



~WEDDING CHRONOLOGY~

Pre-ceremonial Music

Creating the right ambience during the arrival and seating of the guests is pertinent to a successful wedding ceremony. Music should commence upon the arrival of the first guests with a variety of selections from classical, jazz and love ballads to new age and sentimental favorites.

Processional

Once the parents have been ushered to their respective seats, the processional begins with a pre-selected song for the bridal party's walk to the altar; once there, the music will gradually fade.

A new music selection signifies the beginning of the bridal march, for the bride and her escort; as before, the music will fade upon her arrival at the altar.

Ceremony

Music is always an option during the ceremony and occasionally the bride and groom will request a sentimental favorite.

Recessional

At ceremony close, the officiant will present the newlyweds to their guests and after a few spoken words will signal for the recessional to begin. The bride and groom will exit the altar, followed by the bridal party, to a pre-designated location for photos.

Receiving Line

Logistics plays a large part in “when to have a receiving line.” If the ceremony and reception are in the same proximity and especially if the venue is outdoors, the receiving line would be better served before the grand entrance, as the line could be set between the guests and the reception area. However, if two separate locations are involved and the guests arrive before the bridal party, the grand entrance would be advisable before the receiving line.

Grand Entrance

Bridal party will be sequenced in order of introduction from the parents to the bride and groom. Occasionally the wedding couple will choose to introduce the parents during the “parent’s dance” rather than the grand entrance.

First Dance Option

With this option, the bride and groom would proceed to the dance floor immediately after their introduction, for the first dance. Otherwise, the first dance would take place after the meal.

Toast

The toast will be given by the best man, usually from the head table, with a wireless microphone; the maid/matron of honor will often add some words, as will a parent or special guest. The toast is best suited during the meal, when the majority of guests can give their full attention.

First Dance

Once the meal has concluded, photos are completed and the bride and groom are prepared, the first dance will be announced and the couple will join each other on the dance floor.

Parent’s Dance

The parents will be introduced, if they haven’t been already, and invited to join the bridal couple for a pre-selected song, especially for them.

Bridal Party Dance

This customary third dance includes the bridal party with the parents and bride and groom. In the case of smaller weddings and where time is of concern, the bridal party can be invited to join halfway through the parent’s dance.

Snowball Dance Option

This option can be a great icebreaker, especially during an afternoon wedding reception, when guests might be somewhat hesitant to dance. Each member of the bridal party, including the bride and groom and parents will select a different dancing partner from the guests; each time the music stops, every dancer will choose another partner, until all of the guests are dancing. This will only be successful if approved in advance by the bride and groom, with complete cooperation from the wedding party and parents.

Money Dance

Often referred to as the “dollar dance” or “honeymoon dance,” this is a wonderful send-off for the wedding couple and allows the guests an opportunity for a one-on-one visit with them.

Father/Daughter Dance

A special song has been chosen, for a special dance with the bride and her father; this dance can take place at any time during the reception, but is best when guests can provide their full attention, possibly after the garter, when many are seated with their cake.

Mother/Son Dance

Rapidly becoming as popular as the Father/Daughter Dance, this also consists of a requested song by the groom for his mother. Often, the two dances will be combined as one.

Cake Cutting

Often indicates the halfway point in the reception. It is important to schedule the cake cutting strategically, since most guests won't leave until after the cake.

Bouquet Toss

Generally, the bouquet and garter toss would immediately follow the cake cutting. Single females are invited to gather on the dance floor, while the bride tosses her bouquet.

Garter Toss

Single males are invited to gather on the dance floor, while the groom removes and tosses the garter.

Last Dance

Special song for the newlyweds; guests are invited to circle them on the dance floor.