

“Basic” Wedding Ceremonies

by Ingrid Heyn
Authorised Marriage Celebrant

- 1. Traditional basic wedding ceremony #1**
- 2. Basic wedding ceremony #2**
- 3. Basic wedding ceremony #3**
- 4. Selection of Readings**
- 5. Selection of Music**



Traditional basic wedding ceremony # 1

Celebrant:

We are gathered here today in the face of this company, to join together [Groom's full legal name] and [Bride's full legal name] in matrimony; which is an honourable and solemn estate and therefore is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently and soberly. [Groom] and [Bride] will be making a pledge to each other, to be true, faithful, loving and devoted to one another. Into this estate these two persons present come now to be joined. My name is Ingrid Heyn, and I am duly authorised by law to solemnise marriages according to law. If any one can show just cause why they may not be lawfully joined together, let them speak now or forever hold their peace.

[----- optional

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

Parents / Friend:

We do.

The bride is given away.

Celebrant:

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 now about to enter. Marriage, according to law in Australia, is the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life.

Celebrant to Groom:

[Groom], do you take [Bride] for your lawful wedded wife, to be joined in matrimony? Will you love, honour, comfort, and cherish her from this day forward, forsaking all others, keeping only unto her for as long as you both shall live?

Groom:

I do.

OR

Celebrant to the Groom who repeats the marriage vows:

I [Groom] take thee [Bride] to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, honour, and cherish, 'til death do us part, and thereto I plight thee my troth.

Celebrant to Bride:

[Bride], do you take [Groom] for your lawful wedded husband, to be joined in matrimony? Will you love, honour, comfort, and cherish him from this day forward, forsaking all others, keeping only unto him for as long as you both shall live?

Bride:

I do.

OR

Celebrant to the Bride who repeats the marriage vows:

I [Bride] take thee [Groom] to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, honour, and cherish, 'til death do us part, and thereto I plight thee my troth.

[----- optional

The Celebrant introduces the ring ceremony – the ring being handed to the Celebrant by the best man or from a ring-bearer.

Celebrant, speaking of the Bride's ring:

May this ring be blessed so he who gives it and she who wears it may live joyously together, and continue in love all their lives.

Groom, placing ring on Bride's finger:

With this ring I thee wed. Wear it as a symbol of our love and commitment.

Celebrant, speaking of the Groom's ring:

May this ring be blessed so she who gives it and he who wears it may live joyously together, and continue in love all their lives.

Bride, placing ring on groom's finger:

With this ring I thee wed. Wear it as a symbol of our love and commitment.

-----]

[----- optional

The ceremony may include music or a reading at this point. See page 10 for readings.

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Celebrant: May this couple be prepared to continue to give, be able to forgive and experience more and more joy with each passing day, with each passing year.

[Groom] and [Bride], are now beginning their married life together. May they receive loving assistance from their family, the constant support of friends, and a long life with good health and everlasting love. In so much as [Groom] and [Bride] have consented to live forever together in marriage, and have proclaimed their vows to do so before this company as witnesses, having given and pledged their troth, each to the other, and having declared the same by the giving and receiving of a ring, I now pronounce that they are husband and wife.

Celebrant to the couple:

You may now seal this marriage with your first kiss as husband and wife.

Celebrant:

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you the new couple Mr and Mrs [...]

The signing of the register now takes place, and the ceremony usually includes music at this point.

Bride and Groom sign first, then the two Witnesses, and then the Celebrant.

The Marriage Certificate is now handed to the couple by the Celebrant.

Celebrant:

It is my privilege to present you with your Marriage Certificate.

I would like to thank our witnesses [...] and [...], and to say to everyone here, on behalf of the Bride and Groom, how very much your presence here today has been appreciated. Thank you all for being here as part of this special day, to celebrate with [Bride] and [Groom] as they made this commitment to each other.

Mr and Mrs [...], congratulations as you begin your lives together!

Thank you.

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Basic wedding ceremony # 2

[----- optional

The ceremony may begin with bridal party entry. This is optional.

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[----- optional

If the bride has been presented by a family member or friend:

Celebrant:

Who brings this woman to be married to this man?

Family member / friend:

I do.

-----]

Celebrant:

Welcome family and friends.

We have come together today to witness the promises in marriage of [Groom's full legal name] and [Bride's full legal name].

This commitment is between two people who love each other and wish to share each other's lives, who will grow and change in the years to come, welcoming each other's growth with mutual love and respect. Love means sharing whatever life presents.

OR

This ceremony gives social recognition to a union that has already taken place in the hearts of [Groom's full legal name] and [Bride's full legal name]). My name is Ingrid Heyn and I have the privilege and the authority by law to officiate at your marriage today. I take this opportunity to wish you both much happiness in your future lives together.

Celebrant:

[Groom's name] and [Bride's name], do you declare before me and before your witnesses here present, that you come here voluntarily and without reservation and that you are free by law to be married to each other today?

Groom and Bride respond:

Yes, I do.

[----- optional

The ceremony may include music or a reading at this point. See page 10 for readings.

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Celebrant:

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 now about to enter.

Marriage, according to the law in Australia, is the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life.

Celebrant (with Groom repeating the vows spoken first by the Celebrant):

In front of our witnesses here present, I [Groom's name] take you [Bride's name] to be my lawful wedded wife. I promise to love you, to care for you and to respect you for as long as we both shall live.

OR

In front of our witnesses here present, I [Groom's name] take you [Bride's name] to be my lawful wedded wife. I promise to love you, to care for you and to respect you for all of my life.

Celebrant (with Groom repeating the vows spoken first by the Celebrant):

In front of our witnesses here present, I [Groom's name] take you [Bride's name] to be my lawful wedded wife. I promise to love you, to care for you and to respect you for as long as we both shall live.

OR

In front of our witnesses here present, I [Bride's name] take you [Groom's name] to be my lawful wedded husband. I promise to love you, to care for you and to respect you for all of my life.

[---- optional

The Celebrant introduces the ring ceremony – the ring being handed to the Celebrant by the best man or from a ring-bearer.

Celebrant:

[Groom's name] and [Bride's name] have chosen to exchange rings as an outward symbol of their commitment to each other.

The band of the wedding ring represents everlasting love, the ring a never-ending circle with no beginning and no end.

Celebrant (with Groom repeating the words spoken first by the Celebrant):

[Bride's name], accept this ring as a symbol of my love and of all we share.

OR

[Bride's name], take this ring and wear it with my love.

Celebrant (with Bride repeating the words spoken first by the Celebrant):

[Groom's name], accept this ring as a symbol of my love and of all we share.

OR

[Groom's name], take this ring and wear it with my love.

----]

Celebrant:

Ladies and gentlemen, (and children) / Family and friends, [Groom's name] and [Bride's name] have declared before all of us that they now wish to live and love together in marriage.

Let us hope this day will form a milestone in your lives, one that you will look back upon with much joy and happiness.

It therefore gives me great pleasure to pronounce you husband and wife.

Congratulations; you may now both kiss, if you wish.

The signing of the register now takes place, and the ceremony usually includes music at this point.

Bride and Groom sign first, then the two Witnesses, and then the Celebrant.

The Marriage Certificate is now handed to the couple by the Celebrant.

Celebrant:

Ladies and gentlemen, family and friends, on behalf of the Bride and Groom, thank you all for coming here today to celebrate with [Groom's name] and [Bride's name] on their Wedding Day and for making their day so special.

Congratulations again to [Groom's name] and [Bride's name].

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Basic wedding ceremony # 3

Celebrant:

Good morning / afternoon / evening, my name is Ingrid Heyn, and I am an authorised marriage celebrant duly authorised by law to solemnise marriages according to law. I am privileged to be here today to officiate at the marriage of [Groom's full legal name] and [Bride's full legal name]. I also want to wish you much happiness in your future lives together.

Celebrant:

Do you [Groom's name] and do you [Bride's name] declare before me and your witnesses that you are free by law to be married to each other today?

Bride and Groom:

Yes, we do.

Celebrant:

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 now about to enter.

Marriage, according to the law in Australia, is the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life.

Celebrant (with Groom repeating the words spoken first by the Celebrant):

In front of our witnesses here present, I [Groom's name] take you [Bride's name] to be my lawful wedded wife.

Celebrant (with Bride repeating the words spoken first by the Celebrant):

In front of our witnesses here present, I [Bride's name] take you [Groom's name] to be my lawful wedded husband.

[----- optional

Exchange of rings

Celebrant (with Groom repeating the words spoken first by the Celebrant):

[Bride's name] wear this ring with all my love.

Celebrant (with Bride repeating the words spoken first by the Celebrant):

[Groom's name], wear this ring with all my love.

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Celebrant:

You have both made the declarations by law. In front of your family/friends as witnesses, I have great pleasure in pronouncing you husband and wife.

The signing of the register now takes place, and the ceremony usually includes music at this point.

Bride and Groom sign first, then the two Witnesses, and then the Celebrant.

The Marriage Certificate is now handed to the couple by the Celebrant.

Celebrant:

Ladies and gentlemen, family and friends, on behalf of the Bride and Groom, thank you all for coming here today to celebrate with [Groom's name] and [Bride's name] on their Wedding Day and for making their day so special.
Congratulations again to [Groom's name] and [Bride's name].

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List of Readings for inclusion in Basic Ceremony

Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861)

SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE

XLIII. HOW DO I LOVE THEE?

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 everyday'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.

Ben Jonson (1572-1637)

TO CELIA

Drink to me, only, with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise,
Doth ask a drink divine:
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.
I sent thee, late, a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee,
As giving it a hope, that there
It could not withered be.
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st back to me:
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee.

Anonymous

IRISH WEDDING BLESSING

You are the star of each night,
You are the brightness of every morning,
You are the story of each guest,
You are the report of every land.
No evil shall befall you, on hill nor bank,
In field or valley, on mountain or in glen.
Neither above, nor below, neither in sea,
Nor on shore, in skies above,
Nor in the depths.
You are the kernel of my heart,
You are the face of my sun,
You are the harp of my music,
You are the crown of my company

Biblical

SONG OF SONGS

The voice of my beloved!
Behold, he comes
Leaping upon the mountains,
Skipping upon the hills.
My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag.
Behold, he stands behind our wall;
He is looking through the windows,
Gazing through the lattice.
My beloved spoke, and said to me:
"Rise up, my love, my fair one,
And come away.
For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over *and* gone.
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of singing has come,
And the voice of the turtledove
Is heard in our land.
The fig tree puts forth her green figs,
And the vines *with* the tender grapes
Give a *good* smell.
Rise up, my love, my fair one,
And come away!
"O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,
In the secret *places* of the cliff,
Let me see your face,

Let me hear your voice;
For your voice *is* sweet,
And your face *is* lovely.”

SONG OF SONGS

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
As a seal upon your arm;
For love *is as* strong as death,
Jealousy *as* cruel as the grave;
Its flames *are* flames of fire,
A most vehement flame.
Many waters cannot quench love,
Nor can the floods drown it.

Anonymous

YOU HAVE BECOME MINE FOREVER (TRANSLATED FROM HINDI)

You have become mine forever.
Yes, we have become partners.
I have become yours.
Hereafter, I cannot live without you.
Do not live without me.
Let us share the joys.
We are word and meaning, unite.
You are thought and I am sound.

May the nights be honey-sweet for us.
May the mornings be honey-sweet for us.
May the plants be honey-sweet for us.
May the earth be honey-sweet for us.

Anonymous

FROM NAVAJO WEDDING CEREMONY

Now you have lit a fire and that fire should not go out.
The two of you now have a fire that represents love, understanding
and a philosophy of life.
It will give you heat, food, warmth and happiness.
The new fire represents a new beginning - a new life and a new family.
The fire should keep burning; you should stay together.
You have lit the fire for life, until old age separates you.

Khalil Gibran (1883-1931)

FROM THE PROPHET

ON MARRIAGE

“Then Almitra spoke again and said, “And what of Marriage, master?”
And he answered saying:

You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore.
You shall be together when white wings of death scatter your days.
Aye, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.

But let there be spaces in your togetherness,
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.

Love one another but make not a bond of love:

Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Fill each other’s cup but drink not from one cup.

Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.

Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be
alone,

Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the
same music.

Give your hearts, but not into each other’s keeping.

For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.

And stand together, yet not too near together:

For the pillars of the temple stand apart,

And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other’s shadow.”

List of Music for inclusion in Basic Ceremony

Classical Vocal Music for Weddings

SCHUBERT: Ave Maria

BACH-GOUNOD: Ave Maria

CACCINI (popularly attrib.): Ave Maria

FRANCK: Panis Angelicus

PURCELL: Hark! Hark! How all things

PURCELL: If music be the food of love

PURCELL: Sweeter than roses

PURCELL:Hark! The echoing air

PURCELL: Ah! how sweet it is to love

DOWLAND: Come again, sweet love

DOWLAND: Awake, sweet love

DOWLAND: Time Stands Still

HANDEL: Oh! had I Jubal's lyre

HANDEL: Rejoice greatly

HANDEL: Let the bright seraphim

HANDEL: Eternal source of light

HANDEL: V'adoro pupille

HANDEL: Where'er you walk

MONTEVERDI: Exulta filia Sion

MONTEVERDI: Pur ti miro

GIORDANI: Caro mio ben

LOTTI: Pur dicesti, o bocca bella

CACCINI: Amarilli, mia bella

LUZZASCHI: O primavera

BACH: Jauchzet Gott in aller Landen

BACH: Alleluja (from "Jauchzet Gott")

BACH: Bist du bei mir

BACH: Wedding cantata

MOZART: Exsultate, jubilate

MOZART: Alleluja (from "Exsultate jubilate")

MOZART: L'amero, sarò costante (from Il Re Pastore)

MOZART: Deh vieni, non tardar (from Marriage of Figaro)

MOZART: Ruhe sanft (from Zaide)

MOZART: Laudamus te (from Great Mass)

MOZART: Domine Deus (duet from Great Mass)

MOZART: Et incarnatus est (from Great Mass)

FAURÉ: Après un rêve

FAURÉ: Notre amour

FAURÉ: Les Roses d'Ispahan

FAURÉ: Clair de lune

R. STRAUSS: Ich schwebe

R. STRAUSS: Kling!

R. STRAUSS: Du meines Herzens Krönelein
R. STRAUSS: Ständchen
R. STRAUSS: Zueignung
BEETHOVEN: Ich liebe dich
OBRADORS: Al amor
OBRADORS: Del cabello más sutil
OBRADORS: La mi sola
CHARPENTIER: Depuis le jour
LISZT: Oh! Quand je dors
RACHMANINOV: Vocalise
RACHMANINOV: Zdes' khoroso
GRIEG: Jeg elsker Dig (I love you)
PUCCINI: Un bel di vedremo (from Madame Butterfly)
PUCCINI: Che il bel sogno di Doretta (from La Rondine)
BELLINI: Vaga luna
HAHN: L'heure exquise
MASSENET: Rêvons, c'est l'heure (duet)
VIVALDI: Laudamus te (duet)
VIVALDI: Esurientes (duet)
VIVALDI: Any of the solo cantatas
CHAUSSON: La Nuit (duet)
CHAUSSON: Réveil (duet)
DELIBES: Flower Duet (duet)

MODERN SONGS

The Power of Love
Everything I Do
Eternal Flame
I'll Always Love You
Unchained Melody
Embraceable You
Love walked in
Evergreen
My Life Belongs to You (Novello)
Always

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC

WAGNER: Bridal Chorus from Lohengrin (also known as "Here Comes the Bride")
PACHELBEL: Canon in D
VIVALDI: Guitar Concerto in D Major, Largo
HANDEL: Air (from Water Music Suite)
JEREMIAH CLARKE: Trumpet Voluntary in D major
PURCELL: "Trumpet Tune and Air"
Various **Beethoven** sonatas
MENDELSSOHN: A Midsummer Night's Dream, incidental music, Op. 61 Wedding March
VIVALDI: Winter, or Spring (from The Four Seasons),
TCHAIKOVSKY: "Waltz of the Flowers" (Nutcracker Suite)

