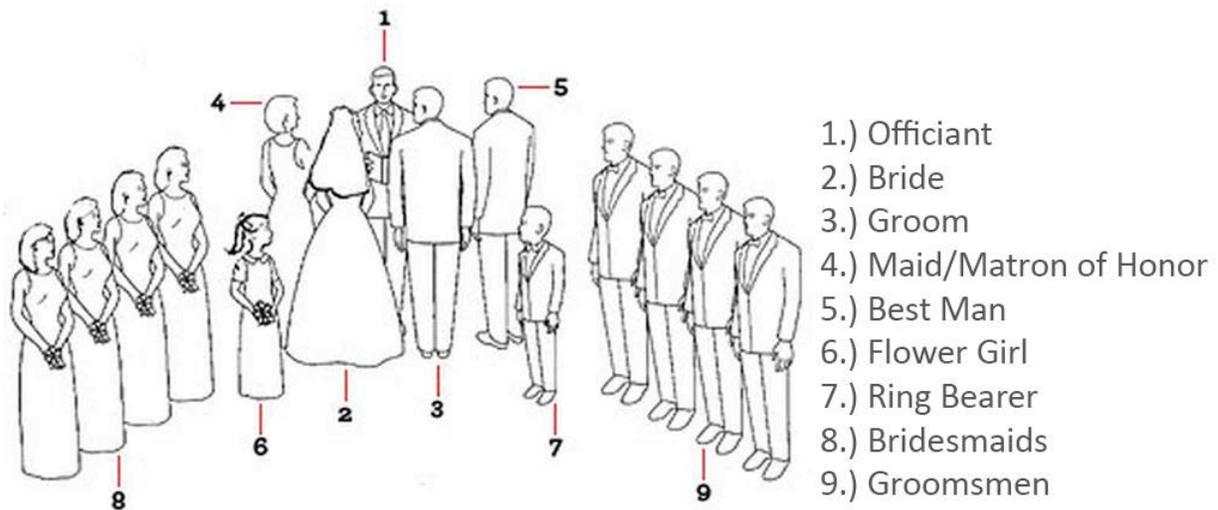


# Planning The Perfect Ceremony

-Presented by Dori Ottolini of Allegro Entertainment



*\*Image from MarthaStewartWeddings.com*

## The Main Event

When it comes to planning the Perfect Wedding Ceremony, there are some crucial decisions to be made first! Where will you be having your ceremony? What date and time will your ceremony happen, and when/where will you be having your rehearsal? When choosing and hiring an officiant, are you selecting a religious leader, or celebrant? Have you picked out your Bridesmaids, Groomsman, Flower Girl, Ring Bearer, and Ushers?

## The Vows & Readings

Nowadays, ceremonies can be tailored to fit the vision of the bride & groom. Depending on who you choose to officiate, your ceremony can be very traditional with classic readings and religious references, or personalized with special poems and such. If you will be having readings, have you selected readers? Will you be writing your own separate vows? Choosing traditional vows? Or writing vows together? Don't forget the rings! Who will be in charge of having the rings ready to be presented? *\*This is traditionally the Best Man*

# The Order

Planning out the actual order of things can become a little confusing, so this is based on a “standard” flow. Some things to consider... Do you have Ushers to escort the Mothers & Grandmothers? If yes, the Usher will be arm in arm with the woman, and if the woman is married, the husband would follow directly behind to make up a unit of three. Do you want your groom and officiant to start in place or walk down the aisle? If they’ll be walking down the aisle, it typically happens right after the Seating of Parents & Grandparents along to the same song. Will the Groomsmen come out with the Groom and take their place at the altar, or escort the Bridesmaids down the aisle?

## **The Seating of the Parents & Grandparents**

## **The Processional** (*Bridesmaids, Groomsmen, Flower Girl, Ring Bearer*)

## **The Bridal Entrance**

## **The Unity**

## **The Recessional**

*(\*The following was an excerpt taken directly from aPracticalWedding.com)*

**The Address:** This is when a message is shared with your guests, a speech from the officiant, sometimes including readings. In a church wedding this would be when the minister gives a sermon. If the officiant is a friend or family member, you may want them to tell a personal story about you and your partner or explain how you met. You might want the officiant to share a reading or song lyric, proverb, or religious reading. Depending on your officiant they may or may not write the address—Priests and Rabbis usually do, friends and family might want to, or might want to write it with you.

**The Readings:** The readings really are exactly what they sound like. You may want someone to read a poem, lyrics, a Bible passage, or even a webcomic. Your officiant will introduce the reader, the reader will stand or come up to the ceremony, and then proceed with the reading.

**The Expression of Intent:** I am proceeding in caps because this is important: THIS IS THE ONLY PART OF THE WEDDING CEREMONY WHICH IS LEGALLY MANDATED. The expression of intent is when you and your partner are asked if you take this person to be your legally wedded partner, and you say, “I do,” or, “Hell yes!” or, “We do,” or “Yes, yes, a million times yes.”

**The Vows:** There are options with the vows. Your vows, you read them. Or your own vows, the officiant reads them, and you repeat them. You write them, or you don’t. Or you don’t do personal vows at all. Either way, having the previously mentioned thesis makes it much easier to either stick with the general theme of the ceremony or cover something outside the theme that you want included.

**The Ceremony of the Rings:** The officiant speaks for a moment about the meaning of rings. It usually is along the lines of, “Rings are a circle which is eternal, as is love,” but varies with different religious and cultural contexts. Feel free to add to this explanation, or keep it super simple.

**The Ring Vows:** This is when you present your partner with their ring. I find that most couples want to repeat after me, as it’s hard to remember what you want to say when you’re up there getting married! And I have the extra advantage of an iPad to check my notes on. You’ll place the ring on your partner’s finger and say something to the effect of, “With this ring I thee wed.” Again, you can get as creative as you like with the words to choose to say before you place the ring.

**The Kiss:** The kiss! I love this part, it’s so happy.

**The Pronouncement:** Exactly what it sounds like, the officiant will pronounce you wed, married, husband and wife, wife and wife, husband and husband, zombie hunters for life...whatever you like. (*\*end excerpt*)

## The Music & Mics

Music is one of the most important aspects of a wedding ceremony because it acts as the soundtrack to your love and commitment. It creates the mood and conveys emotion. When we’re talking with our clients, we help guide them by asking questions about how they envision their wedding day. Most of the time, couples already have some songs in mind, but if they feel lost and overwhelmed, we’ll share a few suggestions and websites to start brainstorming.

[www.myweddingmusic.com](http://www.myweddingmusic.com)

[www.vitaminstringquartet.com/collections/albums/wedding](http://www.vitaminstringquartet.com/collections/albums/wedding)

Microphones are one of easiest details for a couple to forget! A lot of churches and venues provide speakers and mics, but a lot of them do not. It’s important for a couple to figure out who will be providing the PA equipment AND music for their ceremony, whether it’s coming from live musicians or pre-recorded.

## The Traditions

-Unity Sand Pouring

-Unity Candles

-Handfasting

-Three Cords

-Jumping The Broom

-Burying The Bourbon

-Wine Box & Love Letters

-Breaking Glass

-Seven Circles

-Foot Washing

-Roses To The Mothers

-Communion

To read about the meaning of these traditions, and the history behind them, check out this link!

<https://www.weddingwire.com/wedding-ideas/10-wedding-ceremony-rituals-and-the-history-behind-them>

## The Décor

Beautiful décor always enhances a wedding day! Have you thought about what you'd like your altar to look like? Will you have pillars and flowers, or draping and candles? How will you be decorating your aisle? (*We strongly discourage aisle runners since they are tripping hazards and are always difficult to roll out.*) If you are having programs, you'll want to plan on a "welcome table" to have them laid out.

## The Rehearsal

Whether you have hired a wedding planner, or are a wedding planner yourself, there are several different ways to run a wedding rehearsal. Personally, I like to work backwards. The most important goal of a rehearsal is for everyone to know where they are starting from, when they'll be walking, and where they'll be heading.

I like to start out with everyone in place at the altar, with grandparents & parents seated (*\*or standing where they will be seated*) facing the altar; with bride's family on the left, and groom's family on the right. I even take it a step farther by placing post-it notes with names to indicate where people are standing or sitting. This alleviates any confusion.

Once everyone knows where they will end up, I have everybody take their starting positions, and we practice the walks. I NEVER bring music with me. It's distracting, and I feel that it makes "over-thinking" an issue. There is no way to control or gage a speed of someone's walk, so trying to coordinate walking cues with music cues is a nightmare I avoid at all costs.

Keep things simple. Run through the order, and ask if anyone has any questions. Remind them that you and your team will be there to help cue them for each step of the process.

I hope this has been helpful, and If you are looking for a professional company to help plan for music and mics, please contact Allegro Entertainment (636) 493-6004 [www.allegroentertainment.com](http://www.allegroentertainment.com)

## References:

[aPracticalWedding.com](http://aPracticalWedding.com)

[MarthaStewartWeddings.com](http://MarthaStewartWeddings.com)

[WeddingWire.com](http://WeddingWire.com)