

# What Goes Into a Wedding Photographer's Pricing

Being a good photographer is an expensive investment. Sure, you can find cheap wedding photographers out there, but they're probably cheap because they are new and inexperienced or they've possibly cut corners on equipment etc. So let's take a look at what goes into a photographer's overhead that adds up to the final cost of your wedding photographer.

**1. Labor costs.** A photographer's work doesn't end when your wedding does. This is the component of the process that is probably the most misunderstood by the average person, as it is the one that they have little-to-no exposure to, generally speaking. After the hours they've put in working (on a weekend, no less) at your nuptials, the photographer's work has just begun. On average, your photographer will spend anywhere from two to four hours on the back end – selecting, processing, enhancing and tweaking your images – for every hour that they are in front of you. This includes, aspect ratios, color-correction, sharpening, saturation, contrast, noise-reduction, dodging & burning, B&W and Sepia conversions and *much* more. That means that an average 8 hour wedding will require, at a minimum, a total of 24 to 40 hours of work on the part of the photographer. A “one day” wedding has suddenly turned into almost a full week of work. Their time is even more valuable when you factor in the limited number of weekends in a year there are for a photographer to work.

**2. Staff salaries.** Photographer's often use/need assistants and/or second photographers. Your photographer is going to have the pay those assistants and that adds to their overhead.

**3. Equipment.** The pieces of equipment a photographer carries around are not your typical point-and-shoot. Most photographers will need at a minimum of two professional quality camera bodies (one for primary shooting and one for backup) which can cost anywhere from \$1,500 to \$6,000 or more. Add to that an array of lenses which cost over \$1,000 each on average. Not to mention any lighting equipment etc. This equipment (combined with your photographer's skill and knowledge) enables your photographer to produce professional images in the variety of venues a wedding will call for, rather than dull, flat images of the typical point and shoot under these circumstances. The average photographer can spend around \$14,200 for their wedding photography equipment. Add to that a robust computer and monitor plus required software, etc. and the costs can be more than \$20,000 just in basic equipment to be able to make, edit and process photos. And like most technology, much of their equipment will be obsolete in 3-5 years due to advances in capabilities and industry trends.

**4. Website.** In this day and age, a photographer has to market himself with a very high-tech, professional website, which can cost a lot to design and maintain if the photographer doesn't have web design skills. It's not unreasonable to spend over \$8,000 a year on website updates, and online marketing such as the sponsored links on Google.

**5. Advertising.** In that same vein, photographers also have to spend money on other types of advertising such as ads in the newspaper, business cards, brochures and bridal shows etc.

**6. Photo extras.** If you knew how much albums actually cost your photographer you'd understand why they are priced the way they are. Don't forget the time it takes to design them as well. An average sized album will take several hours to design.

So that's kind of a basic run through of what goes into a Wedding Photographer's pricing. When you're choosing your photographer just remember that long after the cake has been eaten and the flowers have wilted you will have your wedding photos. So when you find a photographer you love, go for it!



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