

STARTUP : WEDDINGS



PREPARING FOR THE WEDDING DAY

A LETTER FROM SUSAN

Welcome to month two of Startup : Weddings! Month one began the process of understanding the basics with your camera and flash. Month two will start laying out the groundwork you need to begin preparing for your very first wedding.

Some of this might be confusing. That's okay! We still have ten more months together, and I promise it will all come together. Wedding photography is an incredible job, but a lot goes into creating that career - as I'm sure you're seeing!

I am so happy you're on this journey!
It's going to be great!





STARTUP : WEDDINGS

BY THE MONTH:

1. Photo 101, camera, lens, and flash basics
2. The wedding day : how to prepare
3. The wedding day : details and getting ready
4. The wedding day : ceremonies
5. The wedding day : family formals and bridal party
6. The wedding day : portraits of the couple
7. The wedding day : the reception
8. Post-wedding workflow
9. Marketing : Website and online presence
10. Marketing : Social media
11. Sales : Creating a price list
12. Sales : Booking the client

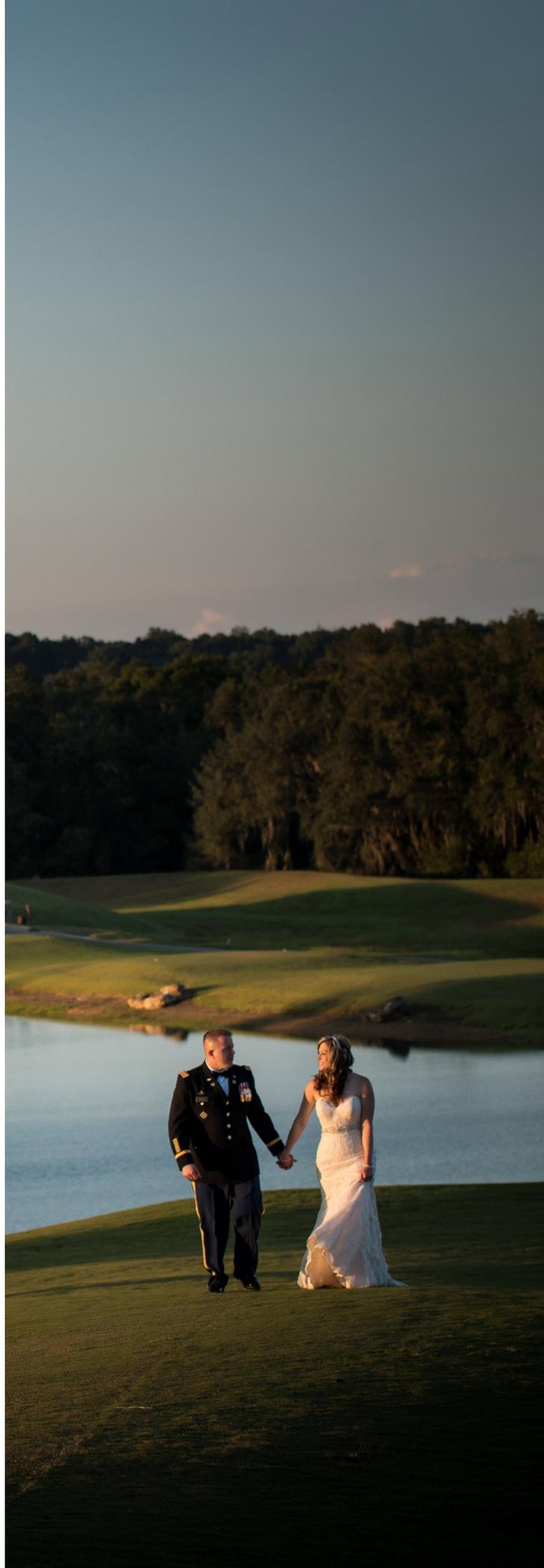




MONTH TWO : PREPARING FOR THE WEDDING DAY

ONE YEAR BEFORE

- Begin by assisting a wedding photographer...Really assist, don't just look to get ahead!
- Reach out to wedding photographers who might be hiring, ask on Facebook
- Second shoot for another wedding photographer...Really shoot, don't just look to get ahead!
- Practice shooting every chance you get! Birthday parties, reunions, family occasions
- Look at light, learn to see the world
- Join The Wedding School, start learning!





**THIS MIGHT SEEM LIKE A LOT OF
PLANNING, BUT IT WILL ALL BE
WORTH IT WHEN YOU SEE HOW
PREPARED YOU'LL BE!**

- SUSAN STRIPLING

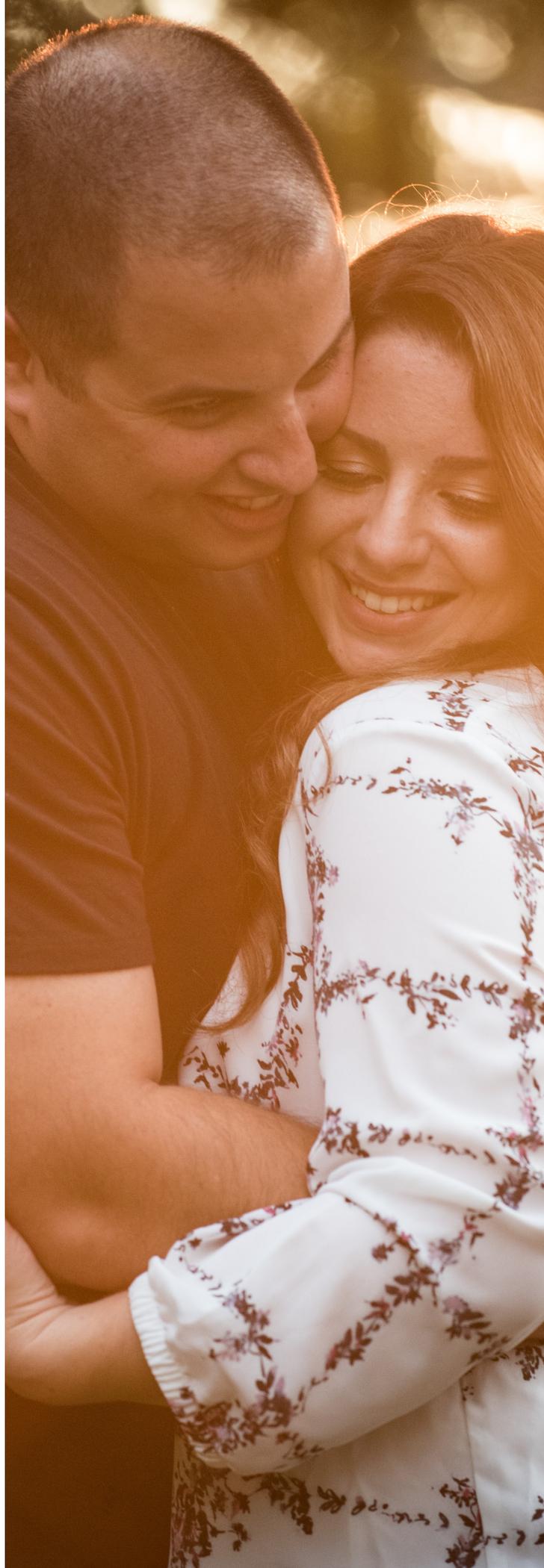
NINE MONTHS BEFORE

- Do you want an assistant?
- Do you want a second photographer?
- I recommend yes on the assistant, maybe no on the second photographer - that's a lot to handle for your first wedding!
- Place an ad or ask around to find your assistant - take it slow!
- Consider bringing a friend to your first wedding instead of an employee
- Start talking to your assistant about what you expect he/she to do for you
- Contract the assistant for the wedding date!



SIX MONTHS BEFORE

- Read your camera manual. Read it again!
- Practice consistent, natural exposures in manual mode
- Download, back up, and get comfortable
- Learn basic exposure and color correction in Lightroom
- Create a back up method for final files
- Set up an online gallery of some kind
- Keep it simple and don't overthink it!



THREE MONTHS BEFORE

- Practice consistent exposures in multiple lighting scenarios : outside in bright light, inside in dim light, by a window, in the shade
- Don't try to create, try to adapt to what is there in front of you
- Put that flash on your camera and practice with it.
- Practice with your flash on TTL or Auto, and your camera on manual.
- See what slow shutter speeds do to flash. See what fast shutter speeds do
- Check in with your assistant
- Practice on everything you can get your hands on
- Read books about photography
- Watch online tutorials
- Practice, practice, practice!



TWO MONTHS BEFORE

- Start to practice with composition. Make sure you're filling the frame with your story, but not too tightly
- Photograph people. Wait for the decisive moment. Learn not to "spray and pray"
- Experiment with aperture priority in natural light. Which feels better? AP or Manual?
- Experiment with your flash. Angle the flash head in different directions. What happens?



SIX WEEKS BEFORE

- Talk to your clients about the timeline of the day. Make sure you have more time than you need for all aspects. Family portraits? Time with the bride and groom together? Getting ready?
- Go to the venue and look around. Go at the time these events will take place. Look at the light. Make a game plan. Keep it simple.
- Make a plan to rent a backup camera body if you don't already have one



**THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU
CAN DO DURING THIS TIME IS
PRACTICE - PRACTICE ON YOUR
FRIENDS, YOUR FAMILY, EVERYONE
AND EVERYTHING!**

- SUSAN STRIPLING



ONE MONTH BEFORE

- Make sure you have enough batteries
- Make sure you have enough memory cards
- Make sure you have space on your computer
- Go over the timeline again with the clients
- Introduce yourself to the other vendors
- Make sure all of your gear is in good working order
- Shoot for fun, as much as you can



TWO WEEKS BEFORE

- Don't think about it
- Take a break. Watch movies. Read books. Go take a walk and look at light
- Read through your manuals again
- Make sure you have backups for everything
- Confirm timing with your assistant
- Relax and enjoy, because shooting your first wedding should not be something you dread!



ONE WEEK BEFORE

- If you've rented backup gear, get it at this point and test it out
- Check all of your gear and make sure it's ready to go, working fully, and in top shape
- Check with the couple to make sure nothing has changed with their timeline
- Start looking at the weather for the day of the event
- Confirm with your assistant one more time!



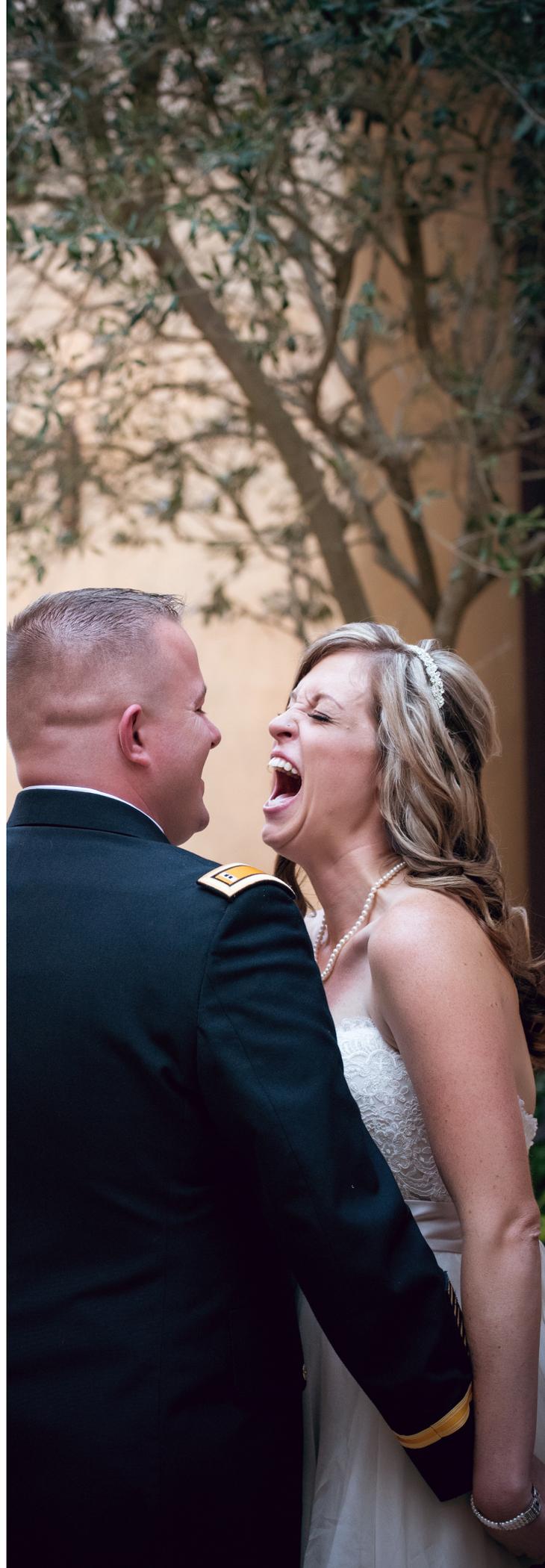
TWO DAYS BEFORE

- Charge all of your batteries
- Check and double-check to make sure everything is packed and ready to go
- Put gas in your car, buy some granola bars, print out maps and timelines, figure out parking
- Program your GPS and make sure you have accurate travel time to get to ALL locations : prep, ceremony, portraits, reception
- Make sure you have memory cards ready to go



THE NIGHT BEFORE

- Double check everything one more time
- Drink a lot of water, eat well, go to sleep
- Seriously, go to sleep
- Stop stressing
- DO NOT TRY TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW
- Don't research, read, or second guess yourself
- Plan to leave early, just in case.
- Now go to bed!



**THIS CAN BE OVERWHELMING -
BUT THIS IS JUST MONTH ONE!
STAY TUNED FOR MUCH, MUCH
MORE!**

- SUSAN STRIPLING

