

**Bride's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Choosing Our Ceremony site

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We plan to have our ceremony in the house of worship \_\_\_\_\_

Person in charge of site: \_\_\_\_\_ Officiant: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Ceremony site rules, regulations and specifics we need to be familiar with:**

**Bride's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Choosing Our Ceremony site

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**We are looking for** a \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_\_ or a \_\_\_\_\_ as our ceremony site.

Based on recommendations, meeting in bridal shows, and searching the Internet and the Yellow Pages we contacted various sites.

We screened them and chose those that greeted us cordially, provided the information we requested in a timely manner, the people we spoke with were helpful but not too eager, and they followed up.

We also judged them by their web sites. We liked:

- ✓ The look and feel,
- ✓ The pictures and presentation we saw on the site,
- ✓ That the information we were looking for was right there,
- ✓ That they were they helpful and not over selling,
- ✓ That they included clearly posted name, address, phone and Email contact.

### **We plan to interview the following Locations:**

Location Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Person in charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Web Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Appointment Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Person in charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Web Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Appointment Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Person in charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Web Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Appointment Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Choosing Our Ceremony site

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Ceremony Location Specifics	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
Location:			
Manager:			
Dates and times available:			
For how many hours?			
What is the earliest arrival time?			
Floral decorations needed or supplied?			
Floral arrangement set up time:			
Maximum number of guests:			
Denomination:			
Offers Organist and – or Soloist:			
Outside musicians - electronics allowed:			
Photography allowed :			
Videography allowed:			
Seeds and or flower throwing allowed:			
Candle light ceremony possible:			
Candle holders supplied?			
Rehearsal time:			
Coat room available:			
Dressing rooms for the bride, groom and wedding party available:			
Handicap accessibility available:			
Special requirements, rules and regulations:			
Fees and equipment costs due dates:			
Parking spaces:			
Are other ceremonies or services conducted at the same time?			

**Bride's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Our Ceremony Costs Worksheet

Payment For	Notes	Total Cost
Location – Facility use:		\$
Sound Technician		\$
Facility Coordinator		\$
Parking:		\$
Coat room attendants:		\$
Organist and – or Soloist:		\$
Use of dressing rooms:		\$
Maintenance and clean-up		\$
Rentals:		\$
Musicians:		\$
Photographer If other than that hired for the reception		\$
Videographer If other than that hired for the reception		\$
Flowers:		\$
Candles including Unity Candles:		\$
We provide or rented Candle holders and candelabras:		\$
Aisle Runner:		\$
Wedding programs		\$
RESERVED Pew cards for family		\$
Guest book and pen set:		\$
Flower Basket:		\$
<b>Other ceremony related expenses:</b>		
<b>TOTAL</b>		\$
<b>Our ceremony budget \$</b> _____		\$
<b>We are within our budget Yes:</b> _____	<b>We are not within our budget need to add</b>	\$

**Bride's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Ceremony To-Do Checklist

To Do	Date Done	To Do	Date Done
Ceremony location:		Officiant:	
Required medical tests:		Marriage License:	
Parking arrangements:		Coat room attendants:	
Dressing rooms:		Janitor:	
Organist and – or Soloist:		Or other means of ceremony music:	
Religious items : Yarmulkes, Chuppah, glass, Kneeling Bench, Lazo, Arras, Rosary etc		Rentals needed:	
Photographer:		Videographer:	
Florist to provide floral decorations:		Flowers for bride and bridesmaids:	
Flowers for mothers and grandmothers:		Boutonnieres for groom, his attendants, fathers and grandfathers:	
Aisle Runners:		Seeds – candies or flowers for throwing at the bride and groom	
Candles including Unity Candles:		Candle holders and candelabras:	
Our Best Man		Our Maid/matron of honor	
Our Groomsmen		Our Bridesmaids	
Our flower girl or boy:		Attire for our flower girl or boy:	
Flower basket:		Flowers or petals for the basket:	
Wedding rings:		Gifts of jewelry for our children:	
Our ring bearer:		Attire for our ring bearer:	
Ring pillow:		Our guest book and gift table attendant	
guest book and gift table:		Guest book and pen set	
The person we chose to be in charge of distributing our wedding programs:		Wedding Programs:	
Ushers – seating escorts:		Seating charts and RESERVED Pew cards for ushers	
Gifts from the groom to his new wife:		Gifts from the bride to her new husband:	
<b>Other ceremony needs:</b>		<b>Other ceremony needs:</b>	



**Bride's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:**\_\_\_\_\_

## **Personalizing Our Wedding Ceremony**

### **Tips Page**

#### **Traditional Ceremony:**

If it is not conducted in a house of worship, consult with your officiant regarding your choice of ceremony style. Most clergy opt for a traditional religious ceremony as is customary in their faith. Likewise, military wedding ceremonies are considered traditional. Some, if not most traditional officiants will allow, even encourage you to add your personal touches.

#### **Contemporary Ceremony:**

Contemporary Ceremonies usually take place in non-traditional locations such as museums, historical sites, mansions, homes, Las Vegas like wedding chapels, resorts or hotels, a cruise ships, the beach, a clearance in the woods, a barn, gardens etc. Think about introducing some personal touches to make your wedding ceremony as unique as you are. If either or both of you have children, make yours a family wedding and include them in the ceremony.

#### **Vows:**

- Write your own vows. If either or both of you have children write personal vows to them too.
- Check with your officiant if there are any requirements such as things you may not, or must say.
- Follow your heart to dictate your vows. Use your own words. Seasoning your vows with passages that are meaningful to you, be they from literature, poetry and/or the Bible is most appropriate.
- Keep your vows short and easy to remember.
- Make sure that your officiant approves your vows beforehand.
- Last but not least. Rehearse presenting your vows. Look your love in the eye and speak directly to him/her. Though you have an audience, they are there to share in your happiness not to judge you.

#### **Ideas:**

- Ask your friends and relatives who sing well, to sing **your wedding song** during the service.
- Ask your friends and relatives to read a special poem or Bible verses during the service.
- Instead of the traditional wedding march and during your walk up and down the aisle, have music that is meaningful to both of you played.
- Add memorable touches to your wedding ceremony such as having both of you light a special unity candle. Have the bride and groom exchange gifts while still on the altar. If yours is a family wedding, include the children in the unity candle ceremony and present them with jewelry gifts right after your vows to them. Together, tie the knot using a pretty cord. In a family wedding, follow by having the children add their own knots. Just before you exit, give a flower to each mother and grandmother etc..
- Consult with your officiant if you may write a short poem or a short letter of endearment to each other and have one of your friends or relatives to read it during the ceremony. At the entrance of the ceremony room, display photos of you and your families as you were growing up. Pictures of your parents and grandparents exchanging marriage vows will have a great impact too. If either or both of you have children have their pictures on display as well.

**Bride's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:**\_\_\_\_\_

## **A Sample of a Wedding Ceremony and the Order of the Service**

**You may wish to include the ceremony order in your wedding program so that your guests will be able to follow.**

**A wedding ceremony is a solemn occasion. Yours should be planned to be most meaningful to the two of you and if you have children to the children too.**

Following are a few elements contained in most wedding ceremonies:

1. The Wedding Processional is when the bridal party, parents and bride and groom enter the ceremony site. The order often depends on the religion or heritage and the couple's preference.
2. Music. Usually classical or instrumental.
3. The officiant welcomes your guests.
4. Followed by a prayer or a reading. Readings can be anything that is close to your heart. It can be about love, relationships, marriages or family. You can have quoted from the Bible, poetry, literature or something written by you, a friend or family member. A ceremony reading can be serious, sentimental and even humorous.
5. The officiant continues by providing the definition of marriage in general, and will probably talk about the seriousness of the solemn vow the two of you are about to exchange, and about your new life together as a husband and wife.
6. Attendants or witnesses may be called to sign the marriage license and/or wedding certificate.
7. You follow by exchanging wedding vows. Usually the order is: Groom to Bride, Bride to Groom, and if there are children Groom to Children, Bride to children. It is advisable NOT to expect vows from the children to the Bride and Groom. However, if the children are so inclined, they should be welcome to present their vow.
8. Second reading, song or prayer.
9. The Ring ceremony followed by an exchange of the first gift from husband to wife and wife to husband. In a family wedding, Gifts (usually jewelry) from both to the children.
10. Unity candle ceremony.
11. A blessing, benediction, or officiant's sanction of the marriage. In a family wedding the officiant welcomes the children to the newly created family. A declaration of marriage is when the officiant says something like "By the power vested in me by the State of \_\_\_\_\_, I now pronounce you husband and wife" "You may now kiss the bride" or "you may now kiss each other."
12. Your first kiss as a married couple. In a family wedding proceed with kissing and hugging the children.
13. Now comes the Introduction of newlyweds is when the officiant presents Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_" In a family wedding the officiant presents the new family of Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ and (children's' first names) "It is expected that at this moment the guests stand and applaud. They stay standing during
14. The recessional when Bride and Groom followed by family and wedding party leave the ceremony location.

### **Personalizing Our Ceremony;**



**Bride's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:**\_\_\_\_\_

## Interesting Ceremony Customs

### Breaking a Glass

In a Jewish wedding the bride and groom sip wine from the same cup. At the end of a wedding ceremony the groom breaks a glass.

### The Arras and the Lazzo

In a Latin wedding, the groom gives his bride 13 Arras coins to assure that he will always take care of her needs. The couple also performs a Lazo ceremony that binds them to each other.

### Jumping the Broom

Jumping the Broom is a symbol of a new beginning. There are many different versions of this ritual in which the couple jumps over the broom to symbolize the sweeping away of the old to welcome the new.

### Lighting of the Unity Candle

Lighting a Unity Candle has become a popular and symbolic wedding tradition. The Unity Candle set includes the pillar and 2 taper candles. After they are declared a husband and wife, each takes a lit taper and uniting the flame from both, together they light the pillar to symbolize that two lives have become one. The pillar candle can be decorated and can be personalized with the wedding invitation, favorite verse or poem, photo and much more. To get ideas go to [www.a-weddingday.com/candlesbynily.html](http://www.a-weddingday.com/candlesbynily.html) . After the wedding, the unity candle can be re-lit as the couple celebrates each anniversary.

### Unity Sand Ceremony

In the Unity Sand Ceremony, sand streams of different colors are poured into the same vessel to symbolize the bringing together of two lives into one. In a family wedding, the bride, the groom and each of the children pours colored sand into the vessel to celebrate bringing together members of existing families into a single bond of love in a newly created family.

### The wine Ceremony

This ritual involves the pouring of a goblet of wine and handing it to the bride and groom. The celebrant invites them to take a sip of wine for each blessing, their past, the present, and their future together.

An interesting twist is to have the wine be a mixture of white wine symbolizing the bride and red wine symbolizing the groom. As the mixture becomes one so is the togetherness of their lives.

### The Rose Ceremony

The Rose Ceremony is simple yet profoundly moving. The bride and groom exchange a single red rose, symbolizing the giving and receiving of their love for each other.

Alternately you may choose to present a rose to your mothers. It is most appropriate for the groom to present a rose to the bride's mother and for the bride to present a rose to the groom's mother.

**Bride's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:**\_\_\_\_\_

## **The Order of the Ceremony Procession**

### **Christian**

***The mothers of the bride and groom*** are seated after all guests are seated, and immediately before the start of the processional music. They are usually escorted to their seats by a brother of the bride or groom, or by an usher.

**The Officiant** Can Head the procession or stand facing the guests. The officiant may also follow the candle lighter(s) if the candle lighter(s) lead the procession at the onset of the prelude.

***The Groom*** enters with the ***Best Man*** from the back of the church or through a side door near the altar. Once arrived at the altar, the groom stands to the left of the officiant and the Best Man stands to the left of the groom.

**The Groomsmen** and the **Bridesmaids** walk down in pairs, starting with the two who will stand farthest from the bride and groom, and ending with the best man and maid of honor. They walk down the aisle, usually in height order, with the shortest entering first.

***Junior Bridesmaids*** are girls between the ages of 9 and 14. If they are in your party, they follow the bridesmaids down the aisle.

**The Maid or Matron of honor**, makes her way down the aisle after the last bridesmaid.

***The Ring bearer*** enters the sanctuary either in front of, or paired with the flower girl after all of the adults except the Bride have processed.

**The Flower girl or boy** enters the sanctuary either in back of or paired with the ring bearer just before the Bride enters.

***The Bride***, escorted on the left arm of her father, walks down the aisle after everyone else is in place. If not by parents, a bride can be escorted by a son, a sibling or a very close family member. The father or escort leads the bride to the front of the aisle, and then takes his seat next to her mother. \*

**Train Carriers** In very formal ceremonies, pages or Train Carriers carry the bride's train down the aisle.

- Today, it is becoming acceptable for the mother of the bride to escort her down the aisle too. In that case, the Bride is in between her parents.

**Special customs we integrated into our ceremony:**

**Bride's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:**\_\_\_\_\_

## **The Order of the Ceremony Procession Jewish**

**Guests are seated first.**

*The Rabbi* may lead the procession or can await the others at the Chuppah.

**The Cantor** walks to the right of the rabbi leading the procession or stands at the Chuppah next to the Rabbi.

*The bride's grandparents* follow the cantor and rabbi and are seated in the front row

**The groom's grandparents** follow the bride's grandparents and are seated in the front row.

*The Groomsmen* walk down the aisle in height order, either singly or in pairs, with the shortest man entering first.

**The best man** follows behind the ushers, walking alone.

*The groom* walks next with his mother on his right arm and his father on his left arm.

**The Bridesmaids** enter by height (shortest first).

*The Maid or Matron of honor*, makes her way down the aisle after the last bridesmaid.

**The Ring bearer** enters the sanctuary either in front of, or paired with the flower girl after all of the adults have processed.

*The Flower boy or girl* enters the sanctuary either in back of, or paired with the ring bearer just before the bride enters.

**The Bride with her parents** Escorted on the right arm of her father and on the left arm of her mother, the bride is the last to walk down the aisle.

### **What to include in your ceremony program**

For complete instructions go to the Invitations and Stationery Worksheets.

**Jewish customs we integrated into our ceremony:**

**Bride's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:**\_\_\_\_\_

## **Elements of the Ceremony Music**

When you choose your ceremony music, be sure to include the following:

***Prelude***—Music that will help set the mood as guests arrive, greet each other and find their seats.

**Processional**—Music that is appropriate to accompany your family members and wedding party, as they walk down the aisle.

***Interlude***—Choose songs that have special meaning for you and that reflect your personal style your cultural or your religious traditions.

\* **Recessional**—The moment of joy has arrived. You're married! Choose music that is festive and upbeat, or fun and clever. Be it traditional or more modern, the key is to celebrate.

***Post-wedding***—You'll want to keep the crowds moving so opt for upbeat, energetic and fast-paced music.

\* Before you commit the music to be played at a religious ceremony, make sure to clear your music choices with your officiant . Also get approval or recommendation as to which performance will be acceptable; folk guitar, chamber music, flute, vocalists or other.

**Notes and Comments about the music we chose for our ceremony, its significance to us, the performers, etc.**

**Bride's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Our Ceremony Worksheet

### Readings

First Reading Selection: \_\_\_\_\_ Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

Second Reading Selection: \_\_\_\_\_ Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

Third Reading Selection: \_\_\_\_\_ Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

### Music Selections

Prelude: \_\_\_\_\_ Played By: \_\_\_\_\_

Processional: \_\_\_\_\_ Played By: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride Enters To: \_\_\_\_\_ Played By: \_\_\_\_\_

Ceremony: \_\_\_\_\_ Played By: \_\_\_\_\_

Recessional: \_\_\_\_\_ Played By: \_\_\_\_\_

### Pew Seating Arrangements for Family

Pew # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_

Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_

Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_

Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_

Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_

Pew # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_

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Pew # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_

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Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_ Seat # \_\_\_\_\_

**Bride's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Groom's Name:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Wedding Date:**\_\_\_\_\_

## **Notes and Ideas for Making our Ceremony Unique and Special**