

Top Ten Wedding Photographer Interview Questions

[By Robert London Photography](#)

1) Who will be photographing the wedding? This is extremely important if you decide to use a multi person studio. I would ask to meet the photographer who will be photographing your wedding. Also, get a reference not from the studio but directly from the photographer who will be working your wedding. Ask for a reference where he has been the lead photographer. Remember you can never be guaranteed that the images you are looking at in a portfolio were taken by whom the studio says. At the very least most studios will pad a photographer's portfolio in the beginning of his career. If they are not willing to entertain your inquires, I would consider using another studio or photographer.

2) How much time does the package include? Some photographers have the time inclusive as to the bride's wishes, others limit time so they can do other work that same day or to make the package more affordable. If you are not hiring your photographer for the inclusive day, ask if you decide on or close to the wedding day that you wish them to extend their time, will they be able to stay and at what cost?

3) How long will you need for the formal photos and do you have any ideas on how to make them go smoothly? You can get a feel from the photographer here on what style a shooter he or she really is. If he insists on spending one hour or more, then he is very much a traditional shooter. You can also get a feel for his experience level and how interested he is in creating pictures that are special, not just a document of who was there. I personally like formals to be organized and to go fairly quickly, about half an hour, much longer and people become bored and that begins to show in the pictures. I discuss how to accomplish this here: [How to Obtain Great Wedding Pictures](#)

4) What style album is included in the price and do I have any choices? Many photographers offer only one style of album, or once you have the pictures and they have been paid, will not spend time assisting you. Recently, there have been some great new choices in album design and layout. Gone are the days when everybody's album looked the same. However, designing and laying out the album can be a daunting task to take on by oneself. I explain all the available options in this article: [Modern Wedding Albums](#). If the photographer does not offer the album you want, you should strongly consider that in making your decision. The album is the most comprehensive tangible product you will have from your wedding.

5) If shooting digital will the photographer shoot RAW or JPEG? This will take a little explaining. When a photographer shoots raw, he will have the ability to correct or stylistically change the image with **no** loss of quality. When shooting straight to JPEG format, the photographer's options are **very** limited. Why would anyone shoot JPEG format you might ask? Because it is much easier and uses far less disk space, after a shoot a photographer just sends the images to the lab and if necessary the lab **attempts** to make any changes it can. Beware though that if the exposure or color is more than a little off what is desired then the quality suffers tremendously. After a wedding, I typically spend at least two full days looking at each image and tweaking each raw file to be exactly what I envisioned, then the computer

runs for hours processing the images to the final JPEG. Many photographers are not willing to spend this amount of time.

6) Is there a charge for the negatives or files? Also, do I receive the final JPEGS and proofs full size with no watermarks? The old school of wedding photography was to work cheap up front and then sell expensive prints and albums. Today, many photographers take a middle road and will sell you the negatives or files; others simply include them in the package. I feel that it is important for everybody to at least eventually have the negatives or files. They are part of your family history; your grandchildren will find it awesome to make a new enlargement from the original files. I heard one story of a retiring photographer who just threw out all his negatives when he closed the office. Ask how long they will store them if you cannot have them. Also, are they delivered on an archival format? You should include this cost, if any, in your comparison of photographers. I have heard many times couples who were forced to pay thousands extra to receive their full-size files.

7) Do they have any liability insurance? Many caterers or venues insist on an insurance certificate; it is almost impossible to get this insurance at the last minute. You do not want any surprises the week before the wedding.

8) If you are having your images posted on the web, will they be handing out cards and setting up a display? This is becoming more popular with photographers and more so with the expansion of social media. One of the benefits is that guests will not have to bother you for any prints they would like to order. Some photographers aggressively try to promote this so that they can sell as many enlargements as possible. They will hand out and place cards at every table explaining the process and even set up a small display. This selling can be very intrusive and not fit in well with your decorating plans. You may however love this, but beware of the implications to the flow of your wedding day. I would suggest a well-designed card on each table with your personal hashtag and perhaps a link to a site for uploading, this way everyone can share their images.

9) Inquire if they offer smaller packages, or charge lower rates during the off-season. There will always be those who are inflexible, but there are also those who are willing to work with what you have. Don't automatically rule out an artist based on what their standard fee is. For instance, Brides & Grooms who are having their wedding on a Friday or Sunday I will often give a 15% discount. Also, I do many destination weddings when it is the local off season, therefore I am more open to negotiating. I discuss other ways to save money in this article [Saving Money on Wedding Photography](#)

10) Lastly, all the final small details on the contract. How long after the wedding do I receive the images and is this guaranteed? (I would arrange a financial incentive for longer than six weeks, say 10% refund for each two-week period after six weeks) I have heard some horror stories of couples not receiving images for a year or more. Payment schedule; there is no norm here some want all the money in cash weeks before the wedding, others will do a payment plan or accept credit cards, I have my final payment due when the proofs are ready; I feel this helps the couple spread the expense out some. This can be important if the wedding budget is an issue and do not be afraid to negotiate!