

# 21 Questions

For Your [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

## Wedding Photographer

by Christopher Schall

There are dozens of wedding web sites where brides gather and ask one another questions about their wedding. About a year ago, we logged on and started helping answer the tough questions about photography services. While helping everyone out, we took the most common questions and put them in a list for you. Feel free to copy and past this set of questions in emails you send, and if you have a friend who might like this list, send it right along.

We hope you enjoy!



### The 21 Questions:

1. Will you be the one taking the photos?
2. Are you a member of any associations or groups in your industry?
3. What photography styles do you specialize in?
4. What is the brand and model of the camera that you will be using?
5. What is the brand and model of the lenses you will be using?
6. What lighting equipment will you be using?
7. Will you be using an assistant, if so will it be extra?
8. Will there be backup equipment in case something goes wrong?
9. What will happen if you become ill or cannot come to the wedding?
10. Can other people take photos while you work?
11. If my event lasts longer than scheduled, will you stay? Will it be extra?
12. How many photos will you take? How many photos will you give us?
13. When will you deliver the finished photos to us?
14. What kind of photos will you be taking? Or what can you do? (B/W, color correction, ect)
15. Will you accept a list of photos that I would like you to take?
16. How will you help me put together my wedding album?
17. What is the attire of you and your assistant?
18. Do you have a professional contract for us to sign?

19. Do you have liability insurance? With who, and how much?
20. Will we get the negatives?
21. Tell us about your experience as a photographer.

## Why You Want to Ask These Questions:

The first step is seeing if the photographer is willing to spend the time and talk to you!

### Will you be the one taking the photos?

Some photographers have amazing portfolios, and they will charge a price appropriate for their skill. But come wedding day, they may contract your wedding to another, less skilled photographer.

### Are you a member of any associations or groups in your industry?

If not, they may not be as skilled as they say. It is also a sign of continuing education. Isolated photographers will have outdated photo techniques and equipment.

### What photography styles do you specialize in?

Check to see if they are more than picture takers. A photographer is defined by their style. See if their work shows that they can have fun and are curious. Check their portfolio and match their claim with their work.

### What is the brand and model of the camera that you will be using?

It's easy to google their equipment or look on Amazon.com. If the camera costs less than \$1,500, they will have issues taking pictures in low light, or capturing the fast paced action. Make sure the photographer has invested in their equipment.

### What is the brand and model of the lenses you will be using?

The lenses are more important than the camera. A great camera with poor lenses is a disaster. Google or check amazon.com for their lenses. A professional will use lenses costing \$800-\$2,400. Make sure they have a wide angle lens (their description should say 15-35mm) and a telephoto lens (150-200mm). If they don't have these basics, some of the action and perspective at your wedding will be missed.

### What is the make and model of the lighting equipment will you be using? Will you be using a hot shoe flash? Will you be using strobes?



Out of all the questions this separates the pros from the amateurs. It takes skill and knowledge to properly light a scene with equipment. At a minimum, they need a hot shoe flash. If you need nice portraits of large groups, they need a strobe. Have them send an example of a photo where they use stobe to light a crowd.

### Will you be using an assistant, if so will it be extra?

A photographer needs help, no matter how good they



are.

Will there be backup equipment in case something goes wrong?

Something will always go wrong, and a properly prepared photographer can take it in stride.

What will happen if you become ill or cannot come to the wedding?

Food poisoning, missed planes, car wrecks... make sure they have a back up plan.

Can other people take photos while you work?

They should say yes for the ceremony and reception, but no for group photos. If there is more than one camera at a group photo session, not everyone will be looking into the camera you paid for, and ruin otherwise great photos.

If my event lasts longer than scheduled, will you stay? Will it be extra?

Events may go over. It's good to know how to handle it in advance.

How many photos will you take? How many photos will you give us?

Good photographers will take many of pictures, and narrow them down for you.

When will you deliver the finished photos to us?

Photographers have taken up to a year to get the photos back to brides, and make sure that your photographer holds to a schedule.

What kind of photos will you be taking? Or what can you do? (B/W, color correction, etc.)

This is a check on their photoshop skills. Often the best photoshop skills are subtle and go unnoticed unless you look hard.

Will you accept a list of photos that I would like you to take?

You're the customer, make sure that they will listen to ideas that you have.

How will you help me put together my wedding album?

Don't let them abandon you after their initial work is done. See if they will help, and how much they will charge.

What is the attire of you and your assistant?

A matter of class, and another sign of professionalism.

Do you have a professional contract for us to sign?

Never hire a wedding photographer without some contract. Photographers without contract liability have abandoned clients, and these stories are everywhere on internet wedding bulletin boards. If this happened to you, it would force you to scramble for a last minute photographer who will likely be more expensive. Contracts keep proper business.

Do you have liability insurance? With who, and how much?

Another sign of a professional.

Will we get the negatives?

Just like film, digital pictures have a negative, make sure they are available in case you want to make your photos black and white, etc.

Tell us about your experience as a photographer.

Always check claims with their web site. Look for passion and customer service.



## Lindsey and I Answer These Questions

Will you be the one taking the photos?

Yes, I will be taking the photos and Lindsey will be assisting.

Are you a member of any associations or groups in your industry?

Yes, we are members of the National Association of Photoshop professionals and the Professional Photographers of America. We regularly teach upcoming photo students, and contribute to photography publica-

tions.

What photography styles do you specialize in?

We specialize in journalistic-art. These are candid photos with advanced photographic techniques like limited depth of field and mixed lighting. We also specialize in flash photography.

What is the brand and model of the camera that you will be using?

We use the Canon 5D MkII, and Canon 7D. These cameras produce the highest quality pictures available to photographers today.

What is the brand and model of the lenses you will be using?

We use Canon brand “L” series lenses. The highest quality available.

Our lenses:

Canon 70-200mm 2.8 L IS USM II

Canon 16-35mm 2.8 L USM II

Canon 85mm 1.2 L USM II

Canon 100mm macro 2.8 USM

Canon 50mm 1.8 II

Canon extension accessory 1.4x L

What lighting equipment will you be using?

580 EX II hot shoe flash

Two Zeus x1600 Strobes

Will you be using an assistant, if so will it be extra?

Yes, Lindsey will be taking photos alongside, and this will not cost extra.

Will there be backup equipment in case something goes wrong?

Yes, we have duplicate equipment if something goes



wrong.

What will happen if you become ill or cannot come to the wedding?

In the very unlikely event this will happen, I will have one of my trusted colleagues attend your wedding with the same equipment.

Can other people take photos while you work?

Absolutely! Especially during the ceremony and the reception. We ask that our portrait sessions be private to ensure quality of the photos.

If my event lasts longer than scheduled, will you stay? Will it be extra?

We are there, as long as it takes, and the cost depends on the package you choose.

How many photos will you take? How many photos will you give us?

We will likely take 5,000 pictures for a full day (12 hours) of wedding photos. We find the best photos out of the bunch and give them to you (300+) But you are welcome to have every picture we take.

When will you deliver the finished photos to us?

5 weeks after your wedding. Guaranteed.

What kind of photos will you be taking? Or what can you do? (B/W, color correction, ect)

We call this “creative processing” and we can do anything imaginable. If you see it in a magazine, we can do it. Our photoshop skills are among the best. I personally enjoy rich-toned black and white and 50’s-70’s



vintage styles, but the end choice is yours

Will you accept a list of photos that I would like you to take?

Absolutely! We have a list too! Let us know what photos are important to you, and we'll do our best to capture them.

How will you help me put together my wedding album?

We can give you a hard bound art album with beautiful full photo pages, or give you prints to make your own album. Whatever you choose, we help you through the process.

What is the attire of you and your assistant?

A long sleeve dress shirt, vest, and black slacks, but will wear attire to suit your wedding.

Do you have a professional contract for us to sign?

**Thanks for reading!**

**If you have any questions about this list, feel free to contact us: [www.impact-photo.org](http://www.impact-photo.org) / 303-619-2663**

Yes, we outline all of our services and sign a contract to show our dedication to you.

Do you have liability insurance? With who, and how much?

Yes, we have \$500,000 through State Farm Insurance

Will we get the negatives?

The negatives are available whenever you want them.

Tell us about your experience as a photographer. How many weddings have you done?

I've been a photographer my whole life, producing photos for magazines, textbooks, newspapers and special assignments. I've shot weddings for many years and love my work. We get to share so many good feelings with the bride and groom, it's so rewarding!