

Questions to get you started thinking about your wedding ceremony:

What's the tone you want to set for your ceremony? Casual? Formal? Solemn? Playful? Intense? Lighthearted? Spiritual? Secular?

Are there aspects of your personality or relationship you'd like included (even if you don't know how yet?)

Is there a particular faith background that is important to you? Are there references you'd like to make to this, or pieces of that faith's wedding ceremonies you want to include?

How involved in planning your wedding or ceremony do each of you want to be? Are there certain traditions that are "must haves" for you as individuals?

How customized do you want your ceremony? Do you want to write everything yourself? Leave certain aspects up to interpretation by celebrant or readers? Be offered "multiple choice" options?

How long is "just right." How long is too long? Too short?

Are there aspects of a traditional wedding ceremony that are important to you?

Are the aspects of traditional wedding ceremonies you want nothing to do with?

Are you interested in the traditional basic outline of a wedding. Which aspects do you want, what don't you want?

1. Welcoming (officiant addresses guests, sets tone, addresses any logistics or requests)
2. Processional
3. Gathering (presentation of couple/bride, family inclusion and thank you's, remembrances)
4. Marriage Address/"Love Story"/Homily
5. Declaration of intent (I dos)
6. Unity Ritual
7. Vows
8. Exchange of Rings
9. Declaration of Marriage
10. Closing Remarks
11. Presentation of the couple/post-declaration ritual (broom jumping, glass breaking, wine drinking)
12. Recessional

Who do you want to include in the ceremony? Parents? Grandparents? Readers? Family? Friends?

What roles do you want your any of the above people to play?

Do you want audience participation in your ceremony in any way?

Is there anyone who cannot attend that you want to honor? How would you like to do this?

Do you have readings or other stories you want incorporated into the ceremony? Do you want to select these yourself? Let the readers do it? Get suggestions from the officiant?

Do you plan to have anyone perform at the ceremony? Vocal or instrumental music, chants, magic show, fire eating, pirate band?

What unity rituals (unity candle, handfasting, sand ceremony, rose ceremony, wine box, etc) are you interested in?

Do you want to recite specific vows, or write your own? Which are you most comfortable with?

Will you be exchanging rings? Do you want them to be blessed by the officiant, or someone else close to you? Do you want to recite your vows during the exchange of rings or separately?

Do you plan to kiss? How would you like to be prompted to do this?

How would you like to be pronounced? Husband and wife? Partners in life/love? Something else?

Do you want to be announced to your guests as a married couple? How would you like this announced? Mr./Mrs. and Mr./Mrs. {single name}? Mr./Mrs. {name} and Mr./Mrs. {Name}. "For the first time as husband/wife and husband/wife, Mr. {name} and Mrs. {name}"

A couple of great sources for ideas:

<http://apracticalwedding.com>

<http://www.shefinds.com/2013/the-dos-and-donts-of-customizing-your-wedding-ceremony/>

<http://offbeatbride.com/2012/10/wedding-ceremony-101#.UxvG6V7VgWQ>

<http://www.weddingbee.com/2012/12/21/full-text-vows/#axzz2vQJa1UWj>

http://offbeatbride.com/2013/09/trending-topic-vows#.Uxu_5F7VgWQ