



CIVIL CELEBRANT

MARRIAGE INFORMATION

Hi, my name is Megan Summers and it is with great honour that I offer you my services.

Firstly I would like to whole-heartedly acknowledge this decision you have made. A decision to honour your love with Marriage. To take this step is to make a mutual commitment to one another. This ceremony not only honours your love but also your deep friendship and your loyalty to one another.

When you marry you take a legal vow, in Australia marriage is defined as a union between two people, entered into voluntarily, to the exclusion of all others, for life. It is important that you know that this ceremony is legally binding, it is an official ceremony recognised by the Australian Government. It is also a pure and personal ceremony that gives you the space to pronounce your love, your devotion and your commitment to one another.

When you are planning your ceremony you will need to consider how you would like the ceremony to proceed. Ceremonies often include poetry, literature, music and ritual. These are an expression of your love for one another. The ceremony can be as detailed or simple as you would like to make it.

To help you begin to plan your wedding ceremony I have included some information on the following pages. You will find a brief description of the ceremony structure, all of which is optional except the Monitum and legal vows, some sample scripting to give you some ideas on possible wording, and five poems, three songs and two rituals as examples for you to consider, you may wish to include some of these, none of these, or include your own.

You will also find some information about marriage education services and my obligations to you as a celebrant. If you have any questions or are unsure about anything please don't hesitate to contact me.

I am here to help in any way that I can to make this occasion perfect.

Xx Megan

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CEREMONY STRUCTURE

HOUSE KEEPING

The beginning of the ceremony will be announced. This is also the time to let everyone know if you have any requests: e.g. mobile phones off; photos to be taken/not taken during the ceremony or photos to or not to be posted on social media.

PROCESSIONAL

One party is present at the beginning of the ceremony, ceremony, music is played and the other party enters. Traditionally the groom is present at the beginning of the ceremony, the bridesmaids enter followed then by the bride and the person giving her away. Not all brides are given away and it is not necessary to include a bridal party. I give example bellow of alternatives to this bellow.

WELCOMING

On your behalf all guests will be welcomed and thanks given to any special guest. I will then introduce myself as your celebrant.

Here are a couple of examples of possible scenarios:

Where some family members have travelled from overseas to attend:

Welcome Everyone, and a special welcome to (Name) or (Family Name) who have travelled all the way from (City or Town) in (Country) for this special occasion. It is so lovely to have you here today. It means so much to...

The ceremony is a small gathering of less than 20 guests:

Welcome family and friends this intimate and special occasion. (Name & Name) are so happy to have you here today.

GIVING AWAY

This can be done in a number of ways:

- ~ giving away of one or both parties by one or both parents, another family member or friend.
- ~ giving away of both parties to each other.
- ~ giving away of both parties by their community.

For example, when the neither party wishes to be given away, but would like their marriage blessed the following words can be considered:



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The love and devotion of (Name) will always be close by, even when their (daughter/ son/friend etc) enters into the next phase of their life. In knowing how much you both mean to (Name), would you honour this union of (Name) and (Name) by giving your blessings. We do.

Or where the couple have asked for a community vow of support instead of a giving away.

(Name) & (Name) are overwhelmed by the support and love from their family and friends. To show their appreciation to everyone here today, they would like to include you in their ceremony. They ask that together you will give your blessings, repeat after me, 'I do'.

INTRODUCTION

Here I speak about your commitment to each other. I will learn more about you and your past, present and future aspirations from the time we spend together preparing for your ceremony.

WORDS ABOUT MARRIAGE

Here are a couple of examples of different scenarios:

1. For a newly wedding couple:

In marriage we vow to love one another for life and in all that life presents. Let the good times blossom and make a shield to protect your love in hard times. It is your deep friendship and trust that has kindled your love for one another. This is your bond, your true commitment, it is the anchor that will always hold your hearts as one .

2. For a couple who have been together for a length of time:

Time is the teller of truth, time brings forth the hearts deepest desires, and it is time that tells a story of love. When after many years together the choice is made to marry, we can be assured that many obstacles have been overcome, that love has been tried and tested and that at the core of this relationship a deep friendship has been forged.

3. Where the couple wish to acknowledge the joining of two cultures:

It is a very special time when two people from two very different places in the world, with many different customs and values come together for the highest value of all, love. Challenges will come, differences shall be met. Meet these with the highest respect for one another. Your differences are your strength. Together your hearts blaze a million stars bright. Always promise to see this light and travel this path of love and friendship.

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4. The couple are both marrying for the second time and both have children from their previous marriage:

On this occasion we are here to witness not only the coming together of two people, but two families. This brings together a rich tapestry of personalities, of desires and of goals for the future. In all the beauty and challenges that this union brings, may this union bring you much joy and happiness. May your love for one another be the hearth that bestows heartfelt communication and peace. May it be the light that for fills this life you have chosen to spend together.

READINGS

Poems and literature can be read to add depth to your ceremony. You may like to ask a close friend or relative to read. I have added a few examples for you to consider on page 7.

LEGAL COMPONENT

STANDARD MONITUM

"I am duly authorised by law to solemnise marriages according to law. Before you are joined in marriage in my presence and in the presence of these witnesses. I am to remind you of the solemn and binding nature of the relationship into which you are now about to enter. Marriage according to law in Australia is the union of two people to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life."

Legally Acceptable Changes to the Monitum

Duly authorised by law may be changed to legally registered or the registered marriage celebrant authorised; solemn to serious or formal; binding to permanent; nature to promise; about to enter to formalising, sending or binding.

THE ASKING

MANDATORY VOWS

"I call upon the persons here and present to witness that I, (Name) take thee (Name) to be my lawful wedded wife (or husband, or spouse)."

LEGALLY ACCEPTABLE CHANGES TO THE MANDATORY VOWS

Call upon may be changed to ask; persons to people; thee to you; wife/husband to spouse.



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An unofficial Asking may be added:

-simply:

Do you promise (Name) to love and to cherish, to respect and to honour, to nourish and protect, upon this day and all days to come. 'I do'.

-or with a blend of solemnity and humour:

(Name), do you take (Name) to be your Husband/Wife/Spouse? Will you honour and love him/her throughout the fullness of life. Will you care for and protect them even when they can't find what they've lost for the third time that day? Do you promise to love them as they are and in time, for who they will become, as they compete to overtake you in their mobility scooter?

PERSONALISED VOWS

In additional to the mandatory vows you may write your own.

Here is an example of personal vows, they can be added to the legal vows or be spoken separately. If you would like more examples for inspiration, please ask.

I take you to be my partner in life
I promise in all else to live in truth with you
And communicate fully and fearlessly
I give you my hand and my heart
As a sanctuary of warmth and peace
As I join my life to yours

RING EXCHANGE

Traditionally only the bride was given a ring, these days however, couples often give each other a ring. This can also be a part of the vows or spoken separately, here are a couple of examples.

Where both parties will wear a ring and say to each other:

I give you this ring as a symbol of my love for you
A love that is beyond time or place
A love unbound, eternal and transcending all
From today and from this day forth look only to my love
as I place this ring on your finger know you are always in my heart.
Or more simply:



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With this ring I marry you. You are forever in my heart. Wear it and know my love for you always.

Only one party will be receiving a ring so they will 'accept' the ring placed on their finger:

With this ring, you are made holy to me, for I love you as my soul. In accepting this ring, you honour me, and our souls become one.

RITUAL

You may be happy with a traditional ceremony or a ritual could be included here. Rituals can add depth and meaning to your ceremony. Example rituals are: Lighting a Unity Candle; Coloured Sand Ceremony; Sharing of Wine; and a Hand Fastening, just to name a few. You can find more information about these fun and meaningful additions to a ceremony online.

THE PRONOUNCING

The moment you have been waiting for... the announcement that you are now 'Married' and an invitation to seal the ceremony with a kiss.

SIGNING THE REGISTER

The married couple and two witnesses sign the register. Witnesses must be over the age of 18 years.

CONGRATULATION

The ceremony can conclude with a reading, song or a few words of reflection. Words of gratitude for attendance can also be spoken here. At this point you may also wish to direct guests.

PRESENTATION

To family and friends I will introduce you in an agreed way, for example, "I now present the married couple"



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MUSIC, POETRY & LITERATURE

These can add a very personal touch to your ceremony, I have included a few poems for you to consider how poetry could enhance your ceremony.

EVERY DAY YOU PLAY

~PABLO NERUDA~

Every day you play with the light of the universe. Subtle visitor, you arrive in the flower and the water. You are more than this white head that I hold tightly as a cluster of fruit, every day, between my hands.

You are like nobody since I love you. Let me spread you out among yellow garlands. Who writes your name in letters of smoke among the stars of the south? Oh let me remember you as you were before you existed.

Suddenly the wind howls and bangs at my shut window. The sky is a net crammed with shadowy fish. Here all the winds let go sooner or later, all of them. The rain takes off her clothes.

The birds go by, fleeing. The wind. The wind. I can contend only against the power of men. The storm whirls dark leaves and turns loose all the boats that were moored last night to the sky.

You are here. Oh, you do not run away. You will answer me to the last cry. Cling to me as though you were frightened. Even so, at one time a strange shadow ran through your eyes.

THE DAY SKY

~HAFIZ~

Let us be like
Two falling stars in the day sky.
Let no one know of our sublime beauty
As we hold hands with God
And burn
Into a sacred existence that defies -
That surpasses
Every description of ecstasy
And love.

A QUOTE

~HAFIZ~

After a million years of shining,
the sun doesn't say to the earth -
'you owe me'.
Imagine a love like this.



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SOMEWHERE I HAVE NEVER TRAVELLED GLADLY BEYOND

~ E.E. CUMMINGS ~

I have never travelled, gladly beyond any experience, your eyes have their silence: in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me or which I cannot touch because they are too near

your slightest look easily will unclothe me though I have closed myself as fingers you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens (touching skilfully, mysteriously) her first rose

or if your wish be to close me, I and my life will shut very beautifully, suddenly, as when the heart of this flower imagines the snow carefully everywhere descending;

nothing which we are to perceive in this world equals the power of your intense fragility: whose texture compels me with the colour of its countries rendering death and forever with each breathing

(i do not know what it is about you that closes and opens; only something in me understands the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses) nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands

IT'S ALL I HAVE TO BRING TODAY

~EMILY DICKINSON~

It's all I have to bring today -
This, and my heart beside -
This, and my heart, and all the fields -
And all the meadows wide -
Be sure you count - should I forget
Some one the sun could tell -
This, and my heart, and all the Bees
Which in the Clover dwell.

WE
~NAYYIRAH WAHEED~

we
return to each other in waves.
this is how water
loves.



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RELATIONSHIP COUNSELLING

While it is not a legal requirement that you get counselling and even though you are very much in love, it can be helpful to get some tips for maintaining this close intimate bond by relationship counsellors. Marriages are shown to be more fulfilling for both parties when the intricacies of a sustaining loving relationship are understood. There are a few different options out there including courses, couple sessions and online activities. You can find many businesses offering this service online.

Here are a few:

RELATIONSHIPS AUSTRALIA

www.relationships.org.au

A leading provider of relationship support, their services aim to enhance relationships. You can find a 'Prepare and Enrich' questionnaire online. From this initial questionnaire a personal program is created. The program is divided into an initial one hour session followed up with a minimum of two hours to a maximum of 4 hours feedback sessions. The program is by appointment only.

THE HART CENTRE

www.thehartcentre.com.au

An Australian company delivering a comprehensive range of quality relationship and marriage counselling and advice services. The full course includes a questionnaire and two fifty minute sessions. Alternatively you may complete the online questionnaire only.

ANGLICARE WA

www.anglicarewa.org.au

A not for profit organisation that offer a 'Prepare for Marriage Course' as a part of their service. This includes an introductory session, a questionnaire and two follow up sessions.



CIVIL CELEBRANT COMPLAINTS

COMPLAINT AGAINST A MARRIAGE CELEBRANT

Whilst it my intention to whole heartedly serve you as your celebrant on your wedding day; by law I must let you know that you can make a complaint against me.

A party to a marriage, a member of the public, registries of births, deaths and marriages and government departments can all make a complaint. Resolving a formal complaint can be a long and detailed process. You should consider:

- Whether you can settle the matter directly with your me.
- Whether there are other ways to deal with your complaint like those suggested on the Australian Consumer Law webpage.
- That your complaint needs to be made within a three month period, although you can write to marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au to request more time.
- Listed bellow and on the next page are three steps you need to follow when making a complaint.

1. Your complaint must be in writing.

Email: marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au or write to:
Registrar of Marriage Celebrants Attorney-General's Department
3-5 National Circuit BARTON ACT 2600

2. Your complaint must include:

Your full name and contact details; the name of the celebrant involved; full details of the complaint including the date and place of marriage; the date the complaint is made; whether the complaint is also part of things like a report to the police or legal action.

3. You must agree to the celebrant receiving your complaint.

The Attorney General needs your written agreement before they can work on your complaint. The celebrant will be given all the documents you provide in support of your complaint.

For more Information please visit:

<https://www.ag.gov.au/families-and-marriage/marriage/complain-about-marriage-celebrant>

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FINAL NOTE

It is of the utmost importance that you keep me up to date with the format you wish to have in place at your ceremony. It is essential that you communicate any changes you would like to make to the ceremony.

I will do everything in my power to make this day the most perfect day.

Please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for considering me as your Celebrant.

MEGAN SUMMERS