

# Great Performances

Make your wedding video a surefire hit with these new technologies, tips and trends.

by Elena Donovan Mauer

Don't make the common mistake of overlooking videography! Capturing your event on film is more important than you may think. "Videos record fleeting events that photography cannot, like the spoken words of your vows, conversations with your bridesmaids, moments of anticipation or even your father's toast," says Tim Smith of Tim Alan Studios and weddingfilmsnyc.com in New York City.

Some couples worry that having a videographer means their wedding will turn into an elaborate production. But the huge lights of the past are no more, and today's technology also allows cameramen to be much less conspicuous. "A tiny wireless mike clips onto the groom's lapel," explains Smith. "It can even pick up whispers between the bride and groom during the ceremony. My cameras are small, and I can shoot from 50 feet across the room." Convinced? Follow these steps for perfect results.

**Get referrals.** As with other vendors, recommendations from friends, family and other wedding pros are usually your best bet. "Ask your photographer who he works well with," says Smith. Both will be chronicling your big day, and you don't want them bickering over the same camera angle. Depending on a number of factors (including where you live), you can expect to pay about \$2,000 to \$8,000 for the whole project.

**Go with your gut.** While in the end it will come down to who you like best, there are a number of factors to consider when deciding whom to go with. Once you've found a few good pros in your price range, arrange meetings so you get to know them and their work. Their samples could run the

gamut from productions that include animation or interviews with wedding VIPs to those shot

at a music-video pace or nonchronologically edited. You're also likely to see straightforward documentary styles. Whose method do you like best? "Make sure you see more than one example of a pro's portfolio, so you know there's consistency of style and quality," says Aron Eisenberg of Reel Life Pictures in Los Angeles. Also, keep in mind that this person will be there with you on a highly emotional day. Do you want him in close proximity for hours on end? Does he seem able to handle stress?

**Consider technology and equipment.** It's OK if you don't know all the fancy terms! Sit down with your pro and let him know which parts of his videos you like—or don't. Ask him what equipment he'll bring along. For example, says Eisenberg, "Some cameramen use a steadycam with a large mechanical arm that creates a smooth, movie-like result. But the equipment can be obtrusive to the bride and groom."

**Ask what's new.** What's hot in the field now? Some brides want parts of their wedding day shot in Super 8, a film that conveys a nostalgic, 1960s feeling. Others want a short version of their video that they can upload onto their wedding website or iPod. Also, some pros are beginning to shoot in widescreen HD, which costs more but may be important as high definition television becomes the norm. Discuss what is right for you and how much any extras will cost.



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Learn how to manage your videographer and all your wedding pros at [bridalguide.com/vendors](http://bridalguide.com/vendors).

**Enjoy the Day!** How can a bride and groom ensure a great video? Relax, smile and have fun. "The more a bride gazes into her new husband's eyes and looks happy, the more radiant she'll look," says Eisenberg. "And the video will be immeasurably better." ■

## This Is Your Life!

Create a video of your love story to show at your rehearsal dinner or reception with these tips from Peilin Chou and John Brancaccio of Lifefilm Productions in New York City.

- Go for quality. Commission a videographer or a company that specializes in personal documentaries, like Lifefilm.
- Unearth home movies and childhood photos of the two of you; gather shots from your courtship as well.
- Have yourselves filmed in meaningful places, doing things you love.
- Ask close family and friends to share their fond memories of the two of you by telling them to the camera.
- When your pro is putting it all together, make sure your video has a clear narrative line.
- Keep the video to less than 10 minutes for the reception, less than 20 for the rehearsal dinner.
- The best time to show your love story? Either before you're introduced to the crowd or right after dinner.
- Give copies to everyone who appears in the film, and keep your own as a family heirloom.