



Comparing Types of Wedding Ceremony

so much planning goes into a wedding but one of the most important bits can be down to pot luck on the day...

Ceremony Features	Independent Celebrant-led Ceremony	Registrar-led Ceremony
Legal status	None - this is a symbolic ceremony, not a legal one (i.e. the couple will not be married as a result of this type of ceremony)	The ceremony is legally binding and couples are married as a result
Personalisation	Infinite – the sky’s the limit! Tell your stories Include whatever words and music are meaningful to you Involve your family and guests (and even your pets, if you like)	Limited to the choice of three sets of legal vows, and council-approved promises, readings and music Little or no opportunity to include any personal content
Exclusions, restrictions and limitations on ceremony content	None (although I’m personally not keen on heights and we have to be sensible about everyone’s health and safety....)	Religious content is not allowed in the words or music used at your ceremony There are some restrictions about how the ceremony room/area is decorated (e.g. no naked flames or water on or near the registrars’ table) Usually, you only meet your registrars for the first time approx 10 – 30 minutes before your ceremony There is no opportunity to rehearse with the registrar beforehand
Locations	Indoors or outdoors On a beach; in woodland; in your garden Under the stars; on a bus, train, or boat Anywhere you like, as long as you have the necessary permission to hold your ceremony there	A civil marriage ceremony can only take place at a register office or at venue approved by the local authority (“approved premises”)
Cost	Depends on your requirements, but can be significantly less than the cost of a ceremony at a register office	Fixed cost depending on the local authority fee structure
Ceremony length	Up to 30 minutes, as a rough guide	Around 15 – 20 minutes