

Worry-Free Wedding Ceremony Rehearsal Guide

Running your own rehearsal doesn't have to be intimidating. With this step-by-step outline, you'll have everything you need to make sure everyone knows where to stand, how to walk, and when to move. Follow these three easy steps, and you'll feel confident that your ceremony will flow beautifully, even without a professional directing it.

A. Placement

- Begin by having the wedding party stand — and parents sit — in the exact spots they'll occupy during the ceremony.
- Grandparents can be seated next to parents or in the row just behind them.
- Stepparents are usually seated in the second row, alongside their spouse, before the ceremony begins.
- Arrange attendants in the order you prefer. Once everyone is in position, the entire wedding party should always face the bride and groom.
- After the bride is presented, she and the groom will face the officiant, arm-in-arm, with the bride holding her bouquet for the first few minutes (perfect for photos).
- Don't overthink the details — from “Who gives this woman?” to “You may kiss your bride,” the officiant will guide the words.



B. Recessional (Walking Out)

- **Practice exiting the ceremony.** Decide in advance if you'll form a receiving line or head straight to a photo location.
- Order of exit:
 1. Bride & groom (they leave completely alone)

2. Flower girl/ring bearer
 3. Maid of Honor & Best Man
 4. Remaining wedding party couples
- After the party exits, ushers (or spouses) escort mothers and grandmothers — the bride's family first.

C. Processional (Walking In)

Now that everyone knows where to stand or sit during the ceremony, **practice coming into the ceremony**. Write the names in the order you want and bring a list to your rehearsal. Suggested order:

1. Stepmothers and other honored women (with ushers or spouses)
2. Grandmothers (with ushers or spouses)
3. Groom's mother (with an usher or spouse)
4. Bride's mother (with an usher or spouse)
5. Minister and groom (from the right side, with best man and groomsmen if not escorting)
6. Bridesmaids (starting from far left inward, escorted or solo)
7. Maid/Matron of Honor (with or without best man)
8. Ring bearer & flower girl (together or separate)
9. Bride and father (or chosen escort), traditionally with the gentleman offering his left arm.

When the music stops, the officiant welcomes guests and asks, *"Who gives this woman to be married to this man?"* The father may reply, *"Her mother and I."* Often, the father and groom will shake hands before the father takes his seat. Decide in advance whether the veil is to be lifted or a kiss is to be shared at this point. The groom then steps into the father's place at the bride's left side.

Final Tip

Relax. The officiant will guide you through the ceremony itself. Your job at rehearsal is just to make sure everyone knows where to walk, sit, and stand. With this outline, you can confidently run your own rehearsal and know your wedding will begin smoothly and stress-free.



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