

Elopement Guide



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So, you've decided to elope.

Congratulations! You've decided to break tradition and have a small intimate wedding ceremony (my favourite kind!). I have a passion for capturing love stories and I want to tell your story candidly, authentically and creatively.

To make it easy I'm just going to refer to it as eloping from here on in. You might not be running away from your parents, and it might not even be a huge secret, but the essence of an elopement has always been to consider nobody but the person you love on your wedding day.

So what is the difference between a modern traditional wedding and an elopement? I think the key difference is that a modern traditional wedding is a celebration for everybody, and an elopement is a private celebration that focuses on just the two of you.

elope

[ih-lohp]

to run away secretly in order to get married

I have an important job to do. Because you've chosen to keep your ceremony private it is my duty to make sure the moments are documented so you don't forget a thing. Sometimes I even act as the legal witness!

I really enjoy helping couples figure out a unique way to get married. So I put together this guide as a starting point, to spark conversation and help make day as wonderful as possible.



This is your day, your way.

The legal bits.

Forget everything you know about weddings. The act of marriage has drastically changed since its beginnings. It is no longer a transfer of ownership between a father and his son-in-law, instead it is a celebration of love!

marriage

[mar-ij]

a union forming a familial bond that is recognized legally, religiously or socially

Let's look at what is legally required in Australia to get married.

#1 Lodge some paperwork.

You will need to lodge your Notice of Intended Marriage at least one month prior to the ceremony day. I would suggest doing this under the guidance of your celebrant to ensure all the paperwork is done correctly.

#2 Have a civil ceremony.

This is something that will be discussed at length with your celebrant, but to give you a basic understanding the following page is a rundown of a typical ceremony and what components are legally required.



The ceremony.

A civil marriage ceremony typically runs in this order:

- **Entrance** (if applicable) + welcome by the celebrant
Sometimes the celebrant will tell a story about the couple.
- **Introduction:** The celebrant must introduce themselves
"I am a celebrant duly authorised to solemnise marriage in Australia..."
- **Monitum:** The celebrant must remind you of the legality of the ceremony
"I am to remind you of the solemn and binding nature of the relationship in which you are about to enter..."
- **Legal vows:** These are the only vows you are legally required to make
"I call upon the persons here present to witness that I, <Name>, take thee, <Name>, to be my lawful wedded partner in marriage..."
- **Sign the paperwork** with two witnesses
- **Personal vows**, including the traditional "I do" ceremony is optional and will typically come straight after the Legal Vows.
- **Announcement + Kiss**

This is the bare minimum, legally required part



Planning an elopement.

I told you to forget everything about weddings... so where does that leave you? A blank page! An elopement can be as simple or as wild as you want it to be. Here are some questions you could ask each other to help plan a day that is truly unique to your love story.

Questions to ask when planning your day.

How do you want the day to feel?

What do you really enjoy doing together?

What makes your heart sing?

Do you want to bring meaning and ritual into the ceremony?

What are your favourite songs (they don't have to be romantic)?

What have you seen before and thought "that's awesome"?

Let's talk about...

Celebrant

Ceremony location

Ceremony time

Getting ready + coming together

Music

Couple portraits

all the feels



The celebrant.

Have you found your Celebrant yet? This is an important person to engage as they guide you through the marriage process and help you with your ceremony structure. I work with some amazing celebrants who have the same passion for small, intimate ceremonies.

Ceremony location.

The best part about eloping is you can get married nearly anywhere. Rather than choosing a venue that has the capacity to hold a crowd, you can instead focus on something that feels right and is special to you. I'm happy to help you figure out a great spot!

Questions to answer together:

- What do you enjoy doing together?
- How would you describe your perfect day together?
- What are your favourite places?
- What are some places that are special to you both?
- What do you want to do afterwards?
- Do you want to have to drive?
- What do you want your photos to look like?



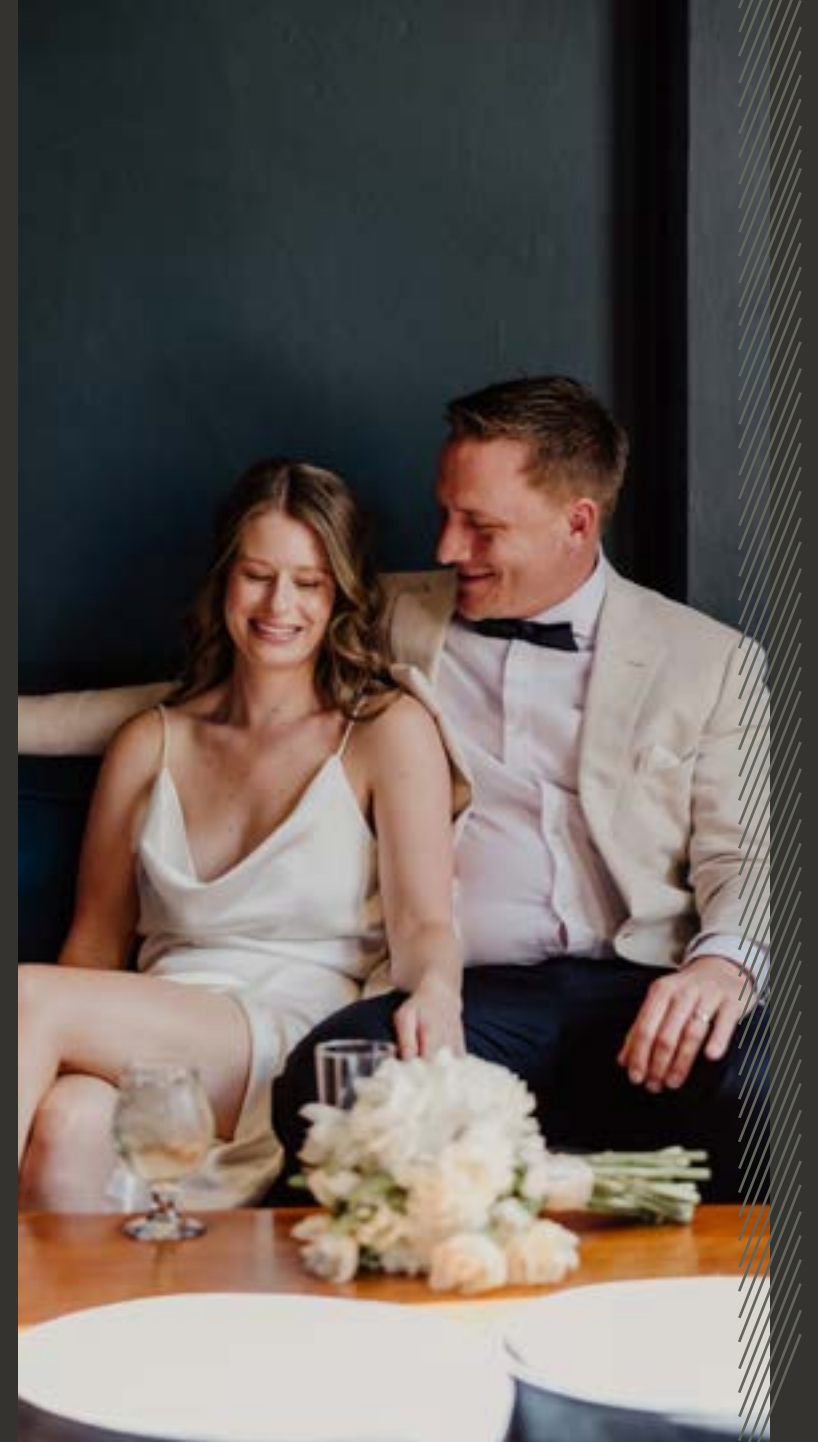
Ceremony time.

What is your favourite time of day? Do you prefer morning? Afternoon? Evening? From a photographer's point of view, the "golden hour" is a beautiful time of day to photograph. This is the hour before the sun sets. However, this might not be your ideal time of day depending on the location, the time of year, or your personal situation. Let's discuss this together so we can work out the ideal time!

Getting ready & coming together.

Are you planning on getting ready separately? Then let's work out when you'd like to me to arrive and how each of you will arrive and come together. Maybe one of you would like to traditionally walk down an 'aisle'? Maybe you can both walk from separate areas and meet in the middle? Maybe you can take a special private moment to come together just prior to the ceremony. You can hold hands around a corner if you'd rather reveal your special outfit on the walk to the ceremony spot. From this point you could walk together to the ceremony or you can part ways and meet at the ceremony.

Are you planning on getting ready together? Then I'll meet you in a designated spot and we can walk together to the ceremony location.



Music.

I love music, it breaks the silence and can really affect the mood and scene. I have a portable Bluetooth speaker that I bring with me and I can hook up your favourite Spotify playlist! For the ceremony you might arrange some music with the Celebrant, but I can help you out for all the moments inbetween.

Couple portraits.

After the ceremony is the perfect time to get some couple portraits! Nearly every couple I photograph tell me they don't like getting their photo taken, but nearly everyone ends the session with "That was fun!" or "You made that so easy!". I find going for a walk or having a few locations in mind nearby helps break up the awkwardness. Don't worry, it'll be fun!

And finally...

Ask yourself **"what are the most important things you both want to remember from your day"**? And let me know what you came up with. This can drive how I capture your day.

This is your love story.



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