

10 Top Tips for Shooting a Wedding as a Guest

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Give the bride and groom an extra-special wedding gift – a set of images from the guest's perspective that will be a truly personal memento of their day.



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1) Sort out your gear in advance - make sure batteries are fully charged and your memory card is empty (and that you're carrying a spare). And do remember to turn off your camera's sound to prevent annoying beeps intruding on the moment!

- 2) The classic zoom duo for weddings – 24-70mm and 70-200mm – or a single zoom covering this type of range, such as the 18-300mm, gives you scope for close-ups without getting in the way of the wedding photographer, as well as the ability to shoot broad 'scene setting' images.
- 3) Make a checklist of any key pictures you do want to take to ensure you capture everything you set out to – and as a friend of the happy couple you've got the inside track on the images that will mean a great deal to them.
- 4) The golden rule is – don't get in the way of the official photographer (and/or videographer). If you want to shoot what they're shooting, be ready to jump in as soon as they've finished. Jump in front of them and you risk being in for the high jump!
- 5) Shoot in RAW (NEF) rather than JPEG. RAW files record all the information captured by the sensor (JPEGs are far more limited) and this gives you more scope for post-production tweaks to exposure, white balance and so on – which can be key for successful results when you're juggling tricky indoor lighting or white bridal gowns with dark suits. And on that note, when you're editing, try images out in black and white – mono shots can be a great way of losing the distractions of multi-coloured wedding outfits and creating a timeless appeal.
- 6) Fill-flash can be useful outdoors in very bright conditions to avoid shadows, but during the ceremony flash can be intrusive, so it's better to dial up the ISO. For indoor shots during the reception, a Speedlight angled to bounce the light off a neutral coloured ceiling or wall can create a softer, more flattering, effect than your camera's built-in flash.
- 7) Don't just photograph the happy couple and the guests – capture the details, such as the table settings, cake, seating plan, flowers, food, drinks, wedding favours. These types of shots can really help to capture the atmosphere of the day and all the hard work that's gone into creating it.

8) Continuous shooting mode will help ensure you get a vital image, while on a Nikon 1 camera Best Moment Capture will do the same job (while Motion Snapshot is perfect for moving moments like the couple walking down the aisle, or the bouquet being thrown).

9) Keep an eye on your composition – place people in frame using the rule of thirds for the most pleasing results, and use leading lines and natural frames such as archways, columns and overhanging trees to focus attention on your subject. Vary your perspective, too – shoot from a window or balcony overlooking the guests, and tilt your camera tilted for a dynamic, 'reportage' effect.

10) Improve your wedding photography by booking onto a [Nikon School training course](#) !