

## WEDDING INFORMATION KIT

### CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ENGAGEMENT!

This is such a special time in your life – you’ve found that special someone with whom you wish to commit your future to, and share your life with. If you thought that was good, you’re in for a treat – you now get to plan and execute the best day of your lives together!

Your wedding, however you choose to plan it, should be a celebration of your love for each other. It should reflect the values you share, the feelings you have for each other, and the important people in your life who have helped you get to where you are. I look forward to working with you to create an unforgettable ceremony experience for you and your guests.

### A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ME

Officiating weddings and other events seemed like a very natural progression for me. I’ve been a performer my whole life, and over the years I have sung at, played at, catered for, waited, MC’d, and best-manned too many weddings to count (not to mention my own elaborate countryside wedding)! I have a wealth of knowledge about all types of ceremony, and have seen the very best and worst of everyone’s ideas over the years.

The large majority of my career has been spent in music – as a touring singer, MC, educator, workshop facilitator, youth leadership trainer, producer, and manager. I have been producing shows, events, festivals and competitions for the last twenty years, and have a good feel for how to create the right energy for an event.



### CEREMONY

Ceremony is important in many ways: Firstly, it provides a solemnness to the day, giving you, your friends, and your families a chance to acknowledge the love and support between you. Secondly, it provides formality to you and your guests, to pay respect to the promises you are making. As well as this, these time-honoured ceremonies help to guide our emotional experience through important milestones in our life.

Weddings are slightly different to other types of ceremonies in that they have serious legal implications. Only qualified and registered celebrants or priests can officiate wedding ceremonies, and certain elements of the ceremony are non-negotiable. The following is a basic outline of elements you may (or may not) wish to consider for your ceremony. The items in red are the legal, non-negotiable items that must be included for your marriage to be solemnised in the eyes of the law.



## TYPICAL WEDDING OUTLINE

As a bit of a guide, here is a standard outline for your typical ceremony. Only the "Monitum" and "Legal Vows" are essential for a legal marriage, and other parts are regularly added, subtracted or modified as required.

### HOUSE KEEPING

A good pre-ceremony opportunity to remind guests about mobile phones, any directions from you about photos and social media, and other important information about the day's schedule, or venue amenities.

### PROCESSIONAL

This is where the bridesmaids and bride enter the ceremony, usually accompanied by music. A brief welcome to guests, an introduction of the celebrant, and explanation of the day's celebrations.

### GIVING AWAY

This is where one, or both parents of the bride and / or groom can release their ceremonial custody of their children to each other.

### INTRODUCTION

Your celebrant will speak a little about your commitment to one another, what marriage means to you, and some anecdotal accounts of how you met.

### READING

Couples often use short readings of poetry, literature, songs, or prayers to enhance their ceremony. It is also a lovely way to include friends or family who aren't otherwise required in the bridal party.



### MONITUM \* REQUIRED

For the marriage to be legal, the celebrant MUST read the government issued monitum.

### THE ASKING

One of the most traditional elements of a wedding ceremony, this is the "I do" bit!

### LEGAL VOWS \* REQUIRED

These are the words you MUST say in the presence of your witnesses to solemnise your marriage.

### PERSONALISED VOWS

Often couples will choose to write their own vows that more concisely represent their relationship. They are spoken before or after the "Legal Vows".



### RING EXCHANGE

The exchange of wedding rings is a classic tradition in Western culture.

### PRONOUNCING

This is the part where your celebrant will say, "I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the bride." This is an important moment within the ceremony - one which seems to delight both the couple and the guests, who are eager to see your first kiss as a married couple.



### SIGNING OF THE REGISTER \* REQUIRED

The paperwork must be completed by the married couple, plus their two chosen witnesses and the celebrant to finalise the marriage. This is a great time to provide some music for your guests, as it often takes 5-10 minutes to finalise everything, and get the photos you are after.



### RITUALS

Some couples may choose to add certain rituals at this point in the ceremony.

### CONCLUSION

The conclusion is just a short set of messages that will help bring everyone's focus back to the task at hand. Any house-keeping or instructions about photos or post-ceremony activities should take place here.

### BLESSING

A final blessing for the couple, as we all wish you the very best for the future.

### PRESENTATION

Traditionally, a couple would be announced before they leave the venue - "May I present Mr and Mrs...". Essentially, the presentation is what prepares people for your departure, and signs off the ceremony.

### RECESSIONAL

Often some music is played as the newly-weds exit the space, as they are showered with petals, rice, confetti, or other projectiles.

Your celebrant will often give instructions to your guests as to what happens next - photos, lawn games, nibbles, etc until the reception begins.





## SUGGESTED POEMS / READINGS

Here is a short list of some well-loved, tried and tested material to give you some ideas and guidance should you require it.

"You can give without loving, but you can never love without giving. The great acts of love are done by those who are habitually performing small acts of kindness. We pardon to the extent that we love. Love is knowing that even when you are alone, you will never be lonely again. And great happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved. Loved for ourselves. And even loved in spite of ourselves."

**From "Les Miserables" by Victor Hugo**

"May your love be firm,  
 and may your dream of life together be a river  
 between two shores—by day bathed in sunlight,  
 and by night illuminated from within.  
 May the heron carry news of you to the heavens,  
 and the salmon bring the sea's blue grace.  
 May your twin thoughts spiral upward  
 like leafy vines, like fiddle strings in the wind,  
 and be as noble as the Douglas fir.  
 May you never find yourselves back to back  
 without love pulling you around  
 into each other's arms."

**From "Graces" by James Bertolino**

"How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.  
 I love thee to the depth and breadth and height  
 My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight  
 For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.  
 I love thee to the level of every day's  
 Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.  
 I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;  
 I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.  
 I love thee with the passion put to use  
 In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.  
 I love thee with a love I seemed to lose  
 With my lost saints, – I love thee with the breath,  
 Smiles, tears, of all my life! – and, if God choose,  
 I shall but love thee better after death."

**"Sonnet 43" by Elizabeth Barrett Browning**



"Only our love hath no decay;  
 This, no tomorrow hath, nor yesterday,  
 Running it never runs from us away,  
 But truly keeps him first, last, everlasting day?"

**"Only Our Love" by John Donne**

"Love is a temporary madness, it erupts like volcanoes and then subsides. And when it subsides, you have to make a decision. You have to work out whether your roots have so entwined together that it is inconceivable that you should ever part. Because this is what love is. Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement, it is not the promulgation of promises of eternal passion, it is not the desire to mate every second minute of the day, it is not lying awake at night imagining that he is kissing every cranny of your body. No, don't blush, I am telling you some truths. That is just being "in love," which any fool can do. Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away, and this is both an art and a fortunate accident."

**"Captain Corelli's Mandolin" by Louise De Bernieres**

"The fountains mingle with the river,  
 And the rivers with the ocean;  
 The winds of heaven mix forever  
 With a sweet emotion;  
 Nothing in the world is single:  
 All things by a law divine  
 In another's being mingle—  
 Why not I with thine?  
 See, the mountains kiss high heaven,  
 And the waves clasp one another;  
 No sister flower could be forgiven  
 If it disdained its brother;  
 And the sunlight clasps the earth,  
 And the moonbeams kiss the sea;  
 What are all these kissings worth,  
 If thou kiss not me?"

**"Love's Philosophy" by Percy Bysshe Shelley**



You are most welcome to source your own material from books, movies or poems that mean something to the two of you. If you'd like some guidance, please feel free to ask and I'll point you in the direction of some great resources.



## SUGGESTED MUSIC

The best musical choices are the ones that mean something to you as a couple, and things that will illicit emotion from your guests. Here are some recommendations of some of my favourites throughout the years:

### CLASSICAL

- |                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Cannon in D                 | (Johann Pachelbel)        |
| • Ave Maria                   | (Franz Schubert)          |
| • Wedding March               | (Felix Mendelssohn)       |
| • Clair de Lune               | (Claude deBussey)         |
| • Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring | (Grossman, Moor and Ross) |
| • A Midsummer Night's Dream   | (Felix Mendelssohn)       |
| • The Blue Danube             | (Johann Strauss II)       |
| • Gymnopédie No. 1            | (Erik Satie)              |
| • Fur Elise                   | (Ludwig Von Beethoven)    |
| • Arioso                      | (Johann Sebastian Bach)   |



### CONTEMPORARY

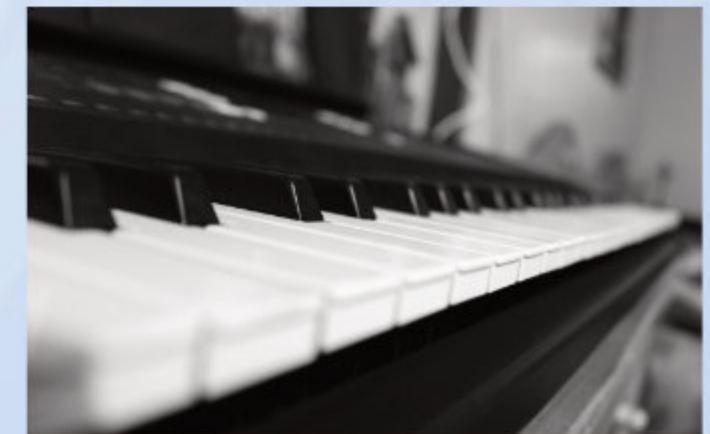
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|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • God Only Knows                  | (The Beach Boys)        |
| • I Will Follow You Into The Dark | (Death Cab For Cutie)   |
| • Thinking Out Loud               | (Ed Sheeran)            |
| • Everything                      | (Michael Buble)         |
| • Crazy Little Thing Called Love  | (Queen / Michael Bublé) |
| • A Thousand Years                | (Christina Perri)       |
| • Better Together                 | (Jack Johnson)          |
| • Just The Way Your Are           | (Bruno Mars)            |
| • I'm Yours                       | (Jason Mraz)            |
| • All Of Me                       | (John Legend)           |

### JAZZ

- |                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • The Way You Look Tonight   | (Frank Sinatra / Michael Bublé) |
| • Come Away With Me          | (Norah Jones)                   |
| • It Had To Be You           | (Harry Connick Jnr)             |
| • L-O-V-E                    | (Nat King Cole)                 |
| • What A Wonderful Word      | (Louis Armstrong)               |
| • Unforgettable              | (Nat King and Natalie Cole)     |
| • At Last                    | (Etta James / Beyoncé)          |
| • Beyond The Sea             | (Bobby Darrin)                  |
| • Dream a Little Dream of Me | (Ella Fitzgerald)               |
| • Come Fly With Me           | (Frank Sinatra)                 |

### ROCK

- |                                    |                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| • Don't Want To Miss A Thing       | (Aerosmith)      |
| • All You Need is Love             | (The Beatles)    |
| • Always                           | (Bon Jovi)       |
| • I Believe in a Thing Called Love | (The Darkness)   |
| • Everlong                         | (Foo Fighters)   |
| • Don't Stop Believing             | (Journey)        |
| • You Really Got Me                | (The Kinks)      |
| • Forever                          | (Mumford & Sons) |
| • Crazy Little Thing Called Love   | (Queen)          |
| • Chasing Cars                     | (Snow Patrol)    |





## SUGGESTED RITUALS

There are numerous options to add to your ceremony that we can discuss over the coming weeks. Some popular examples are:

### LIGHTING OF CANDLES

In lighting candles, the energy of one's blessing can be passed around, to signify communal good faith.

The lighting of candles is a lovely way to get lots of people involved in the ceremony, and can make for some beautiful photos.

Candles can be sourced from:  
[www.spotlightstores.com](http://www.spotlightstores.com)



### RELEASE OF BUTTERFLIES

Butterflies have long been a symbol of new beginnings, good fortune and joy - a beautiful sentiment to start your life together.

Check out:  
[www.blissfulbutterflies.com.au](http://www.blissfulbutterflies.com.au)



### SAND CEREMONY

A large vial or vase is filled with different coloured sands to represent the coming together of bride, groom and family. Once the sand is mixed together, it can never be separated - a beautiful metaphor for marriage and family.

This creates a beautiful keepsake, and especially poignant when the bride and/or groom has existing children that they want incorporated.

Check out:  
[www.sandwizard.com.au](http://www.sandwizard.com.au)



### HANDBASTING

The bride and groom's hands are tied together in an ancient ceremony which dates back to Pagan traditions of the ancient Celts. The wrapping of the cords signify the unity and bond into which the couple are now committing.

Couples may buy the ties, or make their own fastings with material from precious garments or threads they own.

More information:  
[www.handfastings.com](http://www.handfastings.com)





## WORDS MATTER

A few choice words for different scenarios – here is a small folio of writing, to show how varied and personalised a ceremony can be.

Some family members have travelled from overseas to attend:

*"When I look around today and see how far and wide everyone has come to support our lovely couple, I'm reminded of how determined love can be. Travelling through time and space, unwavering with distance or inconvenience. May you all continue to love, cherish and honour these strong friendships and family connections for as long as life allows."*

The ceremony is a small gathering of less than 20 guests:

*"So often in life we are offered the choice between quality and quantity. Thoughts of scarcity frequently make us choose quantity – lest we run out when we're in need. But what I see here today is a gathering of the utmost quality – the closest of friends and family, whose unwavering love and support will carry this young couple through all the challenges that lay ahead in their lives."*



Words about marriage where the couple wish to acknowledge the joining of two cultures, and both have children from their previous marriage

*"Maud Lindsay once wrote, 'Love is a bridge that links us heart to heart.' I think this sentiment is particularly poignant today. It is a bridge of infinite length – connecting people and places, cultures and traditions from all around the globe, and bringing them together in love. It is a bridge of infinite width – it doesn't diminish in capacity when another steps on, but instead widens to accommodate. As we watch our beloved couple marry today, we watch that long, safe bridge grow. Not just between our couple, but between young Greg, Kari, Jai and Sari too."*

A giving away, where both parents will affirm their blessings on the marriage:

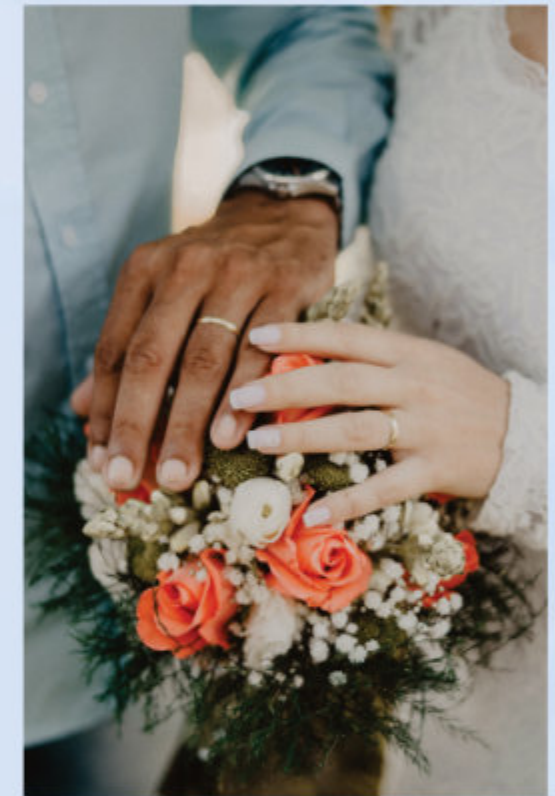
*"One of the most understated, but deepest relationships in life is that between caring parents, and loving sons and daughters. One of the rare occasions this relationship is acknowledged is at a wedding ceremony. John, Jenny, Barbara and Steve wish to acknowledge the great love and pride they have for their children. Who brings this couple to be married today?"*  
 Parents: "We do."

The asking, with a blend of solemnity and humour:

*"Greg, do you take Olivia to be your wife, and lifelong companion? To share your life openly and honestly (even when you know she's not going to be happy)? To respect her uniqueness and accept her as she is (even when it occasionally grates on your nerves)? And delight in who she is becoming (even when you wish she'd stay how she was before)? Do you promise to love, honour, and care for her through all the days given to you to share?"*

Personalised vows (additional to the mandatory vows)

*"I promise to forever treat you with respect, even when we disagree; with compassion, even when it's inconvenient; and with love, even when it doesn't come easily. I promise to always make time for the things that bring us closer together and nurture our love. I promise to always nurture a healthy imagination, and remember your youth and beauty, long after both have departed."*



Ring exchange, where both parties will wear a ring

*"May the circular shape of these rings be a symbol of your ever-lasting love. Their pure, valuable metals signify the purity of love, and act as a reminder to always protect and cherish the most valuable things in life."*

Presentation as husband and wife:

*"Family and friends, what greater gift can two people share, than the gift of love? It is with warmth in our hearts that we shall forever remember the immense commitment you have made to each other today. May it forever bring you joy, safety, and an energising sense of duty. Ladies and gentlemen, it is with great pleasure I ask you to welcome Mr and Mrs Smith."*



## FURTHER INFORMATION

### MARRIAGE EDUCATION SERVICES

Should you and your partner require assistance with any aspect of your marriage, family life, or co-habitation, there are a gamut of excellent services available to you:

<https://lifeworks.com.au>  
<https://ccam.org.au>  
<https://relationships victoria.com.au>  
<https://mareaa.asn.au>

### HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

In the unlikely event that you have a complaint about any aspect of my celebrant services, feel free to call or email me directly. If you are unhappy with my reply, or fail to reach adequate closure on the matter, you can make a complaint directly to the Attorney General's Office:

<https://ag.gov.au>

