Yes, some fathers qualify for record doses of Valium come time for their daughter's wedding. And, what about your fiancé's family?

How can you at least reduce some of your stress levels on your wedding day?

### Celebrant

The celebrant is responsible for the legals; ensuring you're eligible to marry, actually marrying you, then registration of your marriage.

The celebrant generally writes your ceremony under your guidance to provide the ceremony you desire.

It is essential that you provide the celebrant with everything he/she asks for to ensure things go to plan.

Unfortunately, many brides forget about the celebrant in relation to time...

### The Bride running Late

Celebrants are busy people and may have several weddings on the same day. They must ensure there is ample time to drive between the weddings and setup their PA equipment, signing table etc. The Commonwealth Attorney General requires celebrants to be at a wedding at least 20 minutes before the time it is to commence.

If you are late, the celebrant may have to rush the ceremony in order to attend the next wedding. Even if the celebrant has allowed ample time, if you are inordinately late, then he/she may, in their turn, be late to the next engagement.

Really, the days of the bride being traditionally late have long gone. These days, it's regarded as downright rude! After all, there are many people involved in your wedding, all working to make it your special day. If you are late, paid staff generally go into overtime. Who pays for that?

This message also includes the groom; one or two who, on occasion, have themselves, turned up late, and well primed. Well primed? Read on.....

### Alcohol (1)

It is not unusual for the groom to have few drinks before his wedding. That's normal, but when the groom gets drunk, and I mean drunk, the celebrant finds him/herself in legal territory.

You see, there is a thing called "informed consent". Your marriage is viewed by the authorities as an extremely serious undertaking.

What if you're drunk? How can you make informed consent if you are too drunk to do so? What does the celebrant do? If either of you are drunk, the celebrant

has to make a decision as to whether the ceremony can be proceeded with.

I say either of the bridal couple, since I have noticed brides turning up after a morning on the bubbly at home.

By the way, don't think the celebrant has to marry you just because you are there. There have been several well reported occasions where the celebrant has refused to proceed because of drunkenness of the groom. And, the Attorney General is fully supportive of the celebrant in such cases.

### How can you remain on time? Hairdresser and Makeup

It is essential the bride is prepared FIRST by the hairdresser and makeup people. This enables the bride to dress FIRST and be READY for any home photos your photographer wants to shoot.

While that is happening, the bridesmaids can complete their own get-ready program.

### Photographer/ Videographer

These people are artists in their own right. For them, when being artistic, time becomes irrelevant, so it is vital you keep them informed of the time for the wedding and that the ceremony is expected to commence on time.

### Transport

Whether you use hire or private vehicles to travel to the wedding, it is common sense to carry out a trial run. It is ESSENTIAL you do this a week before at the same time and day you are holding the wedding, to see what the traffic is like. If you arrive 15 minutes late, then leave 15 minutes earlier on your wedding day.

Note also, what is happening around town on your wedding day. Do you plan driving past Energy Australia stadium at the very same time the Knights are playing at home? Don't even think about it!

### Hire Car Company

Ensure the hire car company's driver is familiar with the route.. More importantly, ensure the booking is CONFIRMED. Believe me, that's essential.

### Private Vehicles

Sometimes it's not a good idea to have family or friends drive the vehicles. What do you do if the driver gets on the "grog" with the groom and his men.? You then have to find a sober driver. Family can be really hard to supervise at times.

### Confetti

An absolute "no no" in public parks and most function centres. Rice is also banned in most places.



*Proud of your Scottish heritage? Talk to Philip about his Scottish wedding ceremonies.*

## Signing Table & The Feared Vase of Flowers

Like most celebrants, I carry a small table and chair in my car for the signing. At some weddings, the table and chair are provided by the family or the functions centre.

Whoever sets up the table must ENSURE that under NO circumstances is a vase containing water to be placed on the table. Flowers are welcome, but NO water! Why?

A gust of wind, or more likely, the table is bumped during the signing and the vase WILL fall over. Where does the water go? You guessed it, all over the documents.

## Will your Guests hear the Ceremony?



Make sure your celebrant has a PA system

The single major complaint I hear from couples is they have been to weddings where no one could hear the celebrant. You should ensure that your chosen celebrant has a portable PA system that ensures everyone does hear what is said.

## Wet Weather

If your wedding is planned to occur outside in a park, at the beach, or other outdoor location and the weather turns bad, it's too late if you didn't make alternative arrangements.

It's too bad if the bridal couple get wet, but you simply can't sign documents with the celebrant while it rains without cover.

It is essential you have a **Plan "B"**. I once attended a wedding at the Warners Bay Rotunda. We all made it to the Rotunda before the rain arrived, but when it did, the wind drove it horizontally through the rotunda area. We had to adjourn over the road to a café to complete the signing.

Plan B doesn't just mean rain, it means wind also. Try getting married in a 30-40 knot westerly gale and you will see what I mean.

If it looks like rain, check out Philip Greentree's website and go to the weather page, then choose Williamstown Met-office's weather radar. You can actually see which way the storm showers are heading.

## The Place for the wedding

You want to get married in that beautiful park down by the river, or that beautiful setting alongside the ocean

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or bay. Then, when you arrive, you are shocked to find another wedding is already there at the same time. Did you consider that public places have to be booked with the local council?

Once you settle on your chosen location to marry, ensure you promptly book with the local council. After all, if you feel the location is great, odds are that other couples feel the same.

## Music

Music should NOT be played during the ceremony. It can severely interfere with the ceremony and prevent guests from hearing what is being said.

Music is fine as the bride arrives and enters the marriage area, and during the signing of the documents.

Worse still, have you ever been to a wedding and found someone forgot the music CDs, and or the CD player completely? It happens more often than you realise.

## Your Engagement Ring

The bride should wear her engagement ring on her right hand during the ceremony. It can then be transferred to the left hand during the signing of the documents. This makes things much easier when it comes time for the wedding rings.

## Alcohol (2) and Smoking

It is impolite, in fact, rude for guests to be drinking and smoking during the ceremony. Alcohol can cause "brainstorms" in some, resulting in stupid comments during the ceremony. Others can become plain noisy and cause general interference & inconvenience. Far fewer people smoke these days than ever-before. Cigarette smoke can be quite irritating to non-smokers, especially in confined quarters inside a building.

## Your Witnesses.

You need two witnesses, both of whom must be aged over 18-years at the time of the signing. A witness who is not aged 18-years is not permitted by Law to witness your wedding.

## At the Wedding Reception

### Master of Ceremonies

Who is your functions MC? Is it an older family member, maybe dear old "Uncle Charlie"? Is he up to it? By this I mean many family members who have always been a "speaker" or "talker" go to pieces on the night of a wedding. Worse still, they are also a guest and simply can't keep away from the "grog". After that happens, well, need I continue?

Then there's the teenage DJ from the disco music company. There is a long term war between disco operators, they cutting their profits ridiculously. They offer their DJs to double up as the MC. The worst catered for segment of the wedding industry is the MC and many cut-price teenage DJs have ruined a very expensive wedding reception.

Do yourselves a favour, pay the little extra money and hire a professional MC. You will never regret doing so.