

Emily Morton Photography

2nd Shooting Guide

Hi there! I'm so excited to work together! This is just a brief guidebook for what to expect at a wedding with me. I know everyone has different levels of experience, so some of this may seem silly to write out, but it's just to make sure we're all on the same page. Mostly I just want you to be creative and shoot how you're comfortable to get the best shots. I trust you to use your best judgment, but of course, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask me.

I'll be at the venue typically 30 minutes before start time to scout the venue and mentally prep for the day. If you're able, I'd love if you could be there 15 minutes early so we can go over the game plan, sync cameras and exchange SD cards etc.

CAMERA SETTINGS:

Time Sync:

If we're starting at the same location, I'll have you sync your camera's time to mine to help streamline culling later. If we're starting at different locations, you can sync your camera the time on your phone or to time.gov for the most accurate time. Make sure to sync up the seconds as well as minutes.

Dual Card Write:

Make sure your camera is writing to both cards in your camera simultaneously. I can help if you don't know where to find this setting. I forgot to tell one of my 2nds that once and I went home with an empty SD card unknowingly.

C-Raw:

I prefer C-Raw (compressed raw) files instead of full Raw because the files are a lot smaller and easier for storage and I really don't notice a difference in quality between the two.

Natural light vs Flash:

If you can manage with natural light, definitely go that route. Feel free to bump your ISO up as high as 5000 if you need to, but definitely make sure your other settings are compensating (ex. 1.8-2.8 f-stop and 1/200 shutter speed). I do like flash and use it when I have to but I prefer to use as much of the natural light as I can before the sun sets. Also be sure to turn off all overhead lighting (especially during groomsmen getting ready) to avoid that yellow glow from the tungsten lighting.

Aperture:

Typically I shoot around 2.8, so if you want to stay around there that's great but what's most important is that the subjects are in focus. So if you feel more comfortable shooting a bit higher, that's fine too. For can group portraits, don't shoot any wider than 4.0 to make sure no one's out of focus.

Shutter Speed:

Avoid shooting under 1/200 unless for intentional motion blur.

GETTING READY:

I typically go for a more documentary approach and let the events unfold naturally. Especially for groomsmen getting ready, don't feel too much pressure to overdo it.

Not all of my couples want a flay lay of their details (I'll let you know before we get started if they do or not), but if they do, for groom details I'll ask for the tie, watch, cuff links, cologne, shoes, boutineer, and ring (if they have it with them). Doesn't have to be all of these, but as many as he has handy.



Once the groom has his shirt and pants on, you can have him stand by a window if possible, to put on his tie, watch and cuff links. You can have either his dad or best man help with the jacket, whomever the groom wants help from. Avoid asking them to do anything cheesy or forced. This should be a mostly relaxed portion of the day.

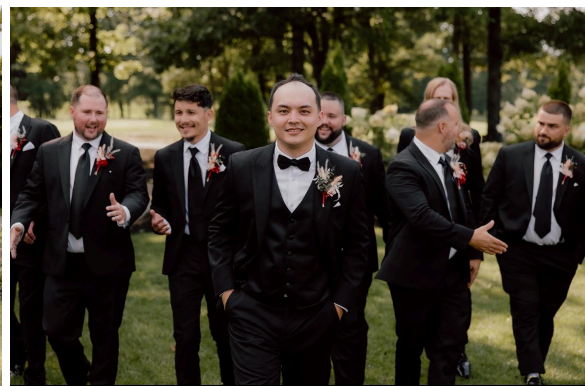


FORMAL PORTRAITS:

If there's no 1st look and you're shooting formal portraits of groom/groomsmen/his family before ceremony, let me know if there's any shots you were unable to get or any that you aren't confident about (ex. you had less than ideal lighting/background situation and feel they might need re-taken).

Aim to get both a full body and close up shot of each combination in vertical. If there are 3 or more people in the shot, make sure to take a shot in horizontal as well. Along with the formal, looking at the camera, aim to get a fun one (mom kissing groom on the cheek, big hug, or you can tell the groomsmen to do something fun or unexpected for their individual shot with the groom, after the formal shot).

For the groomsmen all together, stick to casual posing, such as: have them walk towards you chatting with each other, sitting around a bar, have them all hug or put their arms around each other. You can have a few of them put an arm on the shoulder of the person next to them or you can tell them to chat with their neighbor - that one normally gets some nice genuine laughs and chuckles out of them. Just try to avoid the V formation, or anything too production-y.



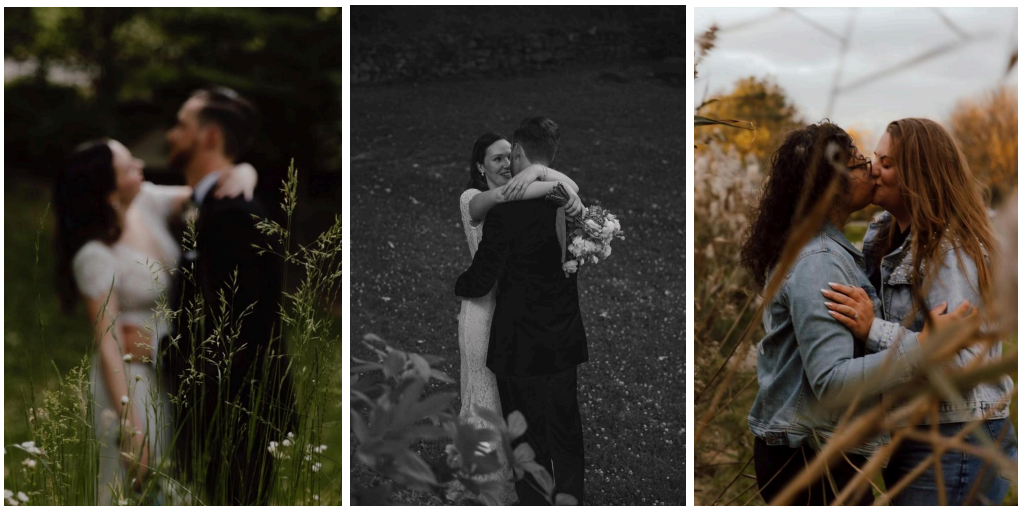
COUPLES PORTRAITS:

If you could help me do a visual check on everyone's clothing while we're shooting, that'd be great! (Ex. bride's dress/veil needs to be adjusted, straighten necklace, fix hair, etc) I'm normally trying to focus on too many things at once and sometimes forget to slow down and check for little details like that, so I really appreciate the extra help with that.

If you have any ideas for cool shots, feel free to jump in and suggest them. During couples portraits, I love side angles and shooting through some leaves/branches, anything creative like that. Also I really love when my 2nds are able to get super zoomed in shots of little details or moments, like if the couple is holding hands or a close up of his hand around her waist or something like that. An 85mm or 70-200mm is great for these kind of shots if you have one. If not, you're welcome to borrow mine if needed.



Also, try to avoid being directly next to me, just so we can maximize our shot variations. The whole idea of having a 2nd shooter is to have an extra person who's getting shots that I can't (for lack of being able to be in 2 places at once lol) so try to avoid being in the same spot as me during couples portraits, unless otherwise specified.



CEREMONY:

During the ceremony I like to get shots of the parents in their seats, especially if you can catch them laughing or crying during the ceremony.



At the start, I'll be up at the front as everyone walks down the aisle and I'll have you at the end of the aisle. Once the bride passes you as she's walking down the aisle, I'd love if you could get a shot of the back of her dress as she's walking, don't worry about being in my shot to get this. Also, it's a hard shot to get but while you're there getting the back of the dress, if you can capture the groom's face as he's watching his bride walk up to him, that's always a gorgeous shot.

Once the ceremony starts, if you could just be on the opposite side as me so we're getting both sides' reactions. I'll periodically move around and switch sides. I love really zoomed in shots during the ceremony of anyone visibly emoting or even just of the bride and groom smiling at each other, so this is another great opportunity for an 85mm or 70-200mm.



At the end of the ceremony you can be next to me in the aisle for the kiss and as they walk back up the aisle, unless there's a videographer and then I'll have you stand somewhere else so the aisle isn't too crowded. I'll follow the bride and groom as they walk away from the ceremony space. You can stay and capture the recessional of the wedding party and parents walking back up the aisle to exit.

COCKTAIL HOUR:

Focus on mostly candids during cocktail hour. I like to use my 85 or 70-200 to get some close ups of people chatting or laughing without them noticing me too much. Feel free to let cocktail hour marinate for 10 minutes or so before shooting candids to avoid getting shots of people eating. You're welcome to take a break to grab a snack from the cocktail hour food while you're waiting for the guests to be done eating. Also, if you can get a few shots of the food displays before people dig into them, that's great. Not a super priority though.

Outside of candids, please also get some grip and grins (the group shots of people who are already standing or sitting next to each other). Make sure your aperture is somewhere between 3.5 - 5.0 for these shots to ensure everyone is in focus.



SPEECHES:

If you can get guest reactions on an 85 or 70-200 while I get catch whomever is giving the speech, that'd be great. Aim to focus on people of importance (wedding party, parents, siblings, grandparents), but also if you notice any of the other guests just being super emotive and laughing a lot or even shedding a tear, definitely get that.



DANCING:

A good amount of shutter drag is great if there's a lot of candles or fairy lights around. If there aren't any candles or hanging lights, just stick to regular direct flash. During any slow dancing you can switch to standard flash (either bounced or off camera), but once the party gets going, shutter drag or direct flash is perfect. I know it can be intimidating, but don't be afraid to get on the dance floor in the midst of the chaos. I feel like the best party shots are achieved that way, compared to staying on the outskirts of the dance floor.

Try not to linger on anyone person for long (bride and groom being the exception). I'm guilty of this myself but I've noticed it can scare some people off the dance for if they feel like the camera is just on them for too long.



Shutter Drag Settings:

Obviously adjust as needed but this is what I typically start with

- Set flash to 80mm and manual 1/4, pointed directly forward
- Shutter 1/4 - 1/5
- ISO 320 - 500
- Aperature: F11 - F13
- It helps me to put my focus on manual, adjust it so that at least one person is in focus and just stay a generally consistent distance from the subject. It just helps cut down on my camera struggling to auto focus in the dark.
- Feel free to ask me if you need any help with these settings

Okay, I know that's a lot of info. Thanks for bearing with me. I appreciate you taking the time to read through everything. Feel free to let me know if you have any questions and I can't wait to work together!