

The Before We Begin Guide to Wedding Photography.

Before we begin you will agree to have all your equipment in triplicate and by all we mean everything down to the remote release cable and biro. I would also recommend having yourself cloned.

Before we begin you will acquaint yourself with the phrases – “Your special day”, “Every precious moment”, “Beautiful hand bound leather album” and “Award winning.”

Before we begin you will promise to get yourself a website so laden in sugar sweetness that it drips of the computer screen.

Before we begin we will need to see evidence of buzz word inclusion on your website such as, contemporary, stylish, trend, traditional (usually preceded by the words ‘away from’), magic, cherished, unique and memorable.

Before we begin you will have to practice your signature so that it looks sufficiently swirly and artistic on your website.

Before we begin you will promise never to grow a beard or have your nose pierced. Forehead tattoos are often not a good idea unless they read ‘Say Cheese.’

Before we begin you will understand that Wedding Photographers are the most blessed and professional of all Photographers and that you personally are the most blessed of the most blessed.

Before we begin you will promise to join a photographic community website and ask how much to charge for doing a wedding.

Before we begin you will need to appreciate that you are not the most important person at the wedding. It could be argued that the bride and groom come before you at least.

Before we begin you will give your word that you will strive to come up with new and interesting ways to photograph the bride even it means endangering her life and making her look like 1 – A Fool, 2 – A Porn Star, 3 – A Bag of Net Curtains.

Before we begin you will always maintain that you got into Wedding Photography because you love weddings and want every bride to have the most Special Day and that the money is an unfortunate consequence.

Before we begin you will agree to change your name if your last name ends in Bottom or contains the word Prat.

...and now you are ready.

You will now need to hire a couple of models and wedding dresses. With these you can create your first 'wedding shots' for your website.

You are honour bound to join the SWPP although you will always wonder why you did.

You will now need to insure yourself up to the hilt for several million pounds. This is just in case you temporarily blind someone with your flash and cause a multiple bridesmaid pile up.

You may also consider learning the Wedding Photographer's Walk. There are two in common usage, The Mince and the Power Walk. The latter is usually reserved for those who want to appear as though they know what they are doing and this is symbolised in the matter of fact, very purposeful gait of the Power Walk with the camera often held like a high calibre weapon. The Mince is the artier of the two and is frequently accompanied by the twirl and pout attack. This symbolises the avant-garde nature of your work and The Mince can, if used correctly, disguise those moments when in all honesty you are just plain flummoxed. Experienced Wedding Photographers will often use both walks on the same day and some will even switch from one to the other in a matter of seamless seconds. I must warn you that without considerable practice this can lead to you having to consult your insurance documents.

You will need to choose a variety of wedding albums to offer your clients. These range from those that look like the jewel-studded Ruba'iyat of Omar Khayyam and come complete with their own suitcase to more modest examples that would not look out of place on the shelves of Poundstretcher. Obviously if you are offering your services for less than £300 for the day, then the Poundstretcher version will be your top package. If you had a taste bypass and think [Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen](#) is a real person, then go for the first example.

You will learn how to use Flash software and liberally embed it in your site in the hope that it looks so amazing and cool that your prospective clients don't mind waiting five days for it to load.

You will have to decide whether or not to include music on your website. Our advice is that if you do, make sure that the 'OFF' button is clearly marked and make the button several thousand pixels wide. If you do make the decision to go with music then obviously a bit of Westlife or monotonously bad pseudo-classical played on a Bontempi Organ is the way to go.

You will cajole, force and scheme your way into convincing the bride to have a 'Trash the Dress' session after the honeymoon. This is where the dress that cost several hundred pounds is immersed, with the bride of course, in the sea, mud, a dirty river and ruined whilst giving you the chance to photograph its demise. You will then be left trying to explain to the bride's Father how it's fashionable at the moment and sadly he will have to remove the dress from e-bay. Obviously rental dresses are out on this one.

You will definitely offer the Bridal Boudoir Package. Basically you get to take photos of the bride in her pants. These can then be kept by the bride's mother to be passed around at the next WI meeting and the groom's father so he can show his mates at work. If the print is intended to be hung on the wall of the Bridal Suite, double check that it ends up in the right room.

You are now on your way to becoming a bona fide Wedding Photographer.

And remember to learn the Wedding Photographers anthem – “I'm simply the best, better than all the rest.”

Below are links to some classic wedding photography websites should you need some inspiration.

<http://www.advancedphotographs.co.uk/>

<http://weddingphotographybrad.co.uk/>

<http://www.niceweddingpictures.co.uk/>

<http://www.freshimages.eu/>