



# 36exp Photography Courses

How To Be  
A Successful  
Wedding  
Photographer



## About 36exp Photography Courses



36exp began in early 2011 with the aim of enabling photographers of all levels to achieve their goals. We are a group of professional, knowledgeable and enthusiastic photographers who provide photography training in London. We create and deliver photography courses and workshops for photographers so that they can improve their skills.

Find out more at [www.36exp.co.uk](http://www.36exp.co.uk)

## About the Authors



Adam Riley documents weddings throughout the UK. Winner of Professional Photography Magazine 'Reportage Wedding Photographer of the year' 2011. His unique ability to capture the emotion of the wedding day is in high demand. Adam is an award winning member of the Wedding Photojournalistic Association.



Andrew Mason is the founder of 36exp Photography and a professional portrait photographer.

## How to Be a Successful Wedding Photographer – 5 Tips

Many photographers think about becoming a wedding photographer at one point or another. For some it becomes an extremely rewarding and potentially lucrative photographic career, either full or part time.

Assuming you've taken the standard first steps on the ladder to getting paid to shoot a wedding of working as a second shooter with a more experienced photographer and photographing the wedding of a friend or family member, you will now have the basic skills, experience and images in your portfolio to pitch yourself as a wedding photographer and take on some jobs. Once you've done this you can legitimately call yourself a wedding photographer, but are you really a successful wedding photographer who is delighting clients, creating stunning images and working in lovely venues with high paying clients?

To progress from getting occasional jobs at the lower end of the market to becoming a high-end, in demand and successful wedding photographer can be a tough journey. Here are five tips from Andrew Mason of 36exp Photography and award winning wedding photographer, Adam Riley.

### 1. Allow the bride and groom to enjoy the day.

As a wedding photographer your number one job is to ensure you create memories and capture the emotion, key moments and overall feel of the day. Your rapport with the bride and groom is an essential part of this and your relationship with them should be nurtured from the very first time you meet.

The bride and groom need to be totally comfortable in your presence and confident in your abilities; both will be key factors in their decision to hire you (and recommend you to their friends).

In the run up to the wedding the happy couple should feel quietly confident that everything will run smoothly on the day, including the photography. Ensure you don't give them any reason to think otherwise.

On the wedding day the bride and groom should be happily oblivious to your presence for the majority of the time. It's their day, and they'll know you have a job to do, but don't be in their face or do anything that encroaches on their, or their guests, enjoyment of the wedding. Being inconspicuous but in the right place at the right time is a difficult balancing act that you need to get right.



## 2. Take a considered approach.

Shooting a wedding can involve working non-stop for 10 hours or more. Maintaining your creative and mental focus can be extremely tough as your mind and body tire. No matter how worn out you get, it is extremely important that you consider every shot you take and have a reason for shooting.

Remember you've been hired based on your portfolio which displayed a specific style. Resist the urge to spray and pray. Snapping away randomly will result in hundreds of average images that are of little value to you or your clients.

Constantly look for shots and uphold your principles in terms of lighting, composition and capturing the moments that matter. Do not solely use a long lens to shoot random headshots. Do get close to the action and tell a story.

## 3. Offer something unique.

Thousands of photographers would jump at the chance of being paid to shoot a wedding. What do you have that they don't? You need to give a bride and groom solid reasons to choose you.

The best place to start is your portfolio. It needs to be as strong as you can make it, and consistent so that potential clients can easily understand what they will get from you. If you're displaying work that is only slightly better than uncle Bob with his new camera, success will not be yours. If your website is confusing and difficult to navigate customers will go to the well built websites of your competitors.

Think hard about what it is you offer and why it is unique. Understand that you can't please everyone, but you can delight a few. Don't overstate your ability though, ensure that your portfolio is honest and reflects what you really do.





#### 4. Progress as quickly as possible.

If you want to shoot high-end clients, you'll need to display a portfolio of stunning images taken at amazing venues. It's a chicken and egg situation. You want to build a portfolio that shows images of top venues and beautiful brides, but you can't win these clients until you have similar images in your portfolio. Luck, hard work, and perseverance are the ways forward here.

Jump at any chance to second shoot at attractive venues and seek out friends and family who may be getting married there. Be very selective about the images you choose for your portfolio.

Avoid the temptation to offer cheap pricing. It will not attract high-end clients. It will attract bargain hunters who don't value your time and skill and you'll shoot weddings that won't give the right impression in your portfolio.

#### 5. Don't take any risks in the run up to the wedding.

If you're booked to shoot the most important day of someone's life you have to show up no matter what.

In the run up to the wedding avoid any situation that risks your appearance at the event. Don't eat anything even slightly dodgy; don't plan a night out the evening before, play in a rugby match or take a snowboarding holiday. Your reputation and the bride and groom's day will both be spoilt by your absence.

Check your route to the venue, factor in a traffic jam and a flat tyre, and get there early.





What next?

If you found this ebook useful and would like the chance to learn more from Adam, and to shoot a bride and groom in church with him, check out the 36exp Wedding Photography Course:

[www.36exp.co.uk/wedding-photography-course/](http://www.36exp.co.uk/wedding-photography-course/)

Thanks for reading.

36exp Photography