

Features

How to choose a wedding photographer



Wedding photography can seem quite overwhelming. If the idea of paying someone hundreds, or thousands of dollars to record your special day worries you, it can help to know what you are looking for in a wedding photographer.

To begin your search, it is important to know your style. Do you like traditional posed shots or are you interested in artsy photojournalistic candid? Knowing what you expect from your photographer on your wedding day can help narrow the possibilities. Some photographers offer a wide variety of shots in one package that would include some of the most popular wedding styles: portrait, photojournalism, black-and-white, fish eye, and action.

When you schedule an appointment to view a photographer's portfolio be sure to check the details. You want to hire someone who will capture the unforgettable images and not simply track you and your groom. Once you find a package that suits your budget, compare the price to other vendors to be sure you're getting the most use of your money.

If hiring a professional photographer does not fit your budget or meet your individual needs, there are other options to capturing your wedding day on film.

*Check the photography department of local colleges for students who have worked on weddings before.

*On the day of your wedding, provide your bridesmaids and groomsmen disposable cameras to snap away as they prepare for the day

*Disposable cameras are also a good idea for your reception guests to use

Whether you chose to hire a professional or work with a friend or student to document your wedding day, make sure you are happy with the decision you make. When the gifts are used and the cake is eaten, all that remain are the memories and the pictures.

Wedding bells toll for Gardner-Webb students

Margaret O'Driscoll
Pilot design editor

Hopes and expectations from the engaged

As the semester draws to an end and finals are being prepared, most students are thinking about warm beaches and summer jobs. For some however, wedding bells are ringing.

Several Gardner-Webb couples are engaged to be married this summer, and their wedding plans are keeping them busy.

One of the most common expectations shared by these couples is the reality that they will soon be living with their best friend.

Senior Amber Bingham, who is engaged to recent graduate Matthew Hudler, has been busily planning her July 13th wedding. Now, however, she is beginning to see the reality of making a marriage work.

Bingham knows that she and Hudler will not always get along but she is trusting that God knows exactly what her dreams are.

Sophomore Amanda Kersey agrees and also looks forward to being a helpmate for her future husband Kevin Houser.

"The hardest thing right now is having to say goodbye, we love being together through the serious times and the silly times," she said.

Another commonality that women share at this time is the fear of not meeting their husband's expectations for a wife.

"There's a lot to being a good wife; the cleaning and cooking is going to be hard while I'm working," said Senior Angela Toole. Toole will marry Brock Slagle on June 1.

Kersey is also skeptical of the constraints marriage tends to put on a self-sufficient person such as herself.

"I am a very independent person and it causes a problem when I have to check in and tell someone what my plans are," she said.

While the fears and expectations continue to build, these couples have been busy doing some building of their own to create their dream wedding.

Senior Leah Nelson and her fiancé, Carlton Wright, have found the workload to be tremendous this semester while planning their wedding.

"There are incredible decisions to be made concerning a wedding, and when you have projects and classes to do as well, it gets difficult," she said.

Most people forget that a man is involved until the day of the wedding when he shows up shaved and showered. Houser has been supportive of his fiancé, Amanda, planning their wedding but his suggestion for guys is to "pray hard."

"It's been a shock for me to learn in the past year all that is really expected of a man as a husband," he said. "You really have to look hard into the role the man has to play as a spiritual leader and a good father."

While these couples are all planning very different wedding ceremonies, they all agree the anticipation is worth it.

"We may get on each other's nerves and beat up on each other once in a while, but we love each other and we always work it out," said Nelson.

Advice from newlywed students

There are many aspects to

college life: homework, projects, ministries, spending time with your husband.

Yes, for some college students, part of their college experience has been shared with a spouse. Several Gardner-Webb students are completing their education as married couples.

While being married and in school may seem to be an impossible task, these couples are proving their commitment to both school and each other.

Senior Sarah (Donaldson) Thomas and GWU graduate Daniel Thomas married here on campus almost a year ago.

"Personally, I find marriage as a student much easier than dating was," said Sarah. "We make decisions jointly and we get to spend more time together now."

One of the challenges Sarah has faced has been maintaining her girlfriend relationships as a married student. "It's hard," she said, "sometimes I neglect girl-time, but they [her girl friends] do

a great job of including me."

She also admits that it is hard to maintain a marriage and still have an attitude of being in college and wanting to have fun.

A positive area that Sarah has noticed as a

married student is an increase in her grades. With less time on campus to be involved with friends and activities, it has been easier to study and concentrate on school.

Money is usually a point of conflict between newlyweds. Students who are contemplating getting married while in school should take into consideration the loans they have and when they have to start making payments.

"We gained more financial aid because we were married," said Sarah, "but insurance is expensive when you become independent."

For those couples who are planning on getting married while in school, Sarah offers this advice: "If you're set on getting married now, make your wedding a non-stress event. Make it simple or plan it for the end of the summer."

Another couple who met at Gardner-Webb and took their marital vows before graduation are seniors Mike and Brooke (Clark) Overholt.

Brooke's advice for students planning a wedding now is to make it what you want; make it yours.

"Being married is a very big deal, but the ceremony is just another day," she said.

Brooke stresses balance as an important tool in building any marriage, not only while in school.

One of the struggles Brooke faced when first married was the fact that she couldn't leave to go home to her family whenever she wanted to.

"Biblically, you have to cut the strings with your family, and that was very hard for me," she said.

Changing her name, however, was not as hard as some expect. "I'm more girly than most people think," she said, "I wrote Brooke Overholt a thousand times before I was married."

Brooke said changing her name could best be summed up with a quote from a friend: "Changing your last name is like changing your eye color for the rest of your life."

"I have very real expectations; I know it won't always be like a Cinderella dream."

Amber Bingham

"Good, bad or ugly, whatever happens you're going home at the end of that day as husband and wife."

Brooke Overholt

I just got engaged! How do I start planning my wedding?

Top 10 Steps

1. Imagine your perfect wedding
2. Put together a guest list
3. Plan your budget
4. Set your planning notebook
5. Choose your ceremony and reception sites
6. Select your wedding party
7. Shop for your dress
8. Book the basics