

# *A Life of Simple Luxury*

cultivated • sophisticated • refined

## Marriage

### *Basic structure for a Wedding Ceremony*

A wedding ceremony follows a simple skeleton structure, that assists in both creating the 'flow' of the event and provides a starting point for crafting a ceremony that is special to you as a couple.

The basic structure is as follows:

- Introduction and opening of the ceremony by the celebrant ("Ladies and Gentlemen, please stand to welcome the bride.... Good morning... my name is...")
  - Welcome ("On behalf of ... and ..., I welcome you...")
- Body of the ceremony- this is where we can tell stories, read poetry, conduct rituals or simply present the couple. The wording here needs to meet the needs of the marrying couple, feel free to consider anything unique or symbolic to you that you would like in the ceremony.
  - Reading or poetry by participant or celebrant
    - Vows and/or promises
    - Symbol of unity (rings)
  - Monitum- the legal requirements of the ceremony
    - Signing of marriage papers
    - Declaration of marriage

During the ceremony, we can add in rituals or symbols that you deem appropriate to your individual ceremony.

**This is your day.**

## Wedding Ceremony Sample

**Sample** • Alison and Brett  
Marrying in Yallingup, WA

Good afternoon, my name is Jo Barrett-Lennard, and I am an Authorised Marriage Celebrant. On behalf of Alison and Brett, it is my pleasure to welcome you to witness their marriage.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we meet here today in Yallingup to witness the joining of these two people in marriage. Alison and Brett are delighted to be surrounded by their family and friends, all of whom they hold dear.

Who brings this woman to stand beside this man? *Person giving bride away "I do"*.

Everyone here is showing their love and support for Brett and Alison by being here today. We are privileged to witness this precious moment as this couple promise to face their future together, to realise their dreams together, and to make public their life-long commitment to each other in marriage.

Louise, bridesmaid of Alison and sister of Brett, will you please come forward and read a poem chosen by the couple.

*Bridesmaid reads poem.*

So how do two people come to this point in their lives? What crossroads do they reach when living without each other is not something that either wish to contemplate?

It is fascinating how and when that transition occurs. Some people will come into our lives for a short time, others create relationships that are strong and long lasting.

But there will only be a few people in our lives, with whom that relationship will be unique, deeply intimate and profoundly rich. A switch inside flicks on, and a relationship begins to truly unfold. From this moment a couple begins to have confidence in what exists between them, trust emerges and a belief in the future which promises nourishment begins to grow.

Alison and Brett have strong views on the type of family that they wish to create, of a home which will provide a strong foundation and sense of belonging for their children., a life which will encompass the company of good friends...loving family and great times.

When I first met with Alison and Brett to discuss their wedding day it was very important to the that everyone was included who is part of their life.

They wanted no-one to be left out of sharing their memorable day. All of you are linked in some way and they are delighted you are here to share in their joy and to party and to celebrate with them.

However with that privilege also comes some responsibility. Alison and Brett have counted on your support and encouragement and your participation in their life for a number of years already. Yet the two of them, will continue to require your love and involvement in the years to come.

Our family and friends are the ones who share the journey with us, they provide the framework on which we hang our lives, they delight in our joys, they weep at our sorrows. They provide consolation, advice and comfort. Our family and friends share our good times and, our not so good times. Over the coming years, you will continue to share in Alison and Brett's hopes and dreams and enjoy the fulfilment of their life together.

*Bride hands flowers to bridesmaid*

Alison and Brett, please take each others hands.

These are the hands of your best friend, young and strong and full of love for you, that are holding yours on your wedding day, as you promise to love each other today, tomorrow and forever. These are the hands that will work alongside yours, as together you build your future. These are the hands that will passionately love you and cherish you through the years, and with the slightest touch, will comfort you like no other. These are the hands that will hold you when fear or grief fills your mind. These are the hands that will countless times, wipe the tears from your eyes; tears of sorrow, and tears of joy. These are the hands that will tenderly hold your children. These are the hands that will help you hold your family as one. These are the hands that will give you strength when you need it. And lastly, these are the hands when wrinkled and aged, will still be reaching for yours, still giving the same unspoken tenderness with just a simple touch.

Now we come to the moment in the day where Brett and Alison will make their promises to each other, thereby forging the bonds of marriage and becoming husband and wife.

These promises are not entered into lightly, but in the belief that their marriage will be a life-long partnership based on the principles of love, trust, understanding and forgiveness. It is an unfolding

vision, offering not only the growth and deepening of them as a couple, but also ensuring the healthy progression of each as individuals.

Love is the glue which links and bonds all aspects of their life together.

Brett and Alison, are you ready?

I am duly authorised by law to solemnise marriages according to law. Before you are joined in marriage in my presence and in the presence of these witnesses, I am to remind you of the solemn and binding nature of the relationship into which you are about to enter.

Marriage, according to law in Australia, is the union of two people to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life. \*

*Rings*

Brett, do you take Alison, to be your partner in marriage, to love and respect in your days together? *I do*

Alison, do you take Brett, to be your partner in marriage, to love and respect in your days together? *I do*

Brett, repeat after me.

I call upon the persons here present to witness that I, Brett Christopher Jameson, take thee, Alison Renee Richards, to be my lawful wedded wife.\*\*

I pledge to share my life openly and honestly with you. I offer my love and friendship from now until the end of our days. I will cherish you in times of joy and sorrow, in sickness and in health. The world is full of possibilities, let us begin our adventures together.

I give you this ring, as a token of my love and of the promises made between us today.

Alison, repeat after me.

I call upon the persons here present to witness that I, Alison Renee Richards, take thee, Brett Christopher Jameson, to be my lawful wedded husband. \*\*

I pledge to share my life openly and honestly with you. I offer my love and friendship from now until the end of our days. I will cherish you in times of joy and sorrow, in sickness and in health. The world is full of possibilities, let us begin our adventures together.

I give you this ring, as a token of my love and of the promises made between us today.

Alison and Brett, this is the first day of the rest of your lives together. All of us present here today, trust that you find each future day even more rewarding.

It is my pleasure to pronounce you husband and wife. Brett, you may kiss your bride.

Ladies and gentlemen, we will now be signing the certificates of marriage. Can I please ask the witnesses up to join the newlyweds.

*Signing of the Certificates*

Ladies and Gentlemen, please congratulate the new Mr and Mrs Jameson!

**\*Section 46 (1) of the *Marriage Act 1961*. This is a legally binding monitum that, by law, must be stated at your ceremony.**

**\*\* Section 45 (2) of the *Marriage Act 1961*. This form of ceremony must be stated by each party of the marrying couple. These vows must be said, as stated, in their entirety for the marriage to be legally binding.**

**Sample • Thomas and Carly**  
Marrying in Swan Valley, WA

*On arrival to the alter, Bride hands flowers to Bridesmaid, takes Groom's hands.*

Good afternoon, my name is Jo Barrett-Lennard, and I am an Authorised Marriage Celebrant. On behalf of Thomas and Carly, it is my pleasure to welcome you to witness their marriage.

We are gathered here today to celebrate one of life's greatest moments, the joining of two hearts. In this ceremony today, we will be witnessing the joining of Thomas and Carly in marriage.

Today we have come together to witness the joining of these two lives. For them, out of the routine of ordinary life, the extraordinary has happened. They met each other, fell in love and are finalizing it with their wedding today. Romance is fun, but true love is something far more and it is their desire to love each other for life and that is what we are celebrating here today.

But today is also a celebration for the rest of us, for it is a pleasure for us to see love in bloom, and to participate in the union of two people so delightfully suited to one another.

But first, some words of wisdom.

A good marriage must be created.

In marriage the "little" things are the big things.

It is never being too old to hold hands.

It is remembering to say, "I love you" at least once a day.

It is never going to sleep angry.

It is standing together and facing the world.

It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.

It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.

It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.

It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.

It is not only marrying the right person -- it is being the right partner.

I call upon the persons here present to witness that I, Thomas James Ryan, take thee, Carly Anne Bradshaw, to be my lawful wedded wife.\*\*

I will cherish our friendship and love you today, tomorrow, and forever.

I will trust you and honour you

I will laugh with you and cry with you.

I will love you faithfully

Through the best and the worst,  
Through the difficult and the easy.  
Whatever may come I will always be there.  
As I have given you my hand to hold  
So I give you my life to keep

I call upon the persons here present to witness that I, Carly Anne Bradshaw, take thee,  
Thomas James Ryan, to be my lawful wedded husband.\*\*

I will cherish our friendship and love you today, tomorrow, and forever.

I will trust you and honour you

I will laugh with you and cry with you.

I will love you faithfully

Through the best and the worst,

Through the difficult and the easy.

Whatever may come I will always be there.

As I have given you my hand to hold

So I give you my life to keep

Thomas and Carly, I would ask that you always treat yourself and each other with respect and remind yourselves often of what brought you together today.

Give the highest priority to the tenderness, gentleness and kindness that your marriage deserves.

When frustration and difficulty assail your marriage - as they do to every relationship at one time or another - focus on what still seems right between you, not only the part that seems wrong.

This way, when clouds of trouble hide the sun in your lives and you lose sight of it for a moment, you can remember that the sun is still there. And if each of you will take responsibility for the quality of your life together, it will be marked by abundance and happiness.

I am duly authorised by law to solemnise marriages according to law. Before you are joined in marriage in my presence and in the presence of these witnesses, I am to remind you of the solemn and binding nature of the relationship into which you are about to enter.

Marriage, according to law in Australia, is the union of two people to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life. \*

### *Rings*

There are 3 rings of marriage. The wedding ring, The Engagement ring and the suffering. We hope the latter can be held to a minimum.

*Groom-* Carly, I love you. This ring is a symbol of never-ending love and respect I have for you. I give you this ring, and I become your husband.

*Bride-* Thomas, I love you. This ring is a symbol of never-ending love and respect I have for you. I give you this ring and I become your wife.

To make your relationship work will take love. This is the core of your marriage and why you are here today.

It will take trust, to know, that in your hearts, you truly want what is best for each other.

It will take dedication, to stay open to one another - and to learn and grow together.

It will take faith, to go forward together, without knowing exactly what the future brings.

And it will take commitment, to hold true to the journey you both have pledged to today.

It is my pleasure to pronounce you husband and wife. Thomas, you may kiss your bride.

Ladies and gentlemen, we will now be signing the certificates of marriage. Can I please ask the witnesses up to join the newlyweds.

#### *Signing of the Certificates*

Ladies and Gentlemen, please congratulate the new Mr and Mrs Ryan!

**\*Section 46 (1) of the *Marriage Act 1961*. This is a legally binding monitum that, by law, must be stated at your ceremony.**

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## *Symbols and Rituals that may be used in your ceremony*

### **Water** • Water poured from two jugs into one vessel

Water is one of the most vital and powerful elements on earth. It cannot be broken, can assume any shape, joins with itself easily, and when moving can erode even the most solid of substances.

The pouring of water symbolised the joining of two separate entities that become one

### **Hand fasting** • Using a ribbon or rope and binding the couples hands together

Whilst holding hands, the celebrant binds the couples hands together, symbolising the binding of the couple to a life together.

### **Sand Pouring** • The pouring of sand from two vessels into one.

The couple pours two separate vases of sand in differing colours into the same vessel, creating a unique, one-of-a-kind pattern. From this point forward, it is impossible to separate the colours, symbolising the blending of two people.

Many couples choose sand from meaningful locations.

### **Love Letters** • A momento for your anniversary.

Before the ceremony, the couple write a love letter each to their partner. During the ceremony, the letters are sealed inside a box, sometimes accompanied by a bottle of wine to be opened at an anniversary (5 years, 10 years etc).

### **Butterfly Release** • Releasing butterflies during the ceremony

There is an ancient legend that states if you want a wish to come true, whisper your wish to a captive butterfly. Because the butterfly cannot tell anyone, it will take your wish to the skies and the wish will be granted. Because the captive butterfly is freed, the balance with nature is kept, and in gratitude the wish comes to fruition.

*Poetry that may be used in your ceremony*

**I Promise You**

I can't promise you that dark clouds will never hover over our lives  
or that the future will bring us many rainbows  
I can't promise you that tomorrow will be perfect  
or that life will be easy  
I can promise you my everlasting devotion  
my loyalty, my respect  
and my unconditional love for a lifetime  
I can promise that I'll always be here for you  
to listen and to hold your hand  
and I'll always do my best to make you happy  
and make you feel loved.  
I can promise that I'll see you through any crisis  
and pray with you, dream with you, build with you  
and always cheer you on and encourage you.  
I can promise that I'll willing be your protector, your advisor, your counsellor  
Your friend, your family, your everything.

I promise you.

*Anonymous*

**I'd Choose You**

I didn't fall in love with you  
I walked into love with you  
with my eyes wide open,  
choosing to take every step of the way.  
I do believe in fate and destiny  
but I also believe we are fated to do the things  
that we'd choose anyway.  
And I'd choose you;  
in a hundred lifetimes, in a hundred worlds,  
in any version of reality  
I'd find you and I'd choose you.  
*Kiersten White- The Chaos of the Stars*

### The Owl and the Pussy Cat

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat went to sea  
In a beautiful pea-green boat.  
They took some honey, and plenty of money  
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.  
The Owl looked up to the stars above,  
And sang to a small guitar,  
'O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,  
What a beautiful Pussy you are,  
You are,  
You are!  
What a beautiful Pussy you are!'

Pussy said to Owl, 'You elegant fowl!  
How charmingly sweet you sing!  
O let us be married! too long we have tarried:  
But what shall we do for a ring?'  
They sailed away, for a year and a day,  
To the land where the Bong-Tree grows,  
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood,  
With a ring at the end of his nose,  
His nose,  
His nose!  
With a ring at the end of his nose.

'Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling  
Your ring?' Said the Piggy, 'I will.'  
So they took it away, and were married next day  
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.  
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,  
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;  
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand  
They danced by the light of the moon,  
The moon,  
The moon,  
They danced by the light of the moon!

*Edward Lear*

**Untitled-** from *Les Misérables*

The future belongs to hearts even more than it does to minds. Love, that is the only thing that can occupy and fill eternity. In the infinite, the inexhaustible is requisite.

Love participates of the soul itself. It is of the same nature. Like it, it is the divine spark; like it, it is incorruptible, indivisible, imperishable. It is a point of fire that exists within us, which is immortal and infinite, which nothing can confine, and which nothing can extinguish. We feel it burning even to the very marrow of our bones, and we see it beaming in the very depths of heaven.

*Victor Hugo*

**Have you ever been in love?**

Have you ever been in love? Horrible isn't it?

It makes you so vulnerable.

It opens your chest and it opens up your heart and it means that someone can get inside you and mess you up.

You build up all these defenses, you build up a whole suit of armour, so that nothing can hurt you, then one stupid person, no different from any other stupid person, wanders into your stupid life ...

You give them a piece of you. They didn't ask for it.

They did something dumb one day, like kiss you or smile at you, and then your life isn't your own anymore.

Love takes hostages. It gets inside you.

*Neil Gaiman*

**He's Not Perfect**

He's not perfect. You aren't either, and the two of you will never be perfect. But if he can make you laugh at least once, causes you to think twice, and if he admits to being human and making mistakes, hold onto him and give him the most you can.

He isn't going to quote poetry, he's not thinking about you every moment, but he will give you a part of him that he knows you could break.

Don't hurt him, don't change him, and don't expect for more than he can give.

Don't analyse. Smile when he makes you happy, yell when he makes you mad, and miss him when he's not there.

Love hard when there is love to be had.

Because perfect guys don't exist, but there's always one guy that is perfect for you.

*Bob Marley*

*Music that may be used in your ceremony*

**Pop**

All of Me • John Legend  
Can't help falling in love • Elvis Presley  
Bless this Broken Road • Rascal Flatts  
Bless this Broken Road • Selah  
Hey Pretty Girl • Kip Moore  
You and Me • Lifehouse  
Beautiful Day • U2  
Come Away With Me • Norah Jones  
I Do • Colbie Calliat  
Marry Me • Train  
Marry You • Bruno Mars  
All I Want is You • U2  
Count on Me • Bruno Mars  
Lost in Love • Air Supply  
All You Need is Love • The Beatles  
I'm a Believer • Smashmouth  
Stand by Me • Ben. E. King  
Amazed • Lonestar  
Sparks • Coldplay  
Signed, Sealed, Delivered • Stevie Wonder  
Crazy Little Thing Called Love • Queen  
The Luckiest • Ben Folds  
History in the Making • Darius Rucker  
Dancing in the Dark • Bruce Springsteen

**Classic**

Canon in D • Johann Pachelbel  
Andante • Mozart  
Bridal Chorus (*Here comes the Bride*) • Richard Wagner  
Sleepers Awake • Johann Sebastian Bach  
Air • George Handel

## *Ceremony Suggestions*

Why not.... Sit your guests in a circle around your alter?

Why not... use ribbons as decorations instead of flowers?

Why not... arrive by boat?

Why not... read a favourite passage from a book instead of a poem, or even instead of vows?

Why not... honour the good-luck tradition and hang charms off your bouquet?

Why not... use native nuts and leaves as a buttonhole instead of traditional flowers?

Why not... let your flower girl wear fairy or feathered wings?

Why not... include colourful parasols with your bridesmaids' outfits?

Why not... place Asian-inspired paper fans on chairs for the guests?

Why not... have a groomsmaid or a bridesman?

Why not... ask a friend or family member to sing you down the aisle?

Why not... write a love note on the sole of your shoes?

Why not... have a dog as your ring bearer? (Bow Tie optional)

Why not... wear a superhero shirt under your suit?

Why not.... Decorate an arbour with origami birds and have the ceremony under it?

Why not.... Skip flowers and have all greenery?