

# The Questions You Didn't Think To Ask Q&A

## To Book or Not to Book? Choosing the “One”

Here is a list of questions (and my answers to them!) that I started compiling when my friends started getting engaged. They often turned to me for advice on booking their wedding photographer. Brides and grooms are on this journey for the first time and often don't know what questions they should be asking to find their photographer.

### **What Made You Want To Become A Wedding Photographer?**

I went to college for photography and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. I ended up interning with a wedding photographer the summer before my senior year. Seeing the personal impact the work had on those people's lives made me fall in love with weddings. Knowing that what I create for my clients is important to them now, but will be even more meaningful to them (and their future families) in 50+ years is the most fulfilling thing I could ask for in a career.

I've heard so many horror stories from other people about their wedding photography and it makes me sad! I've found that usually it's not that the photos themselves are bad, it's that the photographer wasn't professional or communicative with the couple. As a wedding photographer, I tend to focus more on the experience you'll have when we work together. Of course I'm also working to provide you with images you'll love but I want you to look back on your on your wedding and think of me as someone you could lean on before, during and after your wedding.







*One example of this is that I'll be walking you through your timeline and providing you with a (rather extensive!) spreadsheet that we'll create together for you to reference. Most of my brides don't hire a wedding planner or day of coordinator so this is where I step in to fill in the gaps.*

**How many weddings have you shot as a MAIN shooter, how many as a SECOND shooter?**

Combined I've shot over 200 weddings, over 100 of those have been as a main (or lead) shooter

**Are all the images on your site shot by you?**

Yes, absolutely! It would be unethical to attempt to "pass off" any image I show you on my website or in my office. (I'm always surprised how often I get this question!)

**Can I speak with one of your past clients, ask them a few questions?**

Absolutely. You're welcome to check out my reviews on Google and/or Wedding Wire. I can arrange for you to get in touch with a past client if you would like to speak with someone who has already been through the process.





# The Nitty Gritty

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## **Do you charge a travel fee?**

I do not charge a travel fee unless a wedding requires me to stay overnight. Typically this means one way travel under 2.5 hours does not incur any travel expenses. Travel to major cities such as NYC/Philadelphia could require a fee depending on the specifics of the locations.

## **Do you have insurance?**

Yes! Professional wedding photographers should all have proper insurance for their business. Liability Insurance provides protection in case Great Aunt Sophie trips over the photographer's bag and breaks her leg. If a wedding photographer does not have insurance, chances are they are new to the industry, or simply aren't taking their business seriously.

## **Do you have backup equipment?**

Yes! When working with electronic gear sometimes things just stop working for no good reason and it's absolutely imperative to have backup gear. Each photographer will have 2 camera bodies, multiple lenses and multiples flashes.

## **Do you backup your images after my wedding is shot?**

OH Yes! After a wedding is shot your images are backed up in 3 places (2x at my office and 1x at an offsite location in the rare occasion that one location is compromised in some way).

## **How long after the wedding will my images be backed up?**

Finalized edited images (the ones you'll receive) will be backed up for 1 year.

## **What is your cancellation policy?**

In the event that you must cancel our signed contract I ask that you submit your cancellation in writing. Our contract will delineate the amount that is non refundable.



# Before the Wedding

## How does the booking process work?

Once you're ready to book, I'll put together a contract outlining the terms of what's included & the payment schedule. The total cost of the contract will be divided into 3 equal payments. The first payment will be due with the signed contract to reserve your date. No date is reserved until both are received. The final payment is due 1 month before the wedding and the 2nd payment is spaced out evenly somewhere between the first and last payment.

## What does the engagement session include?

Engagement sessions (if included in your package)

include 1 - 1.5 hours of shooting time on a weekday

travel within 15 miles of Somerville, NJ

\$100 credit toward your order

After the shoot, I will go through and select and process the best images (make them extra beautiful, boost the light, contrast, color) and then we'll sit down together in person and look at everything to decide what you'd like to do with them. With the \$100 credit you can apply it toward the purchase of prints, a wedding day sign-in book, the digital files, or save the date cards. will me

## How should I give you the details of the day?

I et with you in person 2 months before your wedding. At this time we'll go through the names of your VIP's (immediate family & bridal party) so I know who everyone is and we'll discuss any sensitive subjects (like divorced parents) so that no one feels uncomfortable on the wedding day. We'll put together a family formals shot list and most importantly finalize your timeline with any last minute planning changes, which you'll receive a copy of to help. I'll also be advising you on some of the finer details (like making sure your flowers are delivered to where you are getting ready - not to your ceremony location).

## Should I give you a list of shots I want? Should I send you my Pinterest board?

We will be going through a shot list together of the family formals. You can also let me know at that time if you'd like any special photos, like a group shot of the groom's college friends or the bride's work friends. You don't need







to provide me a list of major moments like “photo of my flowers” or “photo of me walking down the aisle” - I’ve already got that covered.

**Pinterest can be dangerous** - often times brides show me their Pinterest board and the images they love aren’t realistic because of the wedding day particulars like the venue or lighting. It’s fine to show me the style that you love – I can go through it with you and slim it down to about 5 images that we can try to recreate. Don’t forget, you’re hiring me to capture YOUR wedding day and what makes it special and unique. Sometime the best images I’ve created are ones that you can’t check off a list.

## The Day of the Wedding

### **Will you be the person showing up on the wedding day to shoot my wedding?**

You bet I will! I am the person who will be the lead photographer at your wedding and I’ll also be with you throughout the entire planning process to ensure what you’ve communicated is what you get.

### **Do I really NEED a second shooter?**

YES!!! I feel very strongly about this. All the galleries on my site show what my work looks like with 2 photographers. With 2 shooters, one person can focus on getting the “safe shots” - like the bride coming down the aisle with her dad.

Whereas the 2nd photographer can be getting the more creative image or more “risky shots” like mom tearing up as she watches her daughter coming down the aisle or the groom’s reaction. The 2nd shooter will also be starting with the guys during groom prep.

### **Will there be a second photographer? Are they just assisting (carrying bags) or shooting? What is their skill level?**

I always shoot with a 2nd photographer - they are people who are like me in that they also own their own studios and CAN function as a main shooter. They are not there to hold bags - they are there to serve as a 2nd eye to make sure your memories are captured. Which is so important during many of the moments of the day that happen so quickly.

### **What can I do on the wedding day to make sure I love my images?**

The most important piece of advice I can give is to let me know if anything is concerning you. If you have a specific part of your body that is troubling to you please let me know and I’ll do my best to minimize it. If there is a pose you don’t love PLEASE communicate that to me. You won’t hurt my feelings if you say “I’m not feeling this shot, can we try something different?” It’s YOUR wedding and we’ve only got one chance to do it right. Try not to worry too much about things like “What do I do with my hand?” I’ll be making sure you look your best and tweaking anything that looks out of place.



### **How would you describe your working style on the wedding day?**

It's always my goal to blend into the background and shoot as if I were a fly on the wall. Doing so helps me to capture what is already naturally unfolding. On the flip side, I'm also going to take the reins when it's appropriate (like during bride & groom portraits, family portraits) I'm not afraid to politely and assertively help move things along and say "Ok Smith family! We are going to be starting family photos! If you're a Smith come on down!"

### **What will you typically wear when shooting my wedding?**

My goal is to blend in while still looking professional (and be able to move freely to get any creative shots I see). Typically I wear black dress pants with a dressier top.

### **What happens if my guests are shooting while you are?**

It's nothing I'm not used to. Most guests like to sneak an iPhone shot when I'm setting up a family or other posed photo. If there is a large crowd behind me I will politely ask that they wait until I've gotten my shot. Otherwise I'll have people looking at different cameras and then no one gets a clean professional image. Most guests are very understanding that I have a job to do and are respectful of the task at hand.





# The Deliverables

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**Do you edit all the images I receive? What type of editing is included?**

**How many images will I get?**

Yes! You will be receiving the best of the best, usually about 500-600 shots. I'll be going through all the images I take that day (there are usually thousands! eek!) and taking out all the "mehs" - the test shots, the ones where people blink, the ones that are redundant - and giving you JUST the best. From there every one of those images will be edited for overall adjustments to the image like brightness, contrast, color temperature, sharpness, etc.

**Will I get images in black & white?**

Yes, you will receive images processed in color, black & white and also some in the muted vintage-y tone like you see on my website.

**What kind of editing is included in the images I'll receive, what's not included?**

Every single image you receive will have basic adjustments made to the overall image such as exposure, contrast, sharpening, color correction, etc. Any editing that requires adjustments to a specific area of an images would be an additional charge (such as removal of blemishes, hair or body imperfections, things outside my control).

**How will I receive my images?**

When purchasing digital files for the wedding day, you will receive a flash drive with high resolution files for printing and online versions for posting online. Digital files (if purchased) from an engagement session will be delivered via digital download.







# In Case of Emergency

## **What happens if you are sick or unable to shoot on the day of the wedding?**

This is a question that I still have nightmares about. If I am physically able to be present at your wedding but unable to shoot (i.e. broken arm) I will be there to help coordinate but I will have another photographer of similar style and skill taking my place as well as having a 2nd shooter so there would be 3 of us total.

If I am physically unable to be at your event I will arrange for another photographer of similar style and skill. While this is something I take very seriously I have never (and hope to never) have to do this. I've heard horror stories of brides who've said their photographer cancelled on them just days before their wedding. I feel confident that based on the connections and friendships I've formed with other photographers that I would be in a much better position to find you a comparable replacement than you could on such short notice.

# After the Wedding

## **How long after the wedding will I get my images? How long until I get my album?**

You can expect to receive your images 4-6 weeks from your wedding date. At that time you will get your flash drive of high resolution digital files (if purchased) and online gallery link.

The turn around on printed items varies greatly on how quickly we negotiate changes/selections to the album or prints.

Once an item has been finalized;

- Prints, mounted prints, boxes, and stand out wall prints: 2 weeks
- Books: 2-3 weeks
- Albums: 4-5 weeks



### What is the process/policies for putting together my album?

Most brides feel overwhelmed when it comes to going through their 600+ photos to select some for the album. After your wedding photos are ready, I will typically put together an album “pre-design” where I will select the best images, arrange them across multiple spreads and then ask you to let me know what you want changed from there. I’ve found this speeds up the process significantly when I do the heavy lifting of picking from all the images and you simply tweak from there. I offer an incentive to couples who approve their final design within 1 month from the date their images are received. There is also a penalty for couples who wait 6 months or more to order their album (when included in the package).

### What do your albums designs look like?

When designing your wedding album my goal is for it to be as timeless as possible. I will design about 5-7 images per spread with just simple white lines separating each image. Samples can be found here:

<http://perfettephoto.zenfolio.com/albumproofing>

## Questions to ask yourself when deciding upon the right photographer for you

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You’ll be spending a lot of time with your photographer on one of the biggest days of your life, it’s important to be sure they are a good fit.

- Are our personalities a good match? Following them on social media is a great way to find out!
- *Would I want to be friends with this person outside of a business relationship?*
- *Am I comfortable with this person’s work and communication style?*
- *Has this photographer listened well and addressed all my concerns?*

