

Walking into church with Dad or another special person remains a traditional start to a wedding service for many, although the way it happens can vary.

The bride and her father walk down the aisle

Under normal circumstances, the bride can enter church in the way she feels most comfortable and relaxed and there are no legal requirements. She could walk down the aisle with one or two people – they could be her father or someone else like her brother or her son, another relative or a friend, or she can enter by herself. The person or persons who accompany her to the front would then move to their seats when the groom steps out and stands next to the bride.

Involving parents

Just before the couple exchange vows, the contemporary wedding service includes some optional words that allow both sets of parents to affirm that they are happy that the two getting married are making a good decision:

“Do you the parents of and n entrust them to one another as they come to be married?”

This form of wording allows parents to take part whatever the current complexities of relationships might be and also reflects the realities of a relationship built on equality, trust and choice. Parents stand wherever they are to say these words – which will work well under the current guidelines.

Traditional option of “giving away”

Centuries ago, daughters were thought of as their father’s property and giving her away at her marriage ceremony was a moment when ownership of her was transferred to the groom. The father would walk into church with his daughter and give her away at the altar.

Nowadays, the words used at the point of “giving away” are simply a tradition and this part of the service is entirely optional, but some brides like to hear the original words used at this point, which are:

“Who brings this woman to be married to this man?”

Under normal circumstances, the bride’s father (or mother, or another member of the family or a friend representing the family), would then give the bride’s right hand to the vicar who puts it into the bridegroom’s right hand.

Also in this section

A traditional hymn board inside a church

Hymns

A close up of the Bible open at 1 Corinthians 13 with a wedding ring on the text

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Bible readings

Cross painted on cloth in an abstract style

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Choices for your wedding ceremony



Countdown to your church wedding

Wedding decorations: a bow tied to a pew end

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Ceremony planner

A couple and the vicar at a wedding rehearsal

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The rehearsal

A wedding photographer setting up a group shot

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Professional photography

A couple in church listening to the vicar

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Reading of banns

An open book on a table

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Additional readings

A bride and groom with singers behind them

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Other music

Inside a church. A cross, a candle and some white flowers.

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Prayers

A bride and groom join hands in front of the vicar

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Weddings ceremony words

A couple standing at the front of church with guests watching on

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Wedding blessings

A couple making their wedding vows

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Wedding vows

A videographer filming a wedding in church

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Filming

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