



This wedding kit contains several wedding ceremonies and a couple of renewal of vows ceremonies. By changing a few words here and there, you can make any of the ceremonies work for either occasion.

The ceremonies are written in a larger than normal print and are ready to be used. You just need to fill in the Bride's and Groom's names.

If there is a part of one that you like and part of another – mix them together and create your own.

A Marriage Facts & Fancies pamphlet is also enclosed. They are nice to give to the Happy Couple.

Wedding and Renewal Certificates are included, as many Notaries like to give these complimentary certificates to the Bride & Groom.

Follow the few simple rules on the Tip Sheet and enjoy.

Weddings can be fun!



Wedding Ceremonies

In the State of Maine, there are no "set" or "required" words that must be said during a marriage ceremony. All that is required is that the couple express their consent to be married and that the license is in order.

At the end of the ceremony you can say:

I pronounce you man and wife

I pronounce you husband and wife

I pronounce you married

You could even say: I pronounce you wife and husband.
Check with the couple and ask what they would like you to say.

Is it necessary for you to say: By the power vested in me, (by the State of Maine)(as a Notary Public)? No it is not required, but many notaries like to say a similar phrase. It adds a note of authority and seriousness to the occasion.

Now to the kiss - it isn't required to say, "You may kiss the bride". Some couples prefer, "You may seal your promises with a kiss". Or for a change of pace, how about, "You may kiss the groom"?

Wedding ceremonies can be long or short; they can contain only the vows or they may contain many, many parts. Notaries are frequently asked what parts a ceremony should contain and in what order they should happen.

To help both the Notary and the Happy Couple, the following list contains the most often used parts of a ceremony and the order in which they are most often used.

♥ **Processional:** The bridal party walks in, often with music.

♥ **The Opening Words:** A brief statement about the meaning of love and the value of marriage.

♥ **Readings:** A quote, a poem or a saying, something to support the idea of love and marriage.

♥ **Expression of Intent:** This is where the couple promises to everyone present their intention to create a lasting marriage.

♥ **Vows:** The couple makes promises to each other.

♥ **Exchange of Rings:** The rings, as symbols of the promises made, are exchanged.

♥ **Pronouncement of marriage:** A summation of what has just occurred.

♥ **Kiss:** This needs no explanation.

♥ **Closing Words:** Nice parting words that express a hope for the future.

♥ **Recessional:** The bride and groom, followed by the rest of the wedding party walks out, often to music.

Tip Sheet

Performing Civil Wedding Ceremonies

- 1. Do I have to?** – Yes, if you are a notary public in the State of Maine and you have been asked to perform a wedding ceremony, you have to. You can not refuse because you do not believe in civil marriages or because you simply do not want to.
- 2. Review the license** – Make sure the license is valid. Licenses are valid for 90 days from the date they are issued. Check the date to make sure it has not expired.
- 3. How many copies of the license should there be? –**
 - If the bride and groom reside in different towns, they must obtain a license from only one of the towns. They are free to marry anywhere within the state of Maine.
 - If the wedding takes place in a town other than where the license(s) was issued, the original must be returned to the clerk who issued the license.
 - If both the bride and groom are residents of another state, they will only need one license. The parties are free to marry anywhere within the state of Maine.
- 4. Who is responsible for returning the license to the town clerk?** You are! You and only you! You have 7 days in which to do it. You should deliver it in person, but if that is not convenient and you chose to mail it – send it certified mail, receipt requested. Never give the license to a member of the wedding party to deliver!
- 5. How many witnesses are required & do they have to be of legal age?** – Two witnesses are required and they do not have to be of legal age, they do however have to be old enough to understand the seriousness of the act being performed. The Notary performing the ceremony may not be one of the witnesses.
- 6. What color ink is required?** – The certificate must be completed using black ink.
- 7. Do I need to keep a record?** Performing weddings in the only notarial act that you are required by law to keep a record of.

Customs and Superstitions

There are probably more customs and superstitions concerning the marriage ceremony than any other human ritual. The sources of many of our customs are uncertain and many have taken on new significance over the centuries.

The Ring

The ring is one of the most universal symbols used in wedding ceremonies. The ring was used by the ancient Romans as an engagement token and later as part of the wedding ceremony. As an engagement token, it signifies the man's good intentions and acts as a sign that the woman is no longer available. Since a ring is a continuous circle, it signifies permanence or eternity. The monetary value of the ring has also been important in certain times.

Wedding Finger

The third finger is difficult to raise without raising one of the fingers next to it. This is said to offer protection to the ring finger. And the fact that the left hand is used less than the right provides additional protection. It used to be thought that a nerve or vein ran from the third finger of the left hand to the heart.

Something Old, Something New

An anonymous poem from Great Britain contains the line, "Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue, and lacy sixpence in your shoe." This has become a familiar wedding rhyme telling the bride what she must wear at her wedding in order to ensure good luck. The sixpence in the shoe has for the most part been disregarded and when it is remembered, a dime is frequently substituted.

The Veil

Apparently at one time the veil covered both the bride and groom; and was a substitute for the canopy, which was a cloth, held over the heads of the bride and groom during the wedding ceremony. The use of the veil has also been explained as to conceal the blushes of the bride or to protect her from evil spirits.

Elopement

Originally, a secret wedding to avoid the expense of a regular wedding. Later used by couples that did not have their parents' consent to marry.