

FL Wedding Vows – Ceremony Rehearsal Guide

When you think of a wedding rehearsal, the name can be misleading. You are not practicing the wedding but simply the procession, recession, and where the wedding party is positioned during the service.

Many venues provide a concierge or “day-of” coordinator and other couples hire a separate wedding planner that handles this part of the ceremony. If not, many couples have one of their friends or relatives take on this task.

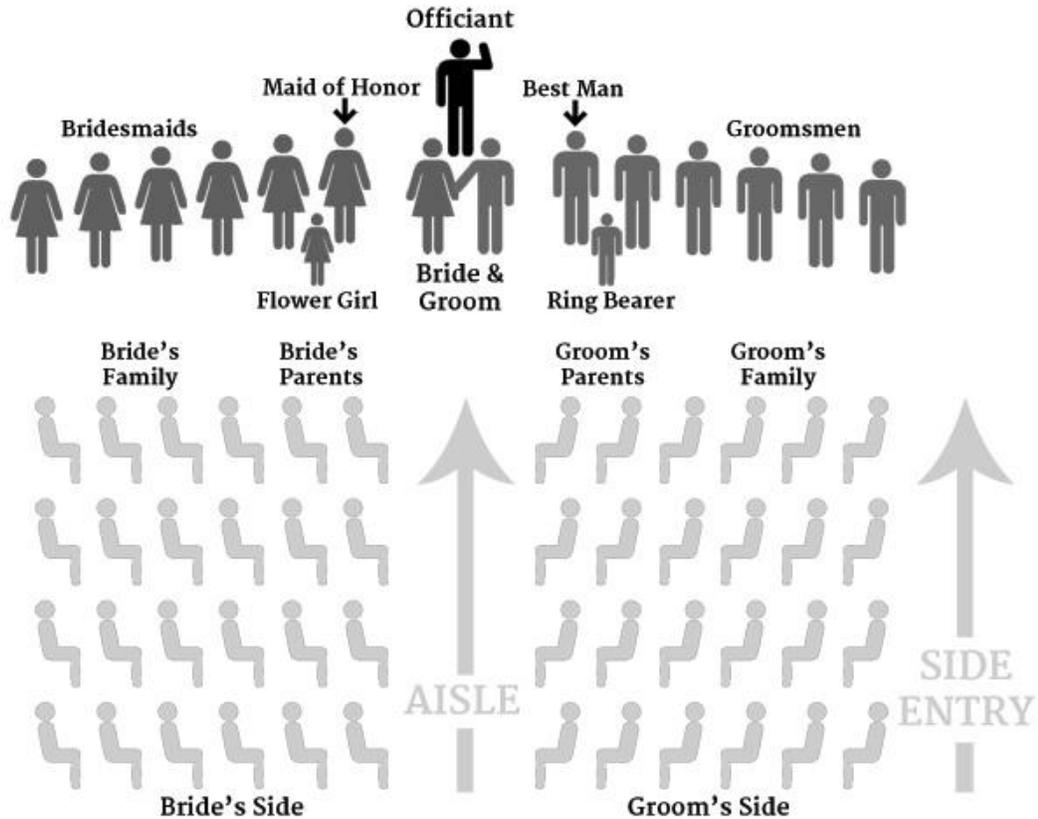
This guide is written for the “traditional” wedding. You are free to make changes based on your preferences but still maintaining the decorum and solemnity of a wedding.

The Rehearsal

1. **Start at the end.** Begin the rehearsal by lining your bridal party where they will stand during the ceremony (see the diagram below for the standard positions of the bridal party). The bridal party should be evenly spaced, and each member should be slightly forward and on a slight angle of the person to their left (bride’s side) or right (groom’s side). Bridesmaid’s should be holding their bouquets in front of themselves with both hands and groomsman should either stand with their hands clasped in front or behind.
2. **Speak through the ceremony.** Read through the ceremony draft so that everyone knows the order of the ceremony. You need not read the ceremony word-for-word nor should you recite your vows. Make note of when the rings need to be presented and if there are any ceremony add-ons that take place. Make sure that any items needed during the ceremony are present (unity candle, sand ceremony containers, etc.). And finally, the couple should practice that all-important wedding kiss (if they want).
3. **Recessional.** Practice walking out exiting in the proper order. The bride should not forget to take her bouquet from the maid-of-honor. The bride and groom exit first and once they are completely out, the maid-of-honor and best man exit together followed by the bridesmaids and groomsmen in pairs. Each couple should wait until the previous couple is approximately half way up the aisle. The flower girl and/or ring bearer (if present) are next followed by the grandparents and parents with the bride’s parents last.
4. **Processional.** Now that everyone knows where to stand and the recessional order, it is relatively easy to line up for the processional. The officiant and the groom generally enter first either from a side door or down the aisle. Once they take their place, the groom’s grand-parent(s) enter followed by the bride’s grandparents. Next the groom’s parents enter followed by the mother of the bride. Finally, the bridesmaids and groomsman enter followed by the ring bearer. The maid-of-honor enters followed by the flower girl. Once everyone is in place, it is time for the bride and her escort. There is no rush and it is strictly up to the bride to start her walk when she is ready.
5. **Presentation of the Bride.** Once the bride and her escort are standing in front of the officiant and groom the officiant will ask “Who gives this woman to be married to this man?”. The response given depends on who is giving the bride away. It could be a simple “I do” or “Her mother and I do” or a variation. The escort will then raise the brides veil (if present), give her a kiss and turn and shake the groom’s hand (or hug/kiss). The bride will hand her bouquet off to the maid-of-honor and turn and face the groom and hold hands.

6. **Repeat the Process.** Practice walking out and then back in one more time to ensure that everyone knows what to do and where to stand. This whole process should take no more than 30 minutes. Now, go have your rehearsal dinner and relax. You deserve it.

Wedding Ceremony Rehearsal Guide



ENTRANCE ORDER (PROCESSIONAL)

1. Grandparents of the Groom
2. Grandparents of the Bride
3. Officiant, Groom, Best Man, and Groomsmen
(from side entry if desired)
4. Parents of the Groom
5. Mother of the Bride
6. Bridesmaids
7. Maid of Honor
8. Flower Girl and Ring Bearer
9. Bride / Father of the Bride

EXIT ORDER (RECESSIONAL)

1. Bride and Groom
2. Maid of Honor and Best Man
3. Bridesmaids and Groomsmen
(in pairs when exiting)
4. Flower Girl and Ring Bearer
5. Parents of the Bride
6. Parents of the Groom
7. Grandparents of the Bride
8. Grandparents of the Groom
9. Officiant
10. Wedding Guests

NOTE: Please excuse the lack of gender-neutral terminology in this diagram. For common variations of this order, including ideas for our LGBT couples, please see the "Variations" section of the guide at <http://ceremonyofficiants.com/resources>.