



# ENHANCE YOUR WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY WITH BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

Quick Guide  
Written by Angela Fulks



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Photograph by Angela Fulks

*A stolen moment between a new bride and groom. The black and white edit of this photo works to enhance the feeling of intimacy between the two of them.*

I began photographing weddings like many other photographers do - by photographing as a second shooter for a local friend that runs a successful wedding photography business. He asked if I would be interested in helping him out when his workload became too much. I happily agreed. I realized quickly after our third wedding together that the images I had been producing weren't fulfilling to me personally. Although I was getting good at mimicking his style, I wasn't excited by the images I was producing for him and his clients. I was extremely thankful for his guidance but very aware that our photographic styles were vastly different.

I began exploring ways to set my wedding photography apart from other area photographers. I wanted to produce images that would not only suit my style as a photographer but also deliver images to my clients that rose beyond the predictable and traditional wedding shots. Using black and white photography to enhance the emotional, quirky, and behind-the-scenes moments of every wedding I photograph has become my calling card for clients who seek out my services.



Photograph by Angela Fulks

*Even in an image as busy as this one, converting to black and white helped keep the focus on the humor of this photograph and the guests' reaction to this moment. The eyes can travel easily through this scene without getting pulled back to one element over another.*


Black and white wedding photos can be beautiful and can produce a certain elegance that are all their own, but they can showcase other elements of weddings as well. Let's explore some other (surprisingly practical) benefits to black and white wedding photography and how to utilize black and white photography to your advantage as a wedding photographer.

- Black and white photography allows you to minimize glaring distractions from images.
- Black and white photography showcases the integrity of emotion and connection captured in our images.
- Black and white photography can give formal wedding portraits a polished and timeless look.
- Black and white photography lets you experiment and have fun with your settings and shooting style to create unique wedding photos for your clients.
- How to make the most of your black and white images in post-processing.

## MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS IN IMAGES

Black and white photography is an effective way to minimize glaring distractions in our images. Wedding photographers have very little control over many aspects of the wedding day, and because of this we often end up with images that include a colorful rainbow of guests' clothing, lighting that is unpredictable and ever-changing, and the messy collection of the wedding party's belongings as they are getting ready before the ceremony.

These can all be huge distractions in our images, drawing our attention away from the moment we are capturing. Eliminating the color in these photos puts our focus back where it belongs: on the bride or groom and their important moments.

 **Key Lesson:** Unavoidable distractions will find their way into our wedding images. Use black and white editing as a way to minimize these distractions and keep your images strong.

 **Recommended Reading:** If you'd like to learn how to create amazing black and white images, grab a copy of Photzy's best-selling premium guide: [Better Black and White](#).





Photograph by Angela Fulks

*A tearful, sweet embrace between a bride and her new stepdaughter after the ceremony. This black and white photo edit enhances the contrast of the white dresses between the dark suits that framed this touching moment.*




Photograph by Angela Fulks

*This debonair groom spent a little too much time in the sun before his wedding. Converting this portrait to black and white helped minimize his uneven skin tone.*

## SHOWCASE EMOTION

By and large, weddings are a culmination of countless hours of care, time, and preparation that go into planning an unforgettable day. With these preparations come frustrations, joy, and often exhaustion. It's no wonder that the wedding day itself can be an emotional rollercoaster for all involved. Being aware of this is essential when seeking out the genuine and sentimental connections of the day.

Don't be shy when it comes to photographing every emotion that can accompany a wedding - the joy, the stress, and even the intimate moments. Presenting these moments to your clients is exactly what will help your clients remember what their wedding day felt like in years to come. I choose to sprinkle in black and white images thoughtfully and strategically throughout a colorful wedding gallery to maximize the impact of particularly emotional, funny, or poignant moments on the wedding day.

 **Key Lesson:** Black and white photography can punctuate emotional moments, but you can't be too shy or timid about getting in there and capturing the emotion.





Photographed by Angela Fulks


*One of my favorite images from a very exuberant reception crowd. After watching him rule the dance floor for about 20 minutes, I knew I had to get in there fast to capture his amazing energy. I love the film noir feeling the black and white edit gave this image.*

## GIVE PORTRAITS A POLISHED LOOK

Wedding portraits can take on a timeless feel when either shot in black and white or converted into black and white in post-processing. Wedding trends, photography trends, and editing trends change, but a great black and white photo will stand the test of time. Black and white images still feel relevant and timeless for years to come.

Portraits with strong compositional elements can be striking in black and white and emphasize the contrast between the black and white colors of traditional wedding attire.

Perhaps the most compelling reason to include black and white images in the mix of wedding portraits is simply because black and white can be flattering to a wide variety of skin tones and textures, help camouflage skin blemishes, and minimize the physical effects of an emotional day.

 **Key Lesson:** Black and white photography has a wide variety of benefits, from hiding blemishes in portraits to emphasizing compositional elements of your images.



## TAKE ADVANTAGE OF UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES TO PRODUCE UNIQUE IMAGES

Let's face it: weddings happen fast! From the ceremony to the portrait sessions to the reception, photographers must remain on their toes and ready to shoot! We do not always have the time to capture the day in a thoughtful and methodical manner. Black and white is extremely forgiving for photos that are emotionally dynamic but may not be technically perfect. Missed focus, motion blur, or a poorly composed image can happen to the most seasoned wedding photographer. Use the energy and action of a reception to experiment with different shutter speeds or unique angles to see how they turn out in black and white. You may just end up with a unique image to present to your clients from their special day.

I believe it's more important to capture a memorable moment than a technically perfect photograph. Don't be too quick to toss out those shots you may not like immediately from the back of the camera. Spend some time during the editing process and really examine what shots could be keepers with some deliberate black and white editing.



**Key Lesson:** Use black and white photography to turn near misses into unique or creative shots for your clients.



Photograph by Angela Fulks

*A “cheeky” behind the scenes moment following the traditional wedding portrait session.*





Photograph by Angela Fulks

*A playful moment between the bride and bridesmaids as they help with the finishing touches before she walked down the aisle.*


## POST-PROCESSING FOR BLACK AND WHITE IMAGES


Many, if not most, cameras come with a built-in black and white setting that will capture your image in black and white straight from the camera. While this an option to think about if you are just starting out in black and white photography, I do not recommend it for weddings. Not all images look great as black and white photos and the built-in function for black and white images within the camera is not designed to enhance the nuances of a good black and white photo. Taking the time to switch between settings on your camera may mean that you miss out on valuable and irreplaceable moments. Converting your images from color to black and white using your favorite post-processing software will not only give you more options to fine-tune your images exactly how you want them, but will also allow you to save both the color and black and white versions of your photos to deliver to your clients.



Photograph by Angela Fulks

Black and white edits do not have to be boring just because the color is gone. By using the tools available in post-processing, you can edit your photos for a moody look or a bright and airy one. Avoid falling victim to flat, lifeless black and white images by experimenting with the exposure tool, the contrast tool, adding or removing grain, brightening up the highlights, or emphasizing the shadows. You can create an impactful image by taking full advantage of these tools. Many editing programs include black and white presets that can be applied easily to images if you'd prefer to save time in the editing process.

 **Key Lesson:** Avoid flat and dull black and white photography by taking advantage of the tools and settings in post-processing programs to give your black and white photography life.

 **Recommended Reading:** If you'd like to learn how to create amazing black and white images, grab a copy of Photzy's best-selling premium guide: [Better Black and White](#).



## FINAL THOUGHTS

Black and white wedding photography can be used in a number of ways to benefit your clients' wedding experience with you as their photographer. Not only are black and white images an excellent addition to your clients' wedding galleries but to your personal

portfolio as well. With enough practice you may even be able to start instinctually determining which photos would benefit from creative or classic black and white editing before you even press the shutter!

### **Self-Check Quiz:**

- 1) Can you point to any examples in your own work that can benefit from black and white photography being used to help minimize distractions? What are they?
- 2) How can you improve your ability to recognize and shoot for emotional moments at weddings to add meaning and sentimentality to your images?
- 3) What are some ways you can think of to use black and white photography to elevate the look of traditional wedding portraits?
- 4) True or False: You should only apply black and white editing to photos that are perfectly shot and composed. Why or why not?
- 5) True or False: Black and white wedding photos are boring without the color as part of your image.





# Hey there!

Let's get real for a minute... Learning photography can be super challenging! But we're here to help you every step of the way! Here are 3 of our most useful (*and FREE!*) photography resources:



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



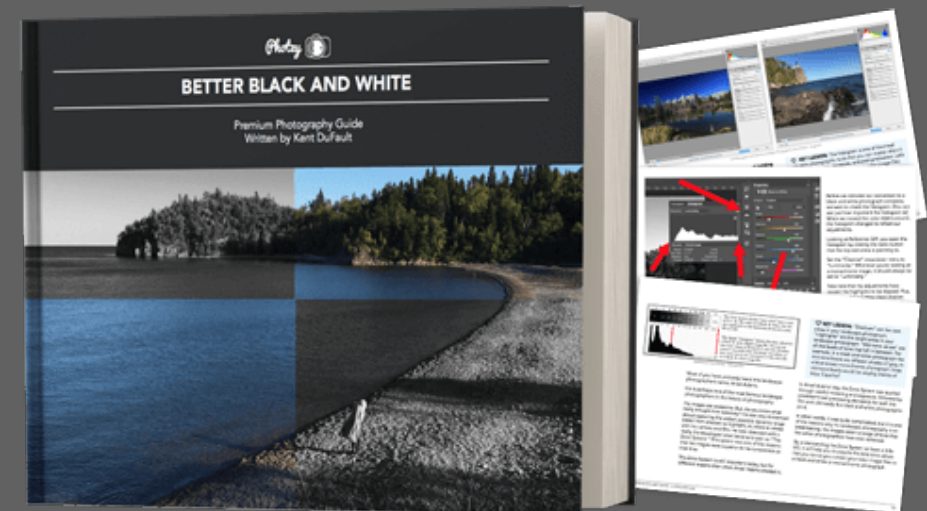
Angela Fulks is a photographer and paranormal investigator who lives in St. Louis, Missouri, with her family of seven. She photographs weddings, portraits, and all the spooky places she can find.

You can see more of her work on Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/angela.m.fulks/>

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