



## Family portrait list preparation

### *INSTRUCTIONS*

We've built our family photo list recommendations on 12 years of experience and over 400 weddings photographed! Family portraits have the potential to be one of the more stressful parts of the day, but these guidelines for number of shots and amount of time needed will help cut down on the stress.

**You do not have to use this template as an actual worksheet to fill out.** We've provided worksheets at the end of the document, but will we ask you to either copy and paste your family list into your questionnaire, sent about two months ahead of your wedding date, or you can send as an attachment via email. Whatever is easiest for you is fine by us – we just don't want you to feel restricted by this formatting. It's just a starting point.

### *SHOT COMBINATIONS*

We use the “two-minute rule” when planning for family portraits on your wedding day: each shot or combination you want captured will take up two minutes on your timeline. So, when making your list, add up the number of shots you want and multiply that by two. That will give you the number of minutes we need to properly capture your family photos.

**Immediate family** portraits are ideal for before the ceremony begins, with a maximum of 15 combinations for pre-ceremony family portraits (*30 minutes*); our recommendations for these 15 combinations are listed on the third page of this document as a planning template for you to use.

**Extended family** groups are best for immediately after the ceremony; family members included in these photos should be instructed to stay at the ceremony site following the end of the ceremony, and not go to cocktail hour until instructed by the photographer. For these extended groups, which can include your aunts, uncles, cousins, and even grandparents if you don't want to ask them to arrive before the ceremony, we suggest no more than 5 combinations. If you have a large extended family (more than 10 people in one photo), we need twice as much time per grouping (*four minutes per shot, or up to 20 minutes total following the ceremony*).

### *TIMING*

It's important that everyone who will be included in family portraits, both before and after the ceremony, are explicitly informed they will be part of these photos and given information on **WHEN** and **WHERE** to meet. As soon as you have confirmation from your wedding planner and photography team about these details, be sure to communicate them clearly to your family members so they know to arrive on time (*or, preferably, early!*) in the appropriate location at your venue.

**If family members are late, we can't guarantee they will be in photos.** The timeline for the day is so important for maximizing enjoyment for you and your guests, and delayed family photos can derail a wedding day timeline. Emphasize this to your family members: tell them how important it is to you that they are represented in your wedding photos. Communicate arrival location and timing at least one month prior to your wedding day. Send a reminder a week or two before your wedding day; remind them again at rehearsal dinner!



### *WHY DO FAMILY PHOTOS TAKE SO LONG?*

Two minutes may seem like a lot of time per family group. We're not actively taking photos for a full two minutes, however – this “two-minute rule” is something we've put in place because **it also takes time to:**

- Gather everyone together and ensure sure no one is missing from the group;
- Put down purses, sunglasses, jackets, and other personal items;
- Ensure everyone looks their best by removing cell phones, wallets, and keys from bulging pockets;
- Arrange and pose everyone properly, adjusting suit jackets, ties, hair, the bride's dress, etc.;
- Get everyone's attention so all eyes are on the camera (*this takes longer with kids*);
- Capture several frames of each combination to make sure everyone's eyes are open;
- Transition to the next group.

### *PHOTO FATIGUE*

The reason we limit family photo time to around 30 minutes for immediate family and up to 20 minutes for extended family is because there is a VERY REAL phenomenon called “photo fatigue” that we have witnessed over and over... *and over again* for our clients who feel a little ambitious with the number of combinations they want to try to get in throughout the day. We absolutely understand these are the people you love, and we want to make every effort to capture the photos that are of highest priority. But we have to balance that with our extensive experience in knowing **you will get tired of taking formal portraits** if there are too many of them on the list. Please trust us, or at least understand that if you want more combinations after the ceremony, we will do our best with the time allocated, but you might not want to anymore by that point in the day! We can also always capture more relaxed photos of you with your extended families throughout cocktail hour and the reception.

### *ADDITIONAL TIPS*

- The time we allocate for family portraits does not include time for your wedding party (bridesmaid and groomsmen) portraits; we'll have a separate section dedicated to that, so you don't need to worry about fitting all your wedding party AND family shots into the 15-combination recommendation.
- If your siblings have partners or kids you'd like to include in the immediate family portraits, please provide their names. If you want separate immediate family shots both with and without your siblings' partners/kids, please note that, as well.
- Please let us know if there are any divorces or sensitive relationships in your family so we know who NOT to put next to each other in a photo.

### *SPECIAL NOTE*

Every family photo combination we suggest is simply our *recommendation* and offered as a starting point to work from! You can make any changes to the suggested list, we just ask that you keep the number of combinations to our suggestions (up to 15 for immediate family pre-ceremony, and up to 5 combinations for extended family post-ceremony).



## Family portrait list TEMPLATE

1. Partner 1 (bride) with parents (*together + individually*): \_\_\_\_\_  
*this is sneaky of us and technically three photos in one!* ***Parents' names***
  
2. Partner 2 (bride) with parents (*together + individually*): \_\_\_\_\_  
*this is sneaky of us and technically three photos in one!* ***Parents' names***
  
3. Couple with partner 1 (bride)'s parents
4. Couple with partner 2 (groom)'s parents
5. Couple with all parents
  
6. Partner 1 (bride) with siblings: \_\_\_\_\_  
***Siblings' names***
  
7. Partner 2 (groom) with siblings: \_\_\_\_\_  
***Siblings' names***
  
8. Partner 1 (bride) with immediate family (*parents + siblings*)
9. Partner 2 (groom) with immediate family (*parents + siblings*)
  
10. Couple with bride's immediate family: \_\_\_\_\_  
***Names of siblings' partners or nieces/nephews to include, if applicable***
  
11. Couple with bride's immediate family: \_\_\_\_\_  
***Names of siblings' partners or nieces/nephews to include, if applicable***
  
12. Couple with both immediate families
  
13. Partner 1 (bride) with grandparents: \_\_\_\_\_  
***Grandparents' names***
  
14. Partner 2 (groom) with grandparents: \_\_\_\_\_  
***Grandparents' names***
  
15. Couple with all grandparents



## Family portrait list **SUBSTITUTIONS**

*Use this as a guide for multiple sets of parents, siblings-in-law, or other immediate family iterations you'd prefer to swap from our recommended list on the previous page.*

- Partner 1 (bride) with each parent individually: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Parents' names*
- Partner 2 (groom) with each parent individually: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Parents' names*
- Couple with each set of parents (*ex: bride's mom + stepdad, or groom's dad + stepmom, etc.*)

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent combination 1*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent combination 2*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent combination 3*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent combination 4*

- Partner 1 (bride) with step-siblings: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Step-sibling names*
- Partner 2 (groom) with step-siblings: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Step-sibling names*
- Additional ALTERNATE combination:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Family member first names*

- Additional ALTERNATE combination:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Family member first names*



## Post-ceremony extended family list

*Remember that groups with more than 10 people require additional time.*

1. Couple with partner 1 (bride)'s maternal side of the family:

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*First names OR provide family last name(s), if group is too large to call individual names*

2. Couple with partner 1 (bride)'s paternal side of the family

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*First names OR provide family last name(s), if group is too large to call individual names*

3. Couple with partner 2 (groom)'s maternal side of the family

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*First names OR provide family last name(s), if group is too large to call individual names*

4. Couple with partner 2 (groom)'s paternal side of the family

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*First names OR provide family last name(s), if group is too large to call individual names*

5. Couple or individual partner with special group of relatives\*:

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*First names*

*\*By "special group of relatives," we mean if you have an aunt you're particularly close to, or a group of cousins you grew up with and want a special photo with them, etc.*

*Please feel free to reach out to us at [studio@annadelores.com](mailto:studio@annadelores.com) if you have any questions or need any assistance with preparing your family photo shot list!*