



Couples Ceremony Ideas



Introduction

Many people find Registrar-led ceremonies very limiting.
You do not have much control over the ceremony itself.

Legally, certain Declaratory and Contractual words have to be used, and you don't have much freedom (if any) to say your own vows, have music, poems, readings, involve other family members or friends and have a more unique ceremony.

So if you have any aspirations to create a more bespoke, authentic ceremony, one that represents you and your partner, choosing a Celebrant-led ceremony is the way.

This gives you the freedom to have your ceremony...

***where you want,
when you want
and in the way you want***



This document contains lots of ideas to make your ceremony more special and memorable.

Each one can be adapted to your wishes and needs.



***“You only get one
chance to make it authentic
and bespoke.
Working with me gives you
that opportunity”***

CEREMONY IDEAS

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Sand Ceremony

A Sand Ceremony is a beautiful way to signify two people's lives coming together in a wedding ceremony.

This is also a fantastic option for including children or family in the wedding.

Its meaning is simple and beautiful:
two becoming one.

The couple mixes two different colours of sand into one container, thereby symbolising their lives and hearts entwined.

Once combined, it would be extremely difficult to separate the sand out again, just as the couple are joined together.

If this is something you are interested in, there are lots of ways it can be even more personalised that we can talk about. It can also be done with water and/or wine!



Love Letters Ceremony

Couples write love letters to each other, and these are locked in a box with a bottle of wine and some wine glasses, ready for later in the marriage such as an anniversary.

Open it up, share the wine, and read the letters you wrote for each other.



You can also involve your guests with this as they can either bring along a personal message sealed in an envelope or you can provide them for them to write as part of your ceremony. These can also be sealed in the box.



Unity Candle Ceremony

The Unity Candle Ceremony is a very romantic wedding ceremony that offers so many opportunities for you to make it unique and personal to you.

In its simplest form, there are three candles, two smaller ones that represent each person, and a larger one that represents their union. The two smaller ones can be lit by each person and can burn throughout the ceremony. The couple then lights the middle candle, called the Unity candle, from the flame of the two outside candles.



When two lights come together they burn stronger and brighter; this symbolises the strength that two people can bring by coming together in a relationship.



Flower Ceremony

There are many ways this can also be adapted and made more personal to you.

The ceremony can also feature family members the couple wish to take part.

One version is to use red roses. Red roses are usually used due to their colour symbolising love. The couple each has a rose, and so does every family member they wish to take part in the ceremony. The couple swap their roses as a first gift to each other before placing them together into a vase.

Then all of the family members add their roses to the mix.

One alternative which is beautiful for smaller weddings is each guest is asked to bring a single bloom. Before the couple enter, two guests (can be the mothers) mingle with the guests and collect the flowers. These can they be made into 1 or 2 bunches that the couple, or one of them, can make their entrance carrying.



Tree Planting Ceremony

Planting a tree is a beautiful wedding idea as it can symbolise the growth of your relationship. Together you can see the tree grow just as your love and married life does, and you must nurture it in order to keep it alive.

Usually, this is done in a big pot so the tree can be moved from place to place, only to be set in the ground once the couple has settled (a perfect metaphor for grounding).



Make the ceremony even more symbolic by choosing the tree due to its meaning—look in mythology or lore or even use a cutting from a tree that's special to you. You could even plant a tree each if you want to, and twist them together as they grow.

Again, there are lots of ways to adapt this and to involve other guests.



Jumping The Broom Ceremony

Jumping the Broom is said to be rooted in African culture, yet it is also attached to African-American tradition dating back to the slave days. It is also said to have roots in the Celtic culture, including but not limited to Welsh, Celts, Druids, and Romanians.

Jumping the Broom symbolically represents sweeping away your single lives and jumping into your married future. The wooden handle represents the strength of your commitment, the straw represents family, and the ribbons hold you together.

The act itself represent love, togetherness, loyalty and respect – all key ingredients for the recipe of a successful marriage!

This is often used alongside a Handfasting /Tying The Knot ceremony – the couple will have their hands bound together before jumping over the broom, signifying leaving their single lives behind and jumping into their new married future together.

Many people create their own broom which can be kept as a special memory, but you can purchase ready-made ornate ones. You can also get some guests to hold the broom for you to jump over. It's a great wedding photo and at the end of the ceremony and the broomstick can be held at the exit point so all the guests can jump over it too!



Handfasting / Tying The Knot Ceremony

This is one of the oldest of these alternative unity ceremony ideas. Particularly known in Pagan wedding ceremonies, handfasting or tying the knot is the joining of the couple's hands and wrists using vines, cord, rope, or ribbon tied into a knot. It often takes place at the end of the wedding ceremony as a final promise from one person to the other to bind their lives together.



You can be extremely creative with this one. It could be you create your own cords, or involve guests.

Different colours and knots can have different meanings. Some types of knots include Infinity Knots, Fisherman's Knots, and Trinity Knots.

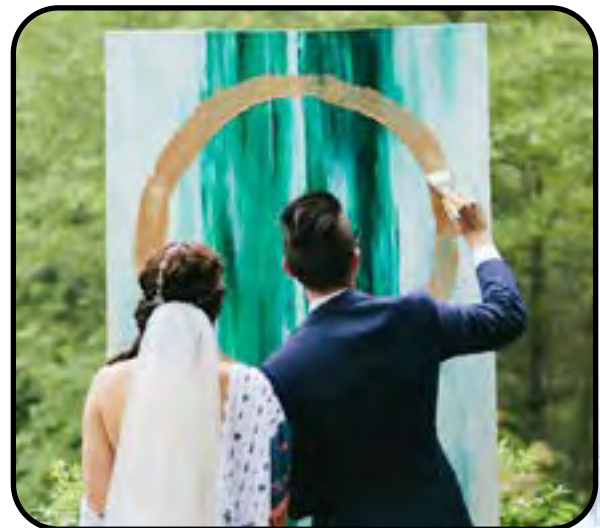


Painted Canvas Ceremony

This is perfect for the artistic couple, where guests can watch as they paint their very first piece of art together symbolising how their lives are merging into one.

To make it even more special, you can carry through the symbolism of "two becoming one" by each using a different colour of paint that, when combined, make a new colour.

By the end of your wedding ceremony you'll have a lovely keepsake that will look fantastic on your living room or bedroom wall.



Ring Warming Ceremony

Ring warming is a great way for guests to be involved in the ceremony. The best man (or woman!) steps forward with both of the wedding rings and passes them around to each guest.

Before the ceremony gets underway, the officiant explains that the rings will be passed amongst the guests. Each guest is instructed to hold the rings, warm them with their love and give the rings their blessings and then pass the ring on to the guest sitting next to them. So, the whole time the ceremony is happening, the rings are slowly making their way from guest to guest, across each row.



At the point in the wedding ceremony when it's time for the ring exchange, the officiant will ask for the rings. Whoever is the last guest to "warm the rings" will hold the rings up for either the best man or someone else in the ceremony to bring them up to the officiant.

Several alternatives of this include guests kissing the rings as they go round, or the couple kissing the ring before they place it on their partner's finger.



Tree Of Life Ceremony

This ceremony idea is a great alternative to a guest book. Place wooden hearts or tags on every guest's chair before the ceremony, and ask guests to write messages on them. Whilst the newlyweds sign the certificate, the guests can come to the front and hang their message on a tree.

The tree can also be moved to the reception so any evening guests can add messages too, and it becomes a wonderful keepsake.



Other Ideas



Ditch The Suit & Gown



The traditional look for a bride and groom (or bride and bride or groom and groom) is not how everyone imagines ‘dressed up’ should look. And besides, if the pandemic has taught us anything, it’s that comfort is key, and a wedding outfit is rarely comfy.

Therefore, if you prefer not to wear white, or even wear a bridal gown, then don’t. Ditch the traditional wedding attire, and wear something that feels like you. It can still be smart. Maybe a jumpsuit, or a wedding suit, or even separates!

Whatever it is, go with what makes *you feel you*.



Hold A ‘Backyard’ Wedding

These smaller, more intimate at-home celebrations are a great way of seriously saving money and having total control over the ceremony. There are so many ways you can create an amazing space in which to have your union celebrated.



Cocktails & Canapés



A cocktail reception with canapés is a lovely way to celebrate your nuptials. Lose the formality of the sit-down meal and give your guests the chance to mingle freely without feeling like they need to stick to their allocated seat.

Get creative – invent signature cocktails that mean something to you and your partner – and just keep the canapés circulating!



Festival Wedding

The UK boasts a wonderful array of DIY wedding venues, and these open-minded spaces are often only too happy for you to throw all your alternative wedding ideas at their blank canvas.

Many of these unconventional wedding venues are outdoors, in the countryside, and benefit from a wealth of land. Land that can be utilised for anything you like.

So, why not throw your own festival wedding!

A boho bonanza of a wedding with floral crowns, ribbon wands, food trucks, games, and of course, live music.

Depending on your location, you and your loved ones could be dancing through the night to your favourite DJ or sharing stories around the fire while toasting marshmallows.



Wedding Soundtrack Favours



Why not include in your guests 'goodie bag' a CD/USB/Playlist link to all the great tunes you played at your wedding?

The ideal way to remind loved ones of your special day, even years down the line, when they pop that soundtrack on.

You can even create personalized CD covers to make their wedding favour even more bespoke.



Create A Wedding Ceremony Arch

No modern ceremony backdrop is complete without an arch.

And these days they're not even arches! We see boxes, floral halos, ladders, old wooden palettes... you name it!

Creating a one-off arch is such a lovely way to share your creativity, as it will feature so heavily in your wedding photos.

It's also a cost-effective way to decorate your wedding reception.



Elope... With The Kids!



If you're not marrying for the first time, you may be inheriting some little ones as part of the bargain. It can sometimes be hard on kids to feel a part of a new, blended family.

Therefore, why not dedicate your ceremony, or elopement to each other, and the kids.

Give your future step-children a special part in the ceremony, and gift them the feeling of being in a dream team.

The Surprise Wedding

Just imagine your friends and families faces when they realise the engagement party they've turned up to, is actually your wedding. It would certainly be memorable.



Skip The First Dance

For some, the idea of the spotlight, the lonely dance floor and the soulful ballad is not an image that conjures joy. Fear yes, anxiety almost certainly.

If this is you, don't put yourself through the torture, and save your first dance for when there's not hundreds of eyes watching you.



Alternatively you could have a 'first group dance'.

Maybe the bridesmaids or groomsmen could have all been secretly working on a routine for this special moment!

Not So Ordinary Guest Book

Guest books are a lovely keepsake, and a sweet way for friends and family to share their thoughts on your wedding day. However, there's no reason for it to actually be a book. It could be (almost) anything. And at any nontraditional wedding these days, you'll find that couples have thought of some pretty creative ways for guests to leave a note.

Here are a few ideas:



Guest book quilt

Guests write their notes on a patch of material. Following the wedding, someone who's good with a sewing machine can then join all the patches together to create a charming quilt.

Polaroids

Each guest who wants to sign your book needs to take a picture of themselves, and then write their note either on the back, or at the bottom of the Polaroid.

The Welcome Sign

Why not combine both guest book and entrance signage, and have your loved ones write all over the welcome sign!

It will save money on stationery and create a lovely piece of decor.

DIY Centrepieces



From floating tea lights and paper lanterns, to scattered petals and succulents. There are so many fun ways to make a statement at your wedding reception.

Struggling for inspiration?

Have a look at [this site](#), and start crafting your unique wedding look!

Creative Ceremony Layout



Traditionally, during a ceremony, wedding guests sit in lines facing an altar.

Why not, seat your guests in a circle, like at the theatre. You'll be standing in the middle, with all your loved ones surrounding you. It would certainly feel more intimate.



DIY Photo Booth

Why not create your own, personalised and totally unique Photo Booth?

Not only will it be more memorable it will probably be cheaper than hiring someone to do it for you.

For some inspiration and guidance on how to make one – [visit this link](#).



Non-Traditional Flower Girl



Not all flower girls have to be under 9, and wear a pretty little dress. In fact, you could have your beloved pet performing this sacred duty.

Or grandma?

You may also have that friend who always wanted that job as a child, but never got it...

Now's your chance to fulfill their lifelong ambition.

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Say No To Wedding Cake



A large proportion of wedding cakes are simply for display. They tick a traditional wedding box, and look impressive on the desert table.

But you know what else looks impressive?

A doughnut wall. An ice cream bar.

A cupcake tower. These sugary structures will all create a stunning display, and can be creatively used to fashion a new kind of cake cutting moment.



The Night Before

Which is stronger. Your belief in superstition, or the feeling of love and comfort you have for your partner?

Why not embrace every moment of your wedding, and have fun together the night before.

Weddings should be all about creating a special day that reflects you, and makes you both feel happy. If spending the night before your big day alone, or with friends, does not bring you joy, then don't do it. If having your partner with you, before all the madness starts, is what you need, then seek their comfort.



Arrive & Leave In Style

If the thought of arriving or leaving by limo, or sleek Rolls-Royce to your wedding feels a little cliché, or not really you, why not consider an entrance and exit that's a little more memorable?



Read Your Vows In Private

If you've opted to write your own vows, you don't have to read them out loud, in public. There can be a temptation when penning your vows, to create a moment, to make your guests laugh, or cry. When really, these words are deeply personal. They're about you, and your partner. It's nobody else's big day.

Therefore, you shouldn't feel pressured to entertain. Take the performance aspect away from your vows, and instead read them to each other in private.

This way you'll appreciate the words a lot more, and free yourself from the fear of scrutiny.



Self-Service Drinks Station

For anyone who's ever attended weddings, you'll know that the busiest place in the venue is always the bar. The queue for drinks can sometimes snake around a ballroom, and really bring the mood down if not dealt with quickly. Why not eliminate the pain, and expense of a full bar, and create a self-serve drinks station!



At these stations, you could have pre-made signature cocktails, both alcoholic and non. All ready to be poured from taps, or jugs that fit your theme.

Place multiple stations around the venue, containing different drinks that are refilled periodically.



Phone Free Wedding

On your wedding day, why not (heavily) suggest that your guests take a break from their devices, and embrace the feeling of freedom?

You'll be amazed at how much more engaged your loved ones are in the events of the day, when they're not reaching for their iPhone every 2 minutes to check their emails.

Be sure to set up a safe place for guests to leave their phone during the day, possibly being charged, and certainly easy to find.



For help, support and guidance about incorporating any of these alternative ideas into your ceremony, please just get in touch.



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