

ABOUT WEDDING OFFICIANTS

Knowledge shared from the [Preferred Vendor Directory](#)

Oftentimes, brides treat the wedding officiant as an afterthought, choosing him or her only after buying the perfect wedding dress, designing a showstopper wedding cake, and finding foolproof wedding favor kits. And yet without an officiant, a legal wedding ceremony cannot take place*. That makes the wedding officiant one of the most important participants in the entire wedding!

If you're a longtime member of a house of worship, you may feel driven to ask a minister, rabbi, marriage officer, or other religious leader to officiate at your wedding ceremony. But if choosing the familiar simply because it's familiar doesn't feel right or there are roadblocks because you are half of an interfaith couple, there are thousands of wonderful interfaith ministers, spiritual non-denominational officiants, and humanist celebrants with a passion for uniting people in the bonds of love.

In other words, finding wedding officiants and marriage celebrants isn't the hard part. The task that can become dismayingly difficult – particularly if a bride and groom have waited until the last minute – is choosing an officiant who understands the breadth of a couple's commitment to one another. Your wedding will be one of the landmark days of your life... you've chosen your other wedding vendors with great care and you should devote as much, if not more time, to choosing the person who will guide you through your wedding vows.

You should also be as diligent about protecting yourself from harm when partnering with a marriage celebrant as you are when working with a caterer or reception venue. The bride and groom who will be married by the very pastor who baptized them both may forgo a contract, but those couples whose weddings will be officiated by independent celebrants should always insist upon there being one in place. In a perfect world, all people who feel called to become wedding officiants would be honest and dedicated, but this profession, like every other, attracts the bad as well as the good.

Insisting upon a contract does not guarantee a faultless wedding ceremony but will go a long way toward ensuring that you're not left standing at the altar without anyone to lead you in your vows.

If your goal is to have a truly unique and original wedding ceremony, choose a marriage celebrant that will help you write custom vows. This is by no means a service all officiants offer. Many wedding officiants have a script they work from, and some will not deviate from it.

Obtaining the marriage license prior to the wedding is the responsibility of the bride and groom, not the officiant. Don't make the mistake of applying for yours too early or too late – in most states, the license will expire after a certain number of days, and some states require that the couple wait for some period of time before actually getting married.

