

May 2025

Volume 4, Issue 4

All content is created for information only and is not legal advice, and not necessarily the views of the AMC.

This newsletter, for NSW Sth Coast celebrants is edited by Lou Szymkow and whilst all care is taken, the editor cannot guarantee the accuracy of information. The editor, guest contributors & guest speakers all volunteer their time for Celebrants.

Cover Photo by Lou Szymkow
Manyana Beach after storm



An update from your AMC South Coast Coordinator, Lou Szymkow

To achieve success, we will continue to grow and do what we can to help each other grow.



Inside this HUGE issue:

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The most important equipment you have, is YOU.

This month's cover photo is one of the 200 beaches on the south coast of NSW. Taken after a storm, it highlights that when it comes to a beach wedding, you always have to be cautious however that will be a subject of another newsletter. We also have incredible wildlife and bushland unique to Australia as so hundreds of locations for ceremonies. The purpose of this newsletter as always is to inform, educate, inspire, and assist celebrants, especially those on the south coast of NSW, however we do have readers from all over Australia and some from other parts of the world and all are welcome. In this 39 page edition we take a closer look at equipment that is needed by all celebrants and try to answer some of the common and repeated questions in a straight forward and uncomplicated way



BE HEARD

One of the most common question is "What sound system do I buy?"

In this edition we try to help you decide for yourself with numerous informative articles covering sound systems, microphone and lots more...

This edition could be described as a comprehensive guide to a Celebrant's needs and equipment.

about what equipment can be and is used, while keeping technical jargon to a minimum. Quite simply, you don't have to a mechanic to drive a car and don't have to be a sound technician to use a public address (PA) system.

Questions about PAs, microphones, stands, frequencies, tripods, Bluetooth, batteries, PA brands, where to place the PA during a ceremony, and much more are examined and hopefully answered.

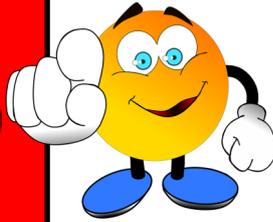
There is also a significant article on health, without which we simply cannot function because YOU are the most important aspect of your celebrancy business.

The importance and value of networking is also explored and a few success tips are added.

You may find the checklist article helpful, the quotations useful, as is the Lifelink guide to registration; and of course there is some humour and poetry.

Hope you Enjoy!

The most important
equipment you have,
is YOU.



Take care of yourself above all else.

There are numerous articles in this issue about taking care of equipment, but none of it is as important as YOU. So, let's look at some tips on selfcare.

Practicing self-care isn't always easy.

Some of us are busy just being Celebrants, or not busy enough, while others have two jobs or may be juggling parenting alongside full-time job and Celebrancy.

When there is so much to do, we can sometimes feel guilty about taking the time required to take care of ourselves.

You might already have a self-care plan. Maybe you have read a past article in an earlier edition of this newsletter and already enacted a plan, or not, but let's look again with this new article and maybe review or refresh.

Filling Your Own Cup

When it comes to self-care, it's handy to think of the phrase "you can't pour from an empty cup".

Instead of running on empty, prioritise small, meaningful actions that help you relax, recharge and reenergise. When you have a huge task ahead, break it down into smaller tasks and celebrate each accomplishment as progress.

Every little thing you do to look after yourself makes a difference in how you think, behave and react.

Of course, there is no one-size that will fit all, and what works for you, might not work for others, but you choose your best path. You don't need to get it right all the time, and you won't, but have confidence in yourself.

By practising self-care, you will notice a difference and so will your clients & couples in your positivity, communication, ability to solve problems, and your keeping calm even when under stress.

Just remember that it is not if your cup is half full or half empty, but that your cup is always refillable.



Getting organized.

Keeping a planner or a calendar on the fridge or office wall can help you write down all your responsibilities and appointments, while at the same time keeping your life a bit more organized.

Some find a paper diary helps as opposed to your phone diary.

When creating files for ceremonies, use a date (e.g. 2025 05 01) to keep files in a specific date order making it easy to check demands.

Download a countdown app and enter all your ceremonies to keep track of available time.

Reduce wasted time by always placing your keys, wallets/purses, briefcases, phone, pens, etc in the same place to make sure they're easily found and ready to go when needed.

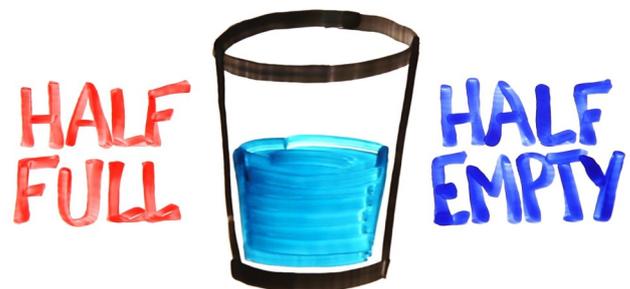
Many will add, "make a plan, or plan to fail".

Creating a checklist for Ceremonies can not only ensure all is prepared but also lowers stress just as a 'To Do' lists can help with daily activities.

Make time for self-care and protect that time.

Whether you decide you want to go for a long walk, take a hot bath, or enjoy a good movie with friends, taking self-care time is imperative.

Look for small ways you can incorporate it into



everyday life.

Physical self-care

This is one that many find challenging because when you have a script to write, it is difficult to go for a walk or run but we all know exercise is good for us, but do we really know just how good it is impacting on mental as well as physical health.

Daily exercise boosts your mood, reduces stress and anxiety, helps shed excess weight and eventually gives you more energy.

You don't need to go to the gym, unless of course you would prefer to, but you can incorporate other exercises, such as walking, golf, tennis, tai chi, yoga, or bike riding, which you may be able to fit into your schedule more easily. Create a routine that works for you. Repetition develops into a habit, and in this case, a very healthy one.

Continued next page

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Here are some simple ideas to start with:

- Start your day with a gentle stretch in the morning
- Get up early to have a quiet cuppa on the veranda enjoying the fresh air and scenery.
- take deep breaths
- Go for a short walk,
- spending time with a pet,
- have an uninterrupted shower.
- Enjoy your breakfast, have a nice lunch and an enjoyable evening meal
- Ensure your bedroom is peaceful and get an early night

Each action and decision can add up to form a positive pattern and eventual habit.

Read a book or listen to an audio.

There is nothing quite as relaxing as sitting in your favourite chair and reading a good book. It stimulates the mind, imagination, and ideas but add a self-help book to the reading list and you might find great ways to stimulate positive thought and energy.

We use our phones for entertainment and as a news source which can contribute to our stress, but you can also use your phone to find a self-help e-book to read or listen to, and enjoy those positive messages.

Like the author of this article, you might have thought that the apparent addiction by some, especially those working in sales, to self-help books was tiresome or off-putting, but if you find a good one or two, they can provide a great deal of encouragement.

You might be amazed at the difference.

Write

As Celebrants, we are often writing for a purpose but occasionally, try writing a short story, journal or a biography as they can not only be mentally stimulating but also cathartic or perhaps entertaining.

Eat right for self-care.

The food we eat has the potential to either keep us healthy and keep our minds working and alert whereas a poor diet can contribute to weight gain or diseases such as diabetes.

Your gut health can have a significant impact on your complete health, well-being, and feelings of vitality. The types of foods you eat crucially impact the bacteria that live in your stomach, resulting in a cascade of either positive or negative outcomes. Keeping your gut healthy can itself give you incredible energy.



Eating the right foods can help prevent short-term memory loss and inflammation, both of which can have long-term effects on the brain and, in turn, the rest of the body.

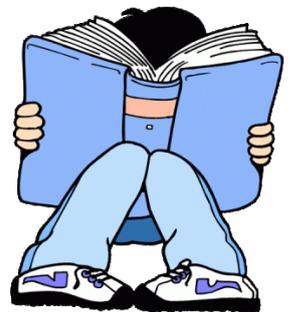
Having a great take-away or delivered meal can be fantastic but fresh is best and so making a healthy meal for yourself or your whole family can ensure great nutrition and taste.

Say no to others and say yes to self-care.

Learning to say no can be challenging; however, if you are already stressed or overworked, saying yes to extra tasks can lead to burnout, anxiety, and irritability. It may take a little practice, but once you learn how to politely say no, you'll start to feel more self-confident, and you'll have more time for your self-care.

Here are 10 samples on how to say no without being rude:

- ◇ "I appreciate the offer, but I have other commitments right now."
- ◇ "Thank you for thinking of me, but I'm unable to help this time."
- ◇ "I'm flattered you asked, but I need to focus on my own tasks."
- ◇ "Unfortunately, I can't fit this into my schedule at the moment."
- ◇ "That sounds great, but I'm already booked for that time."
- ◇ "I need to take care of some other matters and can't commit to this."
- ◇ "Thanks for considering me, but I need to pass this time."
- ◇ "I'm not able to commit to this, but I appreciate the invitation."
- ◇ "I'm sorry, but I need to focus on other priorities."
- ◇ "That's a great idea, but I can't participate right now."



Emotional and mental self-care

Looking after yourself helps to

From previous page

strengthen your mental wellbeing, including how you manage emotions, cope with stress and deal with challenges.

A dip in confidence or some self-doubt is perfectly normal, but you are never alone as a Celebrant, reach out to others, including Celebrants in your network. Here are some other ideas to consider:



- Asking for help when needed
- Try mindfulness - slow down, take a deep breath, and focus on the moment.
- Talk to a friend or family member about your feelings.
- Consider your boundaries - are you taking on too much?

If you get stressed or anxious, take a moment to notice your triggers, pause and rethink how you can respond, instead of reacting.

After a long day, you can improve your mental wellbeing by taking a walk outside, talking to a friend, reading a book, joining a group, learning something new, getting more sleep or eating well.

The little things you do to improve your mental wellbeing can make a big difference and can influence your approach to writing and conducting Ceremonies.

Social self-care

At times, Celebrants can feel isolated, lonely or disconnected from other people. Some can let their social network slip because they're busy juggling busy schedules.

You don't have to be a social butterfly but could have a coffee with a friend, visit a neighbour, attend an event or join a club or team.

Taking part in Regional Meeting, AMC Education sessions and webinars can be a means of social contact. Spending time with people who boost your confidence and help you feel good.

- Surround yourself with successful people.
- Sleep is Vital
- Sleep can have a huge impact on energy levels and how you feel both emotionally and physically. The absence of sleep can have devastating effects on well-being and can even cause major health issues.
- If you keep to a routine, going off to bed and waking at the same time each day, you will find it easier to get to sleep and to wake and so think about your nightly routine.
- A great tip also, is to avoid bright lights (including phone, TV and computer screens), caffeine and sugar for about two hours before bedtime.
- Make sure your bedroom is the best possible place



for you to get good and relaxing sleep. It should be free of distractions with room-darkening curtains.

Taking a break

Spending time in fresh air can help you reduce stress, lower your blood pressure, and live in the moment. Getting outside helps reduce fatigue and exercise in the day can help you sleep better at night.

Sightseeing, gardening, hiking, walking, fishing, and golf are all means of combining fresh air and exercise. It doesn't have to be costly, but can be as simple as a Sunday drive to see some sights,

Holidays, an adventure with a change of surroundings, are a fantastic way to revitalise, helping you to disconnect, relax, and be rejuvenated.

The goal is to veer away from your normal schedule and take the time to do something enjoyable.

- [Self-Care: 12 Ways to Take Better Care of Yourself | Psychology Today](https://www.calm.com/blog/how-to-say-no-nicely)
- <https://www.calm.com/blog/how-to-say-no-nicely>
- https://www.triplep-parenting.net.au/au/articles-and-news/post/its-the-little-things-realistic-self-care-ideas-for-busy-parents/?gad_source=5&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI9f6Y7NC2jAMV_qNmAh256wV3EAAAYAiAAEgK1q_D_BwE





Letters to the Editor



Lou,
congratulations again. Amazing newsletter. What a lot of work!
I most appreciated the poetry page.
I am booked to do the funeral of a bachelor without son or brother or even cousins!
So I have filed that wonderful quote from Ecclesiastes 4.
The statistics are very interesting too.
Power to you always
Dally Messenger III

Hi Lou
Good read once again. Great work as always.
Regards.
Robyn Foster

Thank you heaps Lou with all my appreciations as always 🤝
Sudesh Johar

Love it as you know!!! Keep them coming!!! 🤝 🤝
Kathy Dodd

Hi Lou
Your bulletin keeps getting better if that's possible.
A wonderful diversity of current news, needful information, facts, history, some delights and what is unique a feeling of heartfelt confidence in our important and ongoing profession.
My admiration of your superb efforts
Barry Young O A M.

Yep love keeping in touch via the magazine.
Marion Way

**What's On In The Next 30 Days -
Shoalhaven - South Coast NSW**



As a pathway to better governance, some of the AMC Committee members have joined the *Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA)*. Membership is free and opens doors to incredible resources.

If you are considering joining the AMC Committee or any Subcommittees, or just learning more about how to guide and operate any association, the *Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA)* runs free and paid training sessions and its website hosts over 80 policy templates that an organisation can adapt and use?

The ICDA **policy bank** is one of the most popular resources, and if you join ICDA, as a member, you gain access to the full suite of policy templates on offer.

Just remember that when considering items on the list in relation to AMC, substitute the word 'Board' with 'Committee'.

Popular policy templates include:

- [Privacy policy template](#)
- [Board member induction policy template](#)
- [Child protection policy template](#)
- [Cyber security policy template](#)
- [Staff induction policy template](#) (login required)

ICDA membership also unlocks a range of help-sheets, tools and other resources that are exclusive to members of ICDA, including:

- [How to refresh your fundraising model](#) (login required)
- [Getting what you want in a negotiation](#) (login required)
- [Cyber security audit tool](#) (login required)
- [Check out the 350-plus help-sheets and tools on the ICDA website](#)
<https://www.communitydirectors.com.au/tools-resources/home>.

May (in Latin, Maius) was named for the Greek goddess Maia, who was identified with the Roman era goddess of fertility, Bona Dea, whose festival was held in May. Conversely, the Roman poet Ovid provides a second etymology, in which he says that the month of May is named for the maiores, Latin for "elders",

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May>



YOUR VOICE MATTERS



After its election on 18th March 2025 at the AGM, our new AMC Committee met for the first time on 1st April 2025. The AMC newsletter keep us all UpToDate on progress with the latest issued on and on 17th April.

AMC members should check inboxes to get the latest. AMC committee news

Your AMC Committee is committed to transparency!

AMC Members may attend AMC Committee meetings as an ‘observer’ by emailing at least 24 hours in advance. The AMC is a member organisation, and your AMC committee is the custodian. To attend a meeting, email your request at least 24 hours in advance to:

secretary@marriagecelebrants.org.au

The next meeting is 6th May 2025 but that date is to be confirmed.

Education Session

The invaluable AMC Educations sessions are delivered via audiovisual link, usually via Zoom, and are a great membership benefit and details can be found on the [EVENTS](#) section of the AMC Website when you log in as a member, and in the events section on the AMC Members Facebook page.



AMC ON FACEBOOK

To expand your connections, You should also follow this link to the [AMC Public page](#). Please then like and share.

[https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=australian%20marriage%20celebrants%20\(amc\)](https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=australian%20marriage%20celebrants%20(amc))

Also, as an AMC Member, you can also join the [AMC Private members support group](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/australianmarriagecelebrantsinc/?ref=share>

New AMC Forum is now being trialled

By popular demand, the AMC Forum, on the webpage, will soon be back. It has been created on the AMC website but is still in the testing phase. Once completed, it will look and feel different to the old Forum as technology has changed. Questions and Advice are currently being grouped under these headings:

- Official announcements from BDMs and AGD
- General questions
- Ceremony Ideas and resource sharing
- legal and compliance questions
- marketing and promotions
- business management
- networking
- training & OPD
- mentoring
- regional discussions
- community lounge - to relax, laugh and connect



<https://marriagecelebrants.org.au/dashboard/support/>

ADVOCACY



NSW BDM COMPLAINTS

There has been an increase in complaints in regard to the NSW BDM and so the AMC Committee plans to advocate for members in an effort to improve services.

The committee has asked for SPECIFIC details so that your complaints can be taken direct to the NSW BDM or to other areas as appropriate.

A united voice is a stronger voice. Email the AMC committee with the following :

- What happened & when?
- What you needed?
- What was the response?
- How long did it take? (Be specific with dates)
- What your expectations were?
- How NSW BDM could do better!

Email the details to president@marriagecelebrants.org.au



TIPS FOR NEW & SUCCESSFUL CELEBRANTS

Frequently asked questions include:

"How do I start" and *"How do I get more business"*.

The obvious answer is that you plan., you plan your path and your success. Research feasibility, needs, opportunity and possibilities and learn how to implement what you found. This article wont give you all the answers but will give you some important basics.

Create a Business Plan

If you are Forrest Gump, it is possible to succeed without a plan but a wise person said, *"fail to plan and you plan to fail"*.



- i) set some goals and deadlines – a goal without a deadline is just a dream.
- ii) How often to you wish to work?
- iii) Is Celebrancy second to your full-time job/career or your primary income?
- iv) Can you work weekdays, weekends or only set days of the week.
- v) Do you want a ceremony or more every week, or is one a month is fine?
- vi) What area will you cover i.e. How far are you honestly prepared to travel?

SET FEES FOR BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY

Most business collapse within 3-5 years but planning can prevent that. Use your business plan to determine your fees to make your business sustainable:

- i) List & Calculate all your business expenses including fee, taxes, depreciation, vehicle, advertising, printing, forms, etc.
- ii) Determine what it will cost you to deliver a single ceremony
- iii) Add a profit margin that will fund your next ceremony
- iv) Start as you wish to continue i.e. don't discount to get business because the discounted rate will be your benchmark for all future booking
- v) DO NOT set your fees by what others charge as they may not have a business plan, may be a hobbyist, may not provide the same level of service, and could be operating at a loss.
- vi) Remember that you are not a charity, but that you are in business



- vii) Decide if you will you include the cost of the BDM Certificate or charge for it as an add-on option
- viii) Charge a non-refundable 'lodgement fee' or similar remembering that 'deposits' and 'booking fees' are usually legally refundable upon cancellation but a Lodgement Fee is not as it is for a service already provided.

BOOKKEEPING & BUDGETING

This is fundamental to being in Business.

You cannot manage a business without managing finances. You simply cannot make responsible decision without accurate information but having accurate accounts and a budget enables control.



- i) keep a record of enquiries, bookings, expenditure and income.
- ii) . Look at obtaining an accounts management system or CRM, or create one of your own in a spreadsheet program such as Excel

STUDY & IMPROVE

As Celebrants, we had to study to qualify for our role and undertake annual obligatory development but that only covers the legalities of Celebrancy and not how to market yourself and how to operate a successful celebrancy business.



- i) Network with other successful business owners and Celebrants-you will learn from them.
- ii) Read and study to keep UpToDate with
- iii) Read all your Celebrancy assignments and review all of your studies with a critical eye.
- iv) Review the fundamentals that were taught at the start of your course as many are forgotten by the end.
- v) Download the Act, Regulations, Guidelines, Certificates, Tip Sheets and Fact Sheets form the Attorney General's website.
- vi) Have them ALL reference text accessible to enable answering any important or tricky questions.
- vii) Read a section of the above, or a document every day, even if just a paragraph.
- viii) Read the NOIM and other documents, front to back and practice completing them.
- ix) One of the most frequently asked questions

From previous page

- What sort of Celebrant do you wish to be
- What is your look and character, (and it's ok if you don't wish to stand out)?

EQUIPMENT & ACCESSORIES



- i) Is your equipment suitable for your needs?
- ii) Review your equipment after each ceremony:
 - Did you need/use everything
 - What can be discarded to make it easier?
 - Will adding an item make it easier and more efficient?
 - How do you transport everything i.e. do you need a trolley?
- iii) Will an accessory such as a lectern, candle etc. help you to improve delivery?
- iv) Review your office setup, stationery, filing, computer file backup, secure storage (safe).
 - What changes can you make to streamline or to make better use of space & time?

REVIEW TO IMPROVE & RESPOND



Review your ceremonies, methods, processes and templates regularly or at least every 3 months to keep them fresh and efficient:

Debrief after each and every ceremony you perform and evaluate how to improve:

- i) What worked very well?
- ii) What needs to change?
- iii) What should you not do?
- iv) What could be done better?
- v) What mistakes were made and how to you correct them?
- vi) What obstacles did you encounter & what is the best was to overcome them?
- vii) Were the clients happy with your performance and why?
- viii) Were the PA, signing table, etc well placed or do they need better locations?

ADHERE TO COPYRIGHT



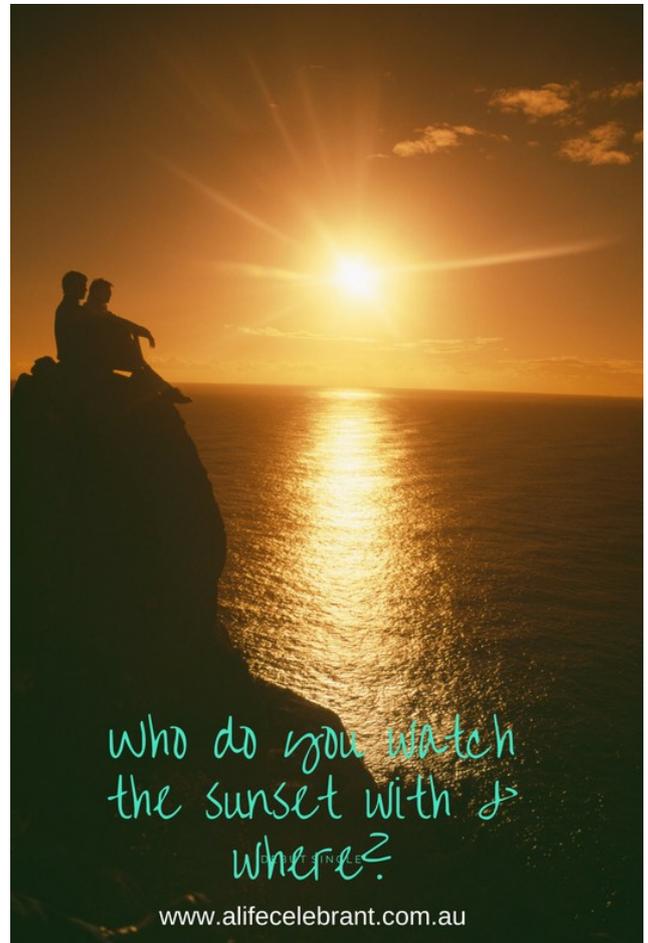
- i) Be careful not to plagiarise or appropriate another's work and always give credit to authors or sources of poetry or readings etc. Failing to credit an author or source could result in your prosecution and a prosecution could result in deregistration.
- i) Don't use photos in advertising that you don't own or have no authority or permission to use
- ii) Appropriation of religious acts, particularly if out of context, can offend and embarrass and in some

instances may be illegal, hence it is inappropriate to read or use religious acts and rituals if you are not religious or do not



understand the purpose of the ritual (*research it and ask a believer to perform the reading or ritual*)

- iii) Have a hand sanitiser freely available and sanitise between handshakes if possible.
- iv) Be alert to dangers and always examine the area for hazards:
 - If under a tree, examine the tree for snakes, potential bird dropping, wasps nest etc
 - Will the arbour withstand a gust of wind?
 - Is there any wet paint?
 - Are there any ant-nests in the ceremonial space



Your First PA System

- a simple guide -

Phil Timbrell, the Happy Day Celebrant, specialises in delivering ceremonies in the Blue Mountains proudly wearing his Akubra hat. He retired from a position as a engineering manager and he knows electronics. He is the AMC Nepean and Blue Mountains Regional Coordinator and is a regular and valued contributor to this newsletter



Article by Phil Timbrell

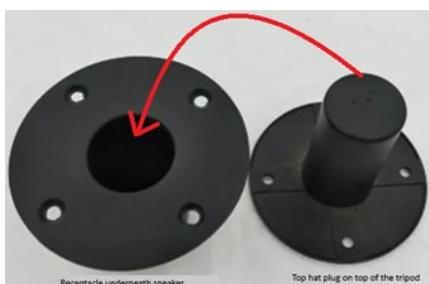
I commence this document with 3 simple statements

- 1) During Covid, there were times when, by law, the celebrant had to use a different mic than the couple, which meant that having a PA system with only 1 mic input proved cumbersome
- 2) The first question many new celebrants ask on forums is “which PA system should I buy?” and this will be followed by every respondent advising the system they have is the one they recommend. This does not really help the new celebrant as they can only buy 1 system and they are definitely not all the same.
- 3) Whilst many celebrants feel their PA gives a lovely quality sound that is pleasing to the audience, how many have actually asked guests sitting in the back row how pleased they were with the sound? We often do a voice check but how many of us put some serious processional music on and listen to it from the back of the venue when it is full of guests? (Humans absorb sound)

This article will not cover issues such as speaker placement however this is covered in a pdf I have written and can be downloaded from www.happydaycelebrant.com.au then go to the bottom of the landing page and click the link to “celebrants page”. (You will also find an article on that subject in the newsletter)

Mandatory

Most Pas are fitted with a top hat receptacle underneath so it can sit easily and securely drop onto a speaker tripod. There are several standard sizes for top hat



diameters, 35mm being the more popular. Some smaller PAs do not have a top hat but may have a screw mount which can be a cumbersome nuisance whereas the top hat ensures a quick and easy setup,

Battery or Mains?

Assuming you want to conduct ceremonies outdoors, you will need your PA to be either battery operated, or if it is mains only, then you will need to buy a portable mains supply which is a rechargeable battery with a 240volt inverter installed. Never depend on a venue providing mains.

Buying second hand.

There is nothing wrong with buying a second hand system from a retiring celebrant or one who wants to upgrade. You have the opportunity to test the unit thoroughly before buying, in the open, which sometimes you do not have if buying from a shopfront or on line. There are 2 things to be careful of however. *Firstly* check the cordless mic frequency.

Frequencies in Australia

In Australia the following frequencies are available and should not be subject to inference:

- ⇒ 520 to 526MHz;
- ⇒ 915 to 928MHz;
- ⇒ 1790 to 1800MHz;
- ⇒ 2400 to 24835MHz
- ⇒ 5.725 to 5.875 GHz

Please note that many mics operate in the 526 to 694MHz range – and TV stations may interfere at these frequencies causing crackling or even cause your mic to drop out. In that frequency range, you may test the unit at home and it will operate fine but at a venue 100kms away, you may find that you have interference from a local TV transmitter. Note that it is illegal for a retailer to sell a new non-compliant system but the same law does not apply to private sellers and so it is necessary to check frequencies before you buy.

The following picture is an advertisement for a PA in Perth with a mic that operates at 644MHz. In Perth 644MHz is considered a no go area according to ACMA due to interference – so stick to the frequencies mentioned above.

Batteries in Second Hand Systems

To Perth celebrants I have a number of items/resources for sale inc. red A4 ceremony folder & form 15 etc also PA system below. Many items may be of interest to new celebrants. Message me for a list **MIPRO MA-303du Dual-Channel Portable Rechargeable Wireless PA System (60W, 6B: 644 to 668 MHz)**

All equipment in Excellent Condition

From previous page

Unless certain of the health of the batteries in a second hand system you are buying, go to a local battery dealer and buy a new battery, then stick a label on the back of your PA with the date you installed the new battery. Lead acid batteries can happily last for 5 years if kept fully charged and are a reputable brand. Cheap batteries that have been allowed to go flat may only last 12 months.

**Bluetooth**

Few people use CDs let alone cassette tapes to play music and most Celebrants opt for playing mp3 music tracks from a USB or Bluetooth.

There is a separate article specifically on Bluetooth and goes into detail as to how to get the best possible result.

**USB**

Some Celebrants prefer to convert their music tracks to a MP3 format on a USB which is plugged into the PA. Most PAs with a USB connection will have a screen to show which track number is being played.

Buying a New System

The first point to consider is that a new system will come with a warranty and as mentioned earlier, it is illegal for a retailer to sell a system that operates on a non-compliant frequency.

As a new celebrant you may find your plans of the type of ceremony you will perform will change with time and so will the needs of your PA system. Let's assume that a typical celebrant might need to be able to project both voice and music to 150 guests seated theatre style outdoors with possible wind and no walls to reflect sound.

If you are comfortable lifting a heavier PA system onto a tripod and carrying it to the car, then choose a PA with larger speaker diameters and if possible with either twin cone speaker or even better, a separate tweeter and main speaker. The speaker itself is an air pump and the larger the diameter the easier it will have to work to get good quality sound out to the people at the back. Also a smaller diameter speaker may sound tinny if it has to work very hard to pump the same amount of air. There are many smaller diameter speakers that sound excellent close up but in my opinion, they cannot match a larger diameter speaker.

A small speaker is 5 inch or less in diameter while a large speaker might be as big as 8 inch diameter. Now the relationship is not linear. The surface area of a 5 inch speaker is less than 40% the area of an 8 inch speaker meaning it has to move the diaphragm much further to pump the same amount of air, and moving the diaphragm much further means working harder and sacrificing sound quality.

In the specs look for a class D amplifier as these are much more energy efficient meaning longer battery life.

Class A are the hungriest for energy.

50 to 60 watts RMS is a comfortable wattage for most needs. It is not recommended to run a pa at full volume for sound quality. Please note many dodgy vendors claim a wattage without saying if it is RMS. If not check. If it states 100 watts peak or 100 watts max, then the RMS value is roughly two thirds the peak or max value. It is the RMS value you must know.

Extra speaker outlet?

If you are needing to play to a large audience seated theatre style, there is a risk of deafening the people at the front in order to reach the people at the back. One solution is to have a second speaker half way down the seating and to run both at half volume. The Bose S1 offers this option as do many other systems (*although I am not recommending any particular brand in this paper*).

Bass and treble boost and cut is an ideal attribute. The reason is that bass cut is useful if the mic is operating in a high wind area while treble cut is ideal if you have feedback issues due to the speaker placement.

Whilst I do not intend to recommend any particular brand or model, as I have no idea of your price point, hopefully this paper will assist in pointing you to a brand and model that will satisfy your needs for years to come.

Phil Timbrell



For information on different plugs used in sound systems, go to this site:

[The Ultimate Guide to Audio Connectors and Cables • Audiostance](#)



The following are references for the next article:

- [tps://www.avproductsonline](https://www.avproductsonline)
- Tuning a belt pack microphone to a Mipro: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tc8fTtk8Ktg>
- Tuning a handheld microphone to your Mipro: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZaV_lpdX4
- <https://www.avproductsonline.com.au/pages/5-things-to-consider-when-buying-a-portable-pa>
- <https://www.audiolinks.com/blog/the-6-principles-for-choosing-a-pa-system-thats-right-for-you/>

What to consider when purchasing a portable PA?

Article by Lou Szymkow

Purchasing a Portable PA can be confusing to some as there are varying models & sizes all offering different features such as power, wireless microphone options, audience size and accessories. You probably already read Phil Timbrell's article but here is a further summary of points to consider when deciding on and purchasing your PA system.

Which brand?

You can have all the information in the world but it will still boil down to your personal preference. The choices are growing in number and so we will cover some basics and options for your to consider.

Mipro and Chaiyo are popular PAs among Celebrants but Bose, Yamaha, JBL, Promic, and Behringer have increased in popularity because of competitive pricing, size & versatility and of course sound quality. All are easy to transport, have features such as durability, Bluetooth, a range of accessories with some have the options of including a USB socket, CD player & extension speakers, and most have an ease of connection to wireless microphones with a good quality sound though people with a perfect pitch ear will complain that the sound from a Mipro or Chaiyo, though very good, are not as great for sound as Behringer, Bose or other European brands.

There are other cheaper brands available at discount stores and on-line but carefully consider the quality and features of the device such as frequency. The ease of changing the microphone frequency is impressive on the Mipro but the price of genuine components can be challenging, and the weight of larger models that use sealed lead acid batteries can be significant at around 13kgs.

Most PA's have a standard tripod hole underneath and so they can be just dropped onto a tripod quickly and easily however some models have a screw mount which can be annoying, while other have a tilt design to sit on the ground.

The Number of Guests & the Location

Some venues have their own PA or even a built-in system and they can be very useful however they sometimes limit versatility as microphones might be at a lectern or there might be



only one cordless microphone and in some circumstances, only one microphone



can be used at a time.

The size of your audience and the location of your event, being indoors or outdoors are vital considerations.

Most ceremonies are outdoors even when held at venues and so your system generally will need to be battery operated and weatherproof proof and so it is worth investing in a weatherproof cover or shading (rain, sun, sand & wind protection)

If you have a large audience something like a Mipro MA707 or its equivalent, can broadcast up to 250 people while the Mipro MA708 is suitable for up to 400 people. Smaller audiences such as 50 to 100 people may be achieved with over the shoulder models such as the popular Mipro MA101 but the 303 and 505's are lightweight and portable with enough power for about 100 guests. If a slave speaker can be added, the sound can carry much further.

For those who want some extra control or may want to add the versatility of adding instruments with a sound mixer, there is the Mackie ShowBox which delivers a 400W amp, custom drivers, with 6 input channels for mics and instruments, and so sound connectivity for singers, guitarists, keyboardists and more .



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What to consider when purchasing a portable PA?



Portability

Choose a PA speaker that can be easily transported to the desired location for ceremonies in parks or on beaches. The larger models are not really suitable for the beaches because of the weight having to be carried across the sand but are fantastic on firmer grounds, as the larger models come with extendable handles and built-in wheels.

Weight of the unit is also a factor to consider when carrying or trying to lift the speaker on to a speaker stand.

Frequency Compatibility



Is the frequency suitable and legal for your area?

There is a chart in this newsletter but you can go to the ACMA website to see what is suitable in your area, noting that a frequency may be legal Australia wide but still be incompatible in your specific location because of a high use by others such as coastal radio frequencies.

<https://channelfinder.acma.gov.au/>

Bluetooth Range



There is a separate article covering this subject in greater detail.

Bluetooth operates best with a line of sight. Bluetooth devices communicate directly with each other using low-power radio waves on a frequency band between 2.400GHz and 2.483.5GHz [source: [Bluetooth Special Interest Group \(SIG\)](#)]. Other Bluetooth devices and wireless communications and objects containing water (including humans) can interfere your signal and so keep the line of sight clear. If you cannot remove interference, have a cable on hand as a backup. Cable which is more reliable and not subject to interference.

Accessories & optional extras

Consider what accessories you need and how will they be utilised & transported.

A tripod and cordless microphones are a must and so is Bluetooth for most Celebrants.

Do you also require an extension speaker, USB, CD players, extra Microphones (both with a cable or wireless

hand held, lapel or headset options), protective speaker cover. It is also important to look at the cost of accessories and in some instances a component may be close to the price of complete PA.

Wireless Microphones

There is a separate article on Microphones. Smaller speakers may only accommodate one internal receiver for one wireless microphone however, larger models may accommodate two to four internal receivers, allowing the user multiple microphones and so a head-worn or lapel microphone as well as a handheld for the vows and another handheld for any readers. Connecting to a portable mixer could add more features ut that is not generally required by Celebrants. In some circumstances, a corded microphone might be connected to a lectern for a reader but other cordless microphones used for other participants.



Compatibility of an Extension speaker

Optional extension speakers are connected with a speaker cable and will distribute your sound evenly to larger audience groups, but cordless options may also be available.

Price and Return on Investment

Determine your budget and weigh it against the system that you need. Prices start at about \$200 and can go to thousands though most will pay between \$400 to \$1500 for a first system.

It may be a practical for instance, to buy a better system from the start so that you don't have to upgrade later, or you might go for a lower-priced versatile system to start, add accessories as needed. or replace when the budget allows, keeping the original as a backup system, or selling it to finance other purchases,

Continued next page

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What to consider when purchasing a portable PA?

Batteries (see also the article on batteries)

For the PA, Sealed Lead Acid (SLR) batteries are durable and usually cheaper but they are heavier than Lithium Ion Batteries, which apart from being significantly lighter and smaller, have a consistent power flow and often a shorter charge period.

Determine if it is easy to replace the PA batteries and at what cost. Wireless Microphones often take two to four AA batteries or may take a 9V battery but rechargeable microphones are also available.



Where to buy?

We are spoiled for choice for new systems in capital cities in Australia, especially in Sydney because there are numerous retailers including the very popular:

- Soundgear,
- DJ City
- Penrith Light & Sound

And many more such as Bava's Music City in Liverpool, not to mention any Jaycar store.

Choices of stores reduces in lessor populated areas although on the south coast, in Wollongong, you will find Lightsounds, and Pipers Wollongong Music Centre.

In Nowra you will find the South Coast Music Centre, as well as Jaycar while in Bega a web search lists JMC Productions

If you don't want to buy local, a trip to a major population areas might give you more choice but local retailers can order systems in for you, or you can buy online.

For preloved systems, Pawn Shops, eBay, as well as Facebook groups including your local Buy Swap & Sell groups and of course the Celebrant Buy Swap & Sell groups.

Buying new ensures that your system is 'legal' in that it is illegal for a retailer to sell a PA with an illegal frequency but that same law does not apply to private sellers and so caution is always required though some bargains can be found, and it is not always a retiring Celebrant selling because there are many reasons for business, real-estate agents, banks, hotels, and individuals to buy a PA for a one off special occasions and then to dispose of them cheaply when it is found they are no longer needed. Just do your due diligence and research before buying a second hand system.

CHOOSING MICROPHONES

This article is based upon the:

⇒ [Complete beginner's guide to wireless microphones](#)

Celebrants love wireless microphones and many PA system come with their own or have like branded accessories to match. This article will not go into technical aspects but is a general guide for voice microphones used by Celebrants.

When using a cordless microphone, there is no risk of tripping or tangling with cables and they offer a freedom of movement that cabled microphones cannot. Cabled microphones have the advantage of no signal interference and no battery costs but are only of value if the microphone won't be moved.

Two of the most highly regarded cordless microphones are:

- [Shure's](#) Vagabond.

Shure pioneered the field in 1953 with a range of about 5 metres (pictured)

- [Sennheiser](#) developed the ground-breaking Mikroport in 1957 with a range 92 metres. Sennheiser are renowned for their sound quality and are regarded by many as the best microphones though they are more expensive than many other brands.

Like those early models, today's wireless microphone systems use a variety of radio frequencies to transmit the audio signal from your mic to a PA system but in Australia, there is competition for the allowed range.

⇒ *See the frequency chart on the next page*

Wireless microphone systems come in a lot of different styles, from simple, compact units to high-performance, road-worthy kits with rack-mountable receivers.

A wireless microphone system includes three parts:

1. microphone, on your person, whether you're holding it or wearing it
2. transmitter (sender), either built into your mic or worn as a body-pack that connects to your mic with a short wire. Each mic has an individual transmitter.
3. receiver, either built into your PA or plugged into it. Whilst most are programmed for just



one individual signal, some receivers are dual channel, which means they are designed and programmed to receive more than one signal.

Be aware that you can not mix and match different brands of receivers and transmitters. You'll be choosing all three parts from the same brand and the same series within that brand.

Receivers come in a few different forms.

Many PA systems preferred by Celebrants, already have receivers built into the PA with microphones already tuned but the receivers may also be an easily replaceable component i.e. a couple of screws and you just clip in the new.

Compact and convenient docking modules and USB dongles are designed for specific models of powered speakers, so you can't use them with anything else.

1) **Hand held microphones** can be, as their name implies, held or can be placed in a microphone stand. They usually have an inbuilt transmitter and some might have a small external aerial.



2) **Clip-on or Lavalier microphones** are small and discreet. You'll see them used on TV by weather reporters and newsreaders and are often used by videographers. They clip onto clothing, like a collar, tie or breast pocket, or strap. They are generally further from the user's mouth than a headset mic. That means you need to turn them up louder to get a good signal, which can lead to extraneous noise and feedback. Audio levels can also vary with movements of the speaker's head. A high-quality stereo microphone will usually enable freer movement and eliminate background noise.



Shure MoveMic Two: Two wireless lavalier mic/transmitters with charging case

3) **Headset microphones** maintain a closer, fixed position to the user's mouth which means that the audio



Samson Airline 77 AH7 Fitness Headset



level and sound quality are consistent. Some designs go over your head, others clip to one or both ears. Some are black and bulky, while others are very light, skin toned, and so hardly noticeable to your audience.

When you buy an aftermarket headset mic, ensure it can be connected to your system. Most have the option of changing connectors to fit your belt pack. There is a join in the cable that enables a change of connectors. The cable and mic, simply screw together. Make sure that is secure.



Avoiding dropouts, interference, and other problems

Some dropouts are caused simply by poor connection. Check that cables are neatly and securely connected.

The layout of your area is vital because if you set it up right, you'll maximize your wireless mic system's range (*and reduce the chances of dropouts*).

Place the receiver in a spot that will help you maintain a "line of sight" between the transmitter and receiver. You don't want metal objects, walls, or a lot of people between your receiver's antenna and your transmitter.

If your receiver has an external antenna, if possible, elevate your antennas above any obstructions.

Ensure the cable from the mic to the sender is not twisted or obstructed.

Perform a sound check to see how far you can go without experiencing problems.

Many systems will help you dodge interference by automatically picking a clear channel when you set things up while system such as the Mipro ACT enables a quick and



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easy change of frequency.

- ◇ Tuning a belt pack microphone to a Mipro: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tc8fTlk8Ktg>
- ◇ Tuning a handheld microphone to your Mipro: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZaV_lypDx4

However, what works well during the sound check might not work during the ceremony because another nearby wireless system might not have been turned on when you performed your sound check and there are more people & devices. Check again just before the ceremony starts by turning off your transmitter and checking to see if the receiver is still picking up a signal. If it is, change channels until you find one that's free of competing signals.

Distortion and signal dropouts can also occur when your batteries are low in power. Use only high-quality batteries and always test them before us and replace as soon as needed. Never start a ceremony with a borderline battery. If you have a Microphone with a rechargeable batteries or an internal rechargeable battery, make certain it is fully charged.

Wireless Range

The range specs provided by the manufacturers of wireless mics are for ideal, unobstructed situations and so if your system claims a 90 metre range, in real life situations, that may be reduced to about 30 metres.

When you approach or exceed your system's effective operating range, you'll get noise or signal dropouts. It's a lot like listening to a radio station on your way out of town. The further you get from town, the worse your reception.

Crowded radio frequency bands can also interfere

with your wireless microphone to receiver signal. That can also include other wireless mic systems in use near yours, and that can include the videographer's wireless microphone.

Digital systems that operate on the 2.4Ghz band can even run into interference from things like microwave ovens, wireless routers, garage doors, and Bluetooth transmitters.

A separate article advises on how to *Sound Check* or test and practice using your PA and microphone

- [Choosing the Right Wireless Microphone: A Comprehensive Buyer's Guide - Audio Champs](#)
- [Complete beginner's guide to wireless microphones](#)



20 Wedding Instagram Captions for Families

1. "Love brought us together, and family keeps us strong"
2. "Watching you marry the love of your life is a dream come true"
3. "Today, we celebrate love and family"
4. "Family is where life begins and love never ends"
5. "Proud parents of the bride/groom"
6. "Together as one, forever a family"
7. "Feeling all the love and family vibes today"
8. "Weddings: where family becomes love's biggest fan"
9. "Witnessing forever with my favourite people"
10. "So much joy, so much love, so much family"
11. "Our family just got bigger and more beautiful"
12. "The best kind of wedding is filled with family love"
13. "Here's to love, laughter, and our beautiful family"
14. "Forever grateful for these family moments"
15. "Family: where love begins and never ends"
16. "Celebrating love with the ones who mean the most"
17. "A day filled with love and family happiness"
18. "Tears of joy and hearts full of love for this family moment"
19. "We came as family, we leave as even more"
20. "Family love makes this day unforgettable"

https://www.edimakor.net/video-editing-tips/wedding-captions-for-instagram.html?yWDAX0D0wk8EAAYBCAAEgI36FD_BwE#part1-2

Frequency range (MHz)	Devices and services https://www.acma.gov.au/wireless-microphones
520 to 694	Television broadcasting services are the main users of this range. Wireless audio transmitters should only use the unused frequencies in this range. Use our Channel Finder to find available frequencies in your area. Wireless microphones can use frequencies 520 to 526 MHz in all areas.
1785 to 1800	This frequency range is only for wireless microphone and other audio transmitter use. This frequency range is available in all areas.
174 to 230	This frequency range is available in many regional and remote areas. Use our Channel Finder to see if these frequencies are available in your area. https://channelfinder.acma.gov.au/
Any transmitter:	
915 to 928	A wide variety of devices including wi-fi use these frequency ranges. Wireless microphones and audio transmitters can also use these frequencies.
2400 to 2483.5	
5725 to 5875	The 88 to 108 MHz frequency range is only for wireless audio transmitters and auditory assistance transmitters.
88 to 108	

Microphone Technique

Not everyone knows how to hold a microphone.

Every Celebrant has experienced handing over a hand held microphone to a couple or to a reader only for them to let the microphone lower until they cannot be heard, or for someone to hold the microphone in such a way that the signal is actually blocked.

If using a handheld, 10cms again is a safe distance but remember that couples who are unfamiliar with a microphone will inevitably lower the microphone as they focus on expressing their words rather than the technical sound and if they gesture, they might move the microphone entirely away from the source.

Keeping an eye on volume might be helpful. Similarly, if indoors, be aware of acoustically reflective surfaces such as glass, concrete, marble, timber etc. that could result in feedback.

The closer you get your microphone to the PA, the greater the risk of feedback. Other factors include the proximity of the microphone to the source (*mouth*), the type of microphone, and of course, the room's acoustics (*sound can bounce off walls & ceilings*).

If it is a handheld microphone, whether corded or cordless, holding it correctly can reduce the risk of drop out.

Holding a hand held microphone incorrectly can result in muffled sound, loss



of signal or damage to cables on corded mics. Whether it is a corded or cordless microphone, this first diagram shows how it should be held so that:

- ◇ the meshed area is not covered
- ◇ the cable or aerial is not harmed
- ◇ The wireless signal is not obstructed

TIP: don't hold it too tightly as that can result in fatigue and tension which will carry through to the voice.

The next step is to ensure that the microphone is pointed at the sound source (mouth) but not too close or too direct so as to generate the PP sound, and not held too high that it would obstruct the users' face and so the ideal location for the microphone is at about chin level and about 5-8cms forward.

That distance of mouth to microphone can be varied when the user is speaking very loudly or when singing, in which case the microphone can be moved further away and you will often see professional musician move the microphone away for the bigger sounds.

Lapel Mics

If using a lapel mic, position it at about 10cms away from the source, and point it to the source. The skin toned headset microphone which should be position about 5cms from the source.

Headset Mics

These are designed so that when worn, the frame brings the microphone to the perfect point however not every head is the same size and so it is always advisable to perform a sound check. Generally speaking, to avoid popping, the microphone should be close to your mouth but off to one side.

TIP: always smooth your hair after positioning the microphone on.

Wind Noise

There are two types of wind noise. One is the 'popping' mentioned above. This is from the microphone being too close to the mouth resulting in Ps & Ds making a popping sound. This can often be alleviated by adjusting the microphone.



The second is of course peripheral air movement causing a noise as it passes over the microphone mesh and again noise can be alleviated by adjusting the microphone or if it is a worn microphone, by turning your body to block the wind.

Both are usually easily more permanently solved by the use of a wind sock. They come in different sizes and colours for different microphone.

Wikihow, gives us a few tips.

<https://www.wikihow.com/Hold-a-Microphone>



Microphone Stands



Whilst lecterns in chapel and at venues will often have a flexible, fitted microphone or two, Celebrants require a little more versatility.

There are two common microphone stands, the vertical, and the boom arm.

The vertical is height adjustable only, and is commonly mounted on a round & weighted base for stability on flat surfaces.

The boom arm stand can be height adjusted as well as extended outward. It commonly has a wider tripod base and can be adjustable for users of varying heights and sizes and be used on uneven grounds with greater security as it is less likely to tip over on uneven ground.

The tripod base can of course still tip on uneven ground and there is currently no design available to overcome that but a sandbag draped over the legs of the tripod can be a preventative.

The boom arm itself can of course be attached to the top of the vertical stand and the boom usually has a weight at the lower end to balance the extended arm, to prevent it from dipping.

Accessories can be added, usually to the vertical portion of the boom stand, such as an iPad or phone holder, umbrella, fan, and more (*see article on speaker stands*).



The microphone holder itself is screwed to the top of the vertical stand or to the upper end of the boom arm.

There are two standard screw mount sizes so make sure you get the right size even though the stand usually comes with a solid microphone holder already fitted for standard corded microphone.

Cordless microphones are usually thicker than a corded microphone and so often don't fit the holder that comes with a stand but instead require a broader holder or clip. There are two holder types that are suitable for cordless microphones. They are a universal or flexible holder and a spring loaded clip which operates somewhat like a peg, opening out to receive the microphone and then clamping onto it when closed. Both are pictured.

There is little doubt that a boom arm stand, with a tripod base, and flexible microphone holder are the most versatile



PLACING YOUR PA

Sound Gear is well known to many celebrants as distributors of Mipro, Chaiyo and Okayo systems which are perhaps the most popular among Celebrants, and *Sound Gear* have from time to time, sponsored events held by AMC. At one such event they distributed advice to members on the use of their PAs, and this article by Lou Szymkow, is based on that information which applies to all PAs and not of course just to the select products distributed by Sound Gear, though their popularity is obvious. I invited Soundgear to further contribute to the article but didn't hear back.

Selection of PA's, is a frequent question that will be covered once again in a separate article and is subjective given that many Celebrants have strong views on brand selection, sound quality, product durability, weight & size, and of course product versatility. Phil Timbrell's article has already given you information on what to consider in a PA but this article is about where to place it for best results at a ceremony.

POSITIONING

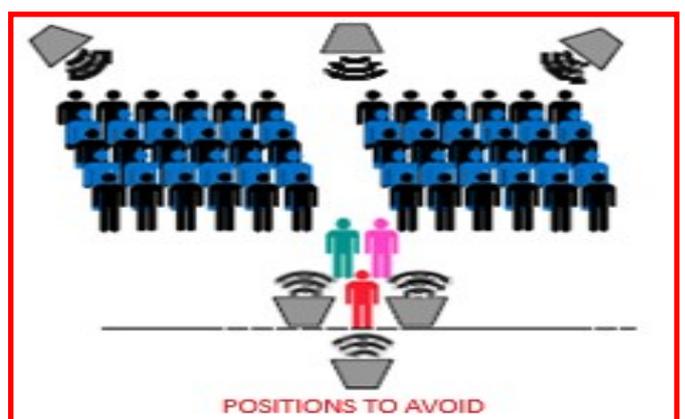
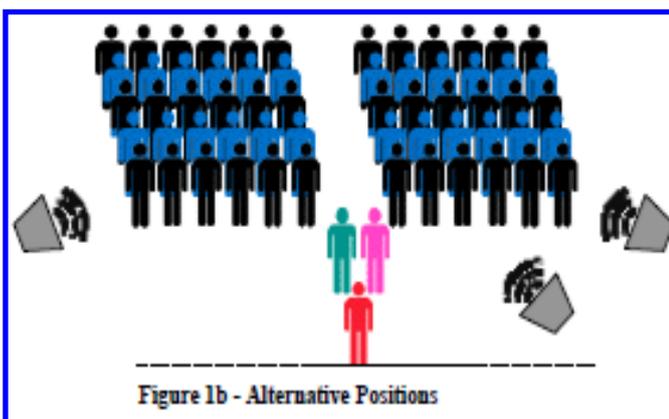
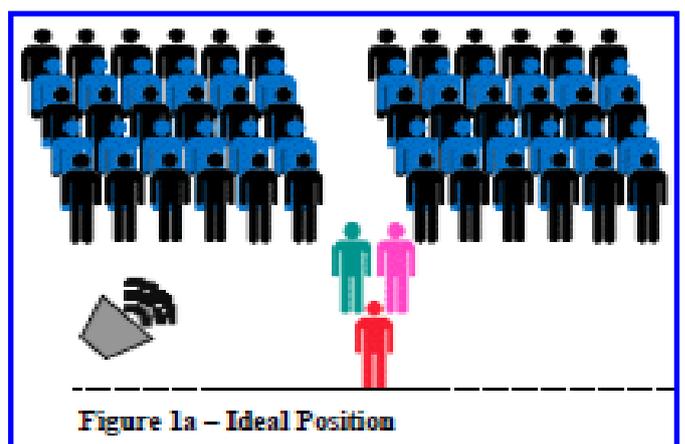
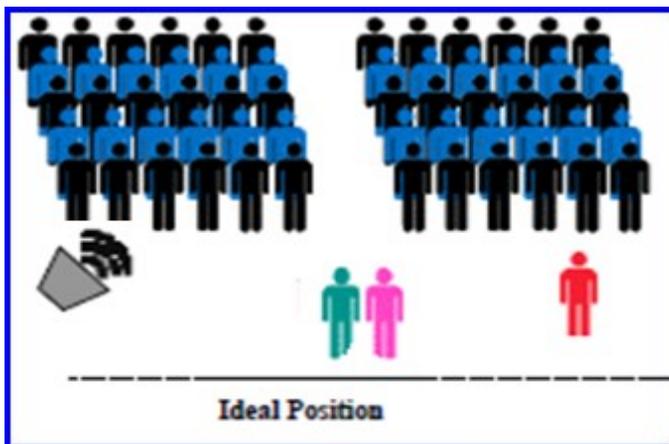
Sound Gear tells us that as a general rule, you should try to place your portable PA to one side and in front of you, angled to into the audience. This will provide good sound dispersion and in most cases, keep the system at a reasonable distance from the Celebrant to



reduce the possibility of feedback, but close enough to ensure Bluetooth will connect without interruption. As *Sound Gear* presumes in their diagrams that the Celebrant will stand with the couple, whereas many Celebrants stand to one side, an modified image has been added to show PA positioning in those circumstances.

Sound Gear says that it is highly recommended to avoid placing the PA behind the guests as not only could that result in feedback but can result in an uncomfortable or confusing listening experience with sound coming from a different direction to the person speaking.

You should always avoid pointing the PA directly at the microphone or positioning it behind the microphone as that will cause feedback which is of course is the horrible loud, screeching, and sometimes painful sound that is caused by the



From previous page

reamplification of sound and can actually seriously damage your speaker.

The ideal is to have the sound approaching the guests from a forward, at perhaps a side direction.

The PA should be on a tripod or stand at a height that is correct for either standing or sitting guests. In other words, keep the PA at ear height. If the gathering is small and seated, keep it lower but if large, distant or standing, raise the PA.

Outdoors, a strong wind can be problematic because sound carries through the vibration of air particles but if the air is already in motion, the sound can literally be blown away. Check the wind direction and position the PA accordingly.

MICROPHONE

There are separate and more detailed article in this newsletter specifically covering microphones choice and stands.

International Morse Code

1. The length of a dot is one unit.
2. A dash is three units.
3. The space between parts of the same letter is one unit.
4. The space between letters is three units.
5. The space between words is seven units.

<p>A ● —</p> <p>B — ● ● ●</p> <p>C — ● — ●</p> <p>D — ● ● ●</p> <p>E ● ● ●</p> <p>F ● ● — ●</p> <p>G — — ● ●</p> <p>H ● ● ● ●</p> <p>I ● ● ●</p> <p>J — ● — —</p> <p>K — — ● ●</p> <p>L — ● ● ●</p> <p>M — — ●</p> <p>N — ● —</p> <p>O — — —</p> <p>P — ● — —</p> <p>Q — — ● —</p> <p>R — ● — ●</p> <p>S — ● ● ●</p> <p>T — — — ●</p>	<p>U ● ● —</p> <p>V ● ● ● —</p> <p>W — ● ● ●</p> <p>X — — ● —</p> <p>Y — ● — ●</p> <p>Z — — ● ●</p> <p>1 ● — — — —</p> <p>2 ● — — —</p> <p>3 ● — —</p> <p>4 ● —</p> <p>5 ● ● ● ●</p> <p>6 ● ● ● —</p> <p>7 ● ● — —</p> <p>8 ● ● — ●</p> <p>9 ● ● — ● ●</p> <p>0 — — — — ●</p>
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SOUND CHECKS & PRACTICE

The best way to get the most out of your sound system, is to practice its use.

1. Turn on PA system,
2. Set the master sound dial to about 2 O'clock
3. turn on the microphone receiver
4. Place the belt pack (sender) on a table or raised flat surface about 5 metres from the PA
5. Slowly raise the microphone volume and become aware of the sound that emanates from the speaker beginning with a hollow sound and eventually a howl. Learn the sound point, just before the feedback so that you know the warning signs.

Then try this next test after turning off the belt pack.

1. Put on your belt pack and wearable microphone.
2. Set the microphone volume
3. Step back to about 10 metres.
4. Turn on the belt pack
5. Walk slowly toward the PA
6. When feedback begins, turn off the belt pack and mark the spot
7. Repeat at various angles
8. The more you experiment, the more you learn

These exercises will give you an understanding of variations in positioning during a ceremony.

Protecting PA Plastic Surfaces

Most PA's are essentially a plastic box filled with electronics but if not cared for, that exterior plastic can become faded, scratched and shabby in appearance.

The first rule is protection and prevention.

When it is not in use, keep the batteries charged but store the PA away from extreme temperatures and the weather, which can damage the body, electronics and the battery.

Ensure you have a secure and safe means of transport to prevent bumps and scratches when in transit.

Cover the PA with a weatherproof and insulated or padded cover that will protect your PA from the elements, extreme temperatures, and damage whilst in transit or on site.

Protecting the body - Things you will need

- Plastic polish, restorer, cleaner or preservative
- A bucket of soapy water
- 3 clean cloths
- Hand towel



Step 1 – Clean with a damp cloth

Dampen a cloth with a specialist cleaning product or with soapy water and wipe down your PA being careful not to wet any switches, the speaker, or any components.

Step 2 - Towel dry

Take a clean hand towel and dry off your PA. Make sure it is completely dry before continuing.

Step 3 – apply the polish or restorer.

Spray your product onto a clean, dry cloth and massage the product onto the plastic casing.

Step 4 - Wipe away excess

Step 5 - Polish.

Allow 5-10 minutes for the product to work its magic and then take another clean cloth to buff the surfaces. Ensure all remaining product has been completely removed and a like new shine results.

<https://wd40.com.au/how-to/how-to-protect-plastic-garden-furniture>

SPEAKER STANDS & TRIPODS

This article first appeared in March 2024 and is repeated in this edition to add to the comprehensive information on sound systems for Celebrants.



We often discuss PAs and where to position them and at what height, but what about PA stands and how to use & transport them.

Most PA stands are collapsible and so can break down to an easily transportable size however the weight will vary depending on the design, body type and materials used in manufacture.

The most common design is a height adjustable pole that is supported by three legs (tripod style) that are connected to each other for strength and so uniformly extend from the single centre pole body. These may be made from lightweight aluminium or a heavier steel composite. The vertical pole can be usually adjusted to a couple of metres in height and have a locking pin as well as a locking dial, for safety.

Most PA stands will slot into a standard 35mm top hat in the base of the PA. Chaiyo and perhaps one other brands however have a speaker stand with a 15.9mm top hat designed for small light weight speakers and they use the same stand for larger speakers but with an adapter to upsize to the 35mm standard.

The pole with an inbuilt speaker at its top should also be mentioned though they are mostly for indoor use as part of a complete sound system and not commonly used for PAs.

Other PA stand designs include a thin pole on a flat base. One design mimics a single pole microphone tripod stand while others also have a flat top shelf on which a small PA may rest. The timber frame stand also has a flat top but usually has holes for bolting a speaker though most PAs will not have corresponding holes and besides, the timber frame is not collapsible and so not as easily transported as the tripod frame although it can be made by any home handyperson. Note that if resting your PA on a shelf, it is only gravity that holds the PA in place. Obviously these would only be suitable for smaller sound systems as they would not provide sufficient stability for heavier systems unless they have a steel frame.

A tip here is that a heavier PA body, and larger speaker size, usually means better sound quality. It's the old wood -v- plastic argument in that thin plastic does not usually have the same depth of sound quality achieved from a system that has a timber or sound acoustically insulated body.

One type not yet discussed is the lectern. You will encounter many, especially at chapels and at venues, with an inbuilt or attached microphone but there are also designs that include a cavity for a PA. The advantages of having a lectern with an inbuilt PA is that a control system can be built into the lectern as well as housing the PA and that the front of the lectern can be decorated with logos or similar and so it can be promotional or decorative however



the first consideration is of course would a lectern actually serve your purpose, as they can be obtrusive. The other obvious aspect is that the PA would be housed below ear level which might work for a small funeral but not for a larger crowd as the sound could be lost.



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Depending on the size of the crowd, you will generally want your PA at approximately ear-level for maximum benefit and have a gap of about a metre surrounding the PA so that there is no reverb or directional obstructions from surrounding objects. Higher for bigger crowds.

In positioning a PA system you also want to ensure a line of sight from your wireless microphone or Bluetooth device to minimise interference. Elevation can be helpful here as well.

Depending on crowd and positioning, you may want an auxiliary speaker, also on a stand, to even out the sound. For large crowds the auxiliary speaker carries sound further but for smaller crowds it balances sound ensuring the front row is not blasted out their seats while the back row hears only a distant whisper. For aesthetics, identical stands are best. The auxiliary can be connected wirelessly or by cable but if a cable is used, consideration has to be given to concealing the cable to prevent it from being a trip hazard. A cable trip can not only cause injury but can damage the system, breaking the cable or toppling the expensive PA. If you have a smaller sound system, an auxiliary speaker or two on stands can be very useful. A small system may be great for a crowd of 20 people but when you have 80+, the sound will be great for the front 20 people, but can be muffled or even lost, further back. Time and time again Celebrants with small systems will insist their sound is excellent but the Celebrant usually stands at the front and so will hear what the front 20 people hear and not the muffled sound that the back 20 people experience.



Most stands are height-adjustable and the metal tripods have a safety pin to prevent slippage but it can be a task to lift a heavy PA up onto the stand and to then adjust the height of both before inserting the safety pin into the body. An option

is a windup stand which allow you to place the PA on top and to then simply wind up the stand to the required height. Windup stands are especially good for large crowds where extra height might be needed in open areas

but of course you may need to be able to tilt the PA toward the crowd so that the sound is not projecting into the distance without those nearby being able to

hear the full sound. It should be mentioned that the wind-ups can be considerably more expensive and heavier.

One stand that you will see at concerts and with street vendors is the feedback amplifier or acoustic stand, so called because it is designed so that musicians can place an amplifier close by and easily adjust dials, or place it so that it faces the musician who can hear what is being projected without reverb. Street vendors use them to allow sound to be projected a short distance. The stands for these folds up but often still take up more space than a collapsable tripod stand.

Price is always important. We always balance affordability with quality, but quality should always win out because, as a professional, you need something that is durable, safe, secure, functional and transportable. Metal tripod stands are usually the most versatile and durable, and depending on design, as mentioned, they collapse for ease of transport. Aluminium stands are lighter but steel is stronger and the extra weight provides more stability.

The heavier the material, the greater the weight capacity & stability. As a general rule, the greater the weight the more stable the stand but design and circumstances can have an impact. A flat PA stand base for example, will be stable only on a flat surface; and just because a stand can support a 17 kilo speaker doesn't mean it won't tip over if on an uneven footing, so make certain that your stand can not only hold the weight of your PA but will withstand a bump, wind or uneven ground.

Getting back to design and style, there are many commercial stand designs available but not all are suitable for events. There are single and multiple pole designs with a flat or angled top and others that are wooden box designs which could easily be made by any person handy with tools and timber, but resoundingly the most common choice is the metal tripod however almost all of the tripod speaker stands on the market, have an adjustable height on the centre pole, but unlike camera tripods, the legs of the PA tripod cannot be individually lengthened which means that if the ground is not level, the tripod won't be straight and so could topple on a slope or on uneven ground. The only way to level such a standard tripod is to either dig down to level the uneven legs or place pads under the legs to raise them to an even level. A paver usually does the trick. I have made this point to one manufacturer and they have promised to consider the design but the writer has designed & built a tripod to overcome that issue and it is featured in an earlier edition of this newsletter .

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Any stand can present a trip hazard. One solution is the placing of barriers around the stand or painting safety stripes on the legs but the most aesthetically pleasing is perhaps the speaker stand skirt which can be made at home or purchased online for about \$18-\$36 on eBay.

There are three types:

1. one that simply wraps around the legs of body of the stand like a skirt and is secured with clips or Velcro.
2. another that is like a fitted poncho and so is a cone shaped sheet with a central hole that drops over the stand before the speaker is placed.
3. The third keeps its shape as it has its own free standing frame.

With the first two, it is important to Velcro the skirt to the tripod legs so that the skirt does not become a flapping sail in a breeze but with all three, they need to be weighted or pegged to prevent them becoming airborne in a strong wind.

There are of course other accessories including those that bracket onto the PA stand, many of which are available online or from music stores, golf shops and bargain stores:

1. **iPad holder** allowing a connected iPad to be readily accessible for music selection
2. **Umbrella Holder** offering the PA some weather protection
3. **Shelf** for accessories such as an external CD player, laptop, amplifier controller or to support a booster battery
4. **Lighting Arms** to support DJ lights
5. **Pockets**, soft or solid to hold spare microphones, cables and accessories
6. **Cable hooks** to take up excess cables
7. **Cable tracks** to securely run and tidy any connected cable
8. **Drink holder** to secure your water bottle or coffee
9. **Fan** to help cool the PA or the user.



TRANSPORTING EQUIPMENT

The easy way to transport all your gear from car to ceremony.



Carrying a PA, speakers tripod, lectern, signing table and other nick-nacks can be troublesome, especially if you cannot get your vehicle close to the ceremonial area.

A few years ago I stumbled upon the Kmart beach trolley for just around \$50 and it was great but still a little cumbersome as it only folded in one direction and was tough to pull in some locations. Kmart then began selling a trolley with handles at both ends for around \$20-\$30 more, and it was very manoeuvrable. It even came with a canopy to protect your gear and a large zipped pocket at one end that was perfect for certificate folders.



KMart seems to have stopped selling the later but still sell the original and now a model that collapses in two directions, so that it takes up even less room in your car however, like the very first model, with just a pull handle, it can be difficult to manoeuvre in confined spaces. They are also available at camping, fishing and outdoor stores.

The wheels on all the Kmart trolleys are not great in that although they are described as beach trolleys, the wheels easily bog in soft sand on the beach and you have to get it across to firm, wet sand to easily pull it along. The plastic wheels, though reasonably durable, can deteriorate over time, especially if you carry a lot of weighty gear.

A canopy trolley though can however be purchased online from a variety of retailers and though they can have similar wheels to the Kmart models, seem to be stronger and better quality. The pull handle is definitely stronger, but the adjustable pram handle is the winner as the trolley can be turned easily and manoeuvred even through restaurant spaces and so is great at wedding venues and reception venues as well as in a field or a firm beach.

Beach trolleys vary greatly in quality and price ranging from the \$50 or so at Kmart up to hundreds with tougher frames and pneumatic wheels



MICROPHONE TROUBLESHOOTING

Interference can be caused by a number of internal and external issues whether using a wireless or a wired PA or microphone. Articles in this newsletter cover the positioning of PAs & microphones, and microphone choice, as well as battery care but lets look at some common problems and possible solutions.

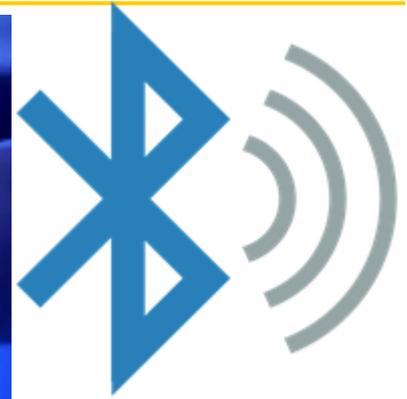
ISSUE	CAUSE	SOLUTION OPTIONS
No Sound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power off • Mic on Mute • Mic not synched to PA • Dead batteries • Sound off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn system & mic on • Take off mute • Synch frequency • Replace batteries • Adjust master and individual mic sound
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat batteries • PA Faulty • Fuse blown (if it has one) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace batteries and/or mic • Switch to wired power using an extension cable • Switch to a backup PA • Get the PA repaired or replaced ASAP • Replace fuse (if it has one)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mic too close to source • Mic held incorrectly • User enunciation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust microphone technique • Use a windsock
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signal Interference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove interference
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User 'fiddles' with Mic switch • Mic held incorrectly • User moves mic or doesn't speak to mic • The user is standing too far away • Sound level too low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure switch with a sleeve, tape, or cable tie. (see below) • Put microphone on a stand • Before the event, teach mic technique • During the event, move the user and the mic closer together • Adjust sound level
Static & interference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-Switch not fully engaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn mic off and then on fully
Static or interference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loose cable, connection or switch • Flat battery in PA, microphone or belt pack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check cable, connections, cable joins, and switch • Check batteries & replace when needed
Static & interference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interference from another signal or a nearby Power Source e.g. radio tower, 2-way radios • magnetic properties in surrounding material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove interference • Change frequency • Move PA • Switch to a secure cable connection
Static & interference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mic held incorrectly • User has 'fiddled' with the switch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before the event, teach user how to operate mic • During event, switch the mic and tell the user how to hold the mic • Tape over the switch to prevent user access
Sound too low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient volume • Wind distortion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust volume
Squealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mic too close to speaker • Volume too high 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reposition PA or Mic • Adjust volume if needed
Wind noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wind on microphone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn and use body as a windshield • Use a windsock in the mic

Celebrant, Phil Timbrell came up with a novel solution to a groom fiddling with a microphone switch. He secured the switch with a cable tie positioning the cable tie lock just under the switch, to prevent it from being moved.



An alternative is to either tape over the switch with insulation tape or apply microphone sleeve.





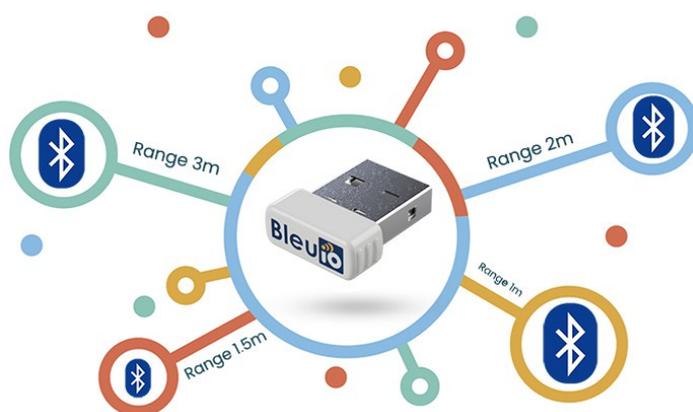
Bluetooth has been around for nearly 25 years and although some suggest there is a better system on the horizon, Bluetooth is continually improving.

Bluetooth LE, 5.0, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and now 5.4 are more powerful than ever, with enormous potential for wireless music and communication.

The limited technical explanation is that Bluetooth devices connect and communicate directly with each other using low-power radio waves on a frequency band between 2.400 GHz and 2.483.5 GHz. [source: [Bluetooth Special Interest Group \(SIG\)](#)].

There have been many advances and the Bluetooth 5.4 is the latest version of the Bluetooth wireless communication standard and has a greater range than earlier versions listed below.

At the best range with Bluetooth 5.4 which is the latest version of the Bluetooth wireless communication standard and has a greater range than earlier versions. Bluetooth 1 for instance, is limited to just 3 metres even in ideal situations.



If the sound system you choose does not have Bluetooth, there are adapters available at electronic goods retailers such as Jaycar, online and from many other suppliers.

The range of a Bluetooth device depends on the type of device, its power output, and the environment in which it is used.

The following is a history of Bluetooth releases which will give you a guide as to which software

version or hardware, your device might have depending upon when your PA was manufactured.

- **Bluetooth 1.0 & 1.1**

Released in 1999, initial versions with a maximum data rate of 732.2 kbps. It was a basic wireless communication for short-range connections.

- **Bluetooth 2.0 + EDR**

Released in 2004, with an Enhanced Data Rate (EDR) up to 3 Mbps. This version improved transmission speed and better power efficiency.

- **Bluetooth 3.0 + HS**

Released 2009, it added High-Speed (HS) mode, allowing data rates of up to 24 Mbps by using Wi-Fi as a co-transport mechanism.

Bluetooth 4.0 (2010): Introduced Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) for low-power devices. Targeted wearable devices, medical sensors, and IoT applications.

- **Bluetooth 4.2**

Released in 2014 and introduced a Low Energy (LE)

- **Bluetooth 5.0**

Released in 2016 and is twice as fast as earlier versions with four times the range and can transfer eight times as much data also with Dual Audio, enabling audio on two connected devices at the same time. It can even detect interference at the edges of the 2.4GHz and neighbouring LTE bands, and automatically prevent it. This should make for clearer music listening from any wireless device. If your device has the right functionality (like Samsung's Bluetooth Dual Audio feature) you can adjust the volume of each independently.

It increased range up to 240 meters and speed up to 2 Mbps). Improved data transfer for smart home devices, industrial applications, and location tracking.

- **Bluetooth 5.1**

Released January 2019

- **Bluetooth 5.2**

Released December 2019/2020, is very common and in 2025 is regarded as a standard. Focus on precise indoor positioning and direction-finding. Improved

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power efficiency and security for connected devices.

• Bluetooth 5.3

Released in July 2021, brought further enhancements in performance, especially in IoT and smart devices, it introduced greater energy efficiency resulting in longer battery life, a more stable wireless connection over long ranges, and less interference and is used in the iPhone 16.

• Bluetooth 5.4

Released February 2023, introduced Periodic Advertising with Response (PAWR), Enhanced support for Electronic Shelf Labels (ESL), Improvements in broadcast channels, increasing scalability for connected devices.

Bluetooth has become the most common way to connect devices wirelessly, and to play music at ceremonies. Celebrants or couples have a playlist that is commonly played through a PA, often the Celebrant's and the music can be heard by all.

The main reasons for its success are:

- affordability,
- ease of use,
- quick and even automatic pairing.
- broad support, with all modern smartphones having Bluetooth integration.

It took some time to build popularity among Celebrants, because early versions such as Bluetooth 1.0, were unreliable and very limited I range.

How Bluetooth Got Its Name

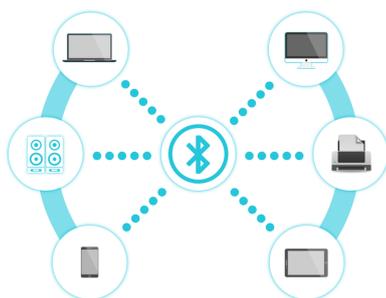
The name Bluetooth is a reference to a Danish King from the 10th century, who united Denmark and Norway. Like King Harald Bluetooth, the technology united different electronic components, allowing them to work together.

How Does Bluetooth Work?

Bluetooth works by using a special Bluetooth receiver and transmitter that sends radio waves between the two devices at a frequency band of 2.4 GHz. Some devices have both the receiver and transmitter built into them, while others may require a Bluetooth adapter. Simply put, Bluetooth connects two devices in a short-range connection.

Unlike traditional Radio Frequencies (RF), Bluetooth is more energy-efficient and can hop between 79

different channels within its 2.4 GHz frequency band to reduce interference. Newer versions of Bluetooth also support AFH (Advanced



Frequency Hopping) for improved results.

This is one of a handful of bands that is set aside by international agreement for the use of industrial, scientific and medical devices (ISM) and so many devices that you may already use take advantage of this same radio-frequency band, including baby monitors, garage-door openers and of course mobile and cordless phones and so make sure that Bluetooth devices and other wireless communications technologies are not within range to interfere with one another is essential. Objects containing water (including humans) can also dampen the signal.

The Bluetooth Pairing Process Across Devices

When connecting your phone to a Bluetooth PA, most devices will have a pairing button that you press to activate the process. Once selected, the pairing process will be complete within a few seconds, and you'll be ready to play music.

Earlier Bluetooth versions were limited to a single connection at a time, meaning you couldn't use one phone to connect to several speakers at the same time, however, Auracast enables one source device (such as a phone) to connect to multiple speakers where ass support Auracast, to play the same audio across multiple speakers simultaneously.

Device Classes

There are three classes of device utilising Bluetooth, that offer three standard *intended* ranges under ideal conditions:

Class 1 devices transmit at 100 mW with a range of 100 metres. Which is what you want in your PA.

Class 2 devices transmit at 2.5 mW with a range of 10 metres. These are commonly earpieces, headsets and headphones.

Class 3 devices transmit at 1 mW with a range of just 1 - 10 metres

Factors Affecting Bluetooth Range

Several factors can affect the range of a Bluetooth device, including:

Physical barriers:

Crowds of people, steel rooves & canopies, walls, floors, and ceilings can block or weaken Bluetooth signals, reducing the range of the device.

Interference from other devices:

Other devices that operate on the same frequency band, such as Wi-Fi routers and cordless phones,



Continued next page

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 garage doors openers, baby monitors, mobile phones, can interfere with Bluetooth signals and reduce their range.

Device type and quality:

The type and quality of the Bluetooth device can affect its range, with higher-quality devices generally having a longer range.

Outdated or poorly designed software

In March/April 2025, signal range significantly decreased in some devices after a phone software update but that was corrected in another update in April 2025.

Extending Bluetooth Range

The simplest method of increasing Bluetooth range is to simply remove interference.

Bluetooth waves can sometimes be disrupted by things like electrical connections, walls, metal pipes, trees, people, obstructions and competing signals. You can reduce interference by bringing your devices closer together, and so minimize the obstructions while improving the strength of your connection.

Next, turn off competing Bluetooth signals, meaning, ask guests to turn off their mobile phone.

With some devices, you may be able to attach an external antenna to improve the range of a Bluetooth device. External antennas can be connected to the device using a cable or wirelessly using a Bluetooth antenna adapter or a USB extension cable to move the Bluetooth adapter to a location with better reception.

If that doesn't work, you might need to update your device and ensure you have the latest Bluetooth software however, a signal repeaters or extender can triple your range.

The easily installed class 2 Bluetooth extender is often the most common device, capable of operating at around 2.5 milliwatts, and connecting devices about 10 metres apart by either sending or receiving, and repeating the signal.

Using a Bluetooth Repeater or Extender

A Bluetooth repeater or extender is a device that can receive a Bluetooth signal and retransmit it, effectively extending the range of the device. These devices are available in various forms, including standalone devices and USB adapters.

Bluetooth range extenders work by receiving a Bluetooth signal and retransmitting it. They typically



consist of a receiver and a transmitter, which are connected using a cable or wirelessly using a Bluetooth connection.

An extender can be purchased online for as little as \$9, though models and prices vary, they can add 100 metres to the range. They are easy to install however always test on location because high levels of interference can still reduce effectiveness, and there may be a signal latency or delay in the Bluetooth connection. Some also require a power source, which can be inconvenient.

Some range extenders may only work with certain types of Bluetooth devices, so:

- Check compatibility before purchasing as some Bluetooth devices use a type of technology that is not compatible with range extenders or repeaters
- research product reviews
- consider the power requirements as some require being plugged into a power outlet



- [Cracking the Code: Is Apple Laptop Good for Coding?](#)
- [Powering Your Devices: The World of USB Charging](#)
- [The Big Screen Showdown: Which Lasts Longer, A TV or Projector?](#)
- [The Ultimate Guide to HDMI Cable Extension: How Long Can You Stretch It?](#)
- [Charging Conundrum: Does Micro USB Charge Slower than USB-C?](#)
- [Connecting the Dots: A Comprehensive Guide to Linking an Interface to Your Computer](#)
- [Unlocking the Secrets of BOSS Bluetooth: What's the Pin?](#)
- [Boosting Bluetooth Signals: Can You Extend the Range of a Bluetooth Device? - Easy Tech Solver](#)
- [What Is The Range Of Bluetooth & How Can It Be Extended?](#)

Device Type	Range Extension	Price Range
Bluetooth Repeater	Up to 100 metres (330 feet)	\$9-\$50
Bluetooth Extender	Up to 200 metres (660 feet)	\$50-\$100



Protecting Equipment

Both rain and heat can play havoc with electrical equipment. On a cool mountain day, a PA can still cut out because of overheating from direct sunlight and the weather can change anywhere for a calm day to a blustering storm. Hence we need to protect our expensive equipment.

An all weather cover is available for Mipro systems but whilst it shades the PA while also protecting it from rain,, the insulation could contribute to overheating on a hot day. So what are the option?

Placing the PA in a shaded area always helps but is not always possible. A portable gazebo or sun shade can work but are not usually the best option for a ceremony.

Plastic PC covers can sometimes be found at budget stores for under \$4, they perhaps best described as a plastic bag that is shaped to fit over a personal computer but the size is also suitable for many PAs

In the December 2022 Newsletter, Phil Timbrell told us how he made a small modification to an umbrella so that he could attach it to his Roland PA. He simply connected a plastic threaded attachment to the stem of his umbrella and screwed a corresponding



connector to his PA. Phil warned that the system is NOT suitable for windy conditions and of course we cannot always predict when a gust of wind will arrive. I recall one ceremony in the mountains that started and ended with beautiful clear blue skies but in between we has a huge gust of wind that blew the lectern and other things over, and 10 seconds of heavy rain that dried out in the subsequent sunshine.

Another umbrella option is a golf umbrella



Golf Umbrella



holder which can be purchased for \$4 to \$60 but average around \$25.

There are basically two types that have many variations, one that has a highly adjustable longer arm, and the other that is essentially an adjustable clamp base. Either can be mounted onto the upright of your PA

tripod but of course you have to buy an umbrella as well. A good quality Golf umbrellas is best because not only are they bigger, but they have vents or a double canopy, with top layer overlapping the lower section so as to allow for wind and so are very slightly less prone to be uplifted in a light breeze though any umbrella will still uplift in a strong gust.

The cheaper alternative to the golf umbrella holder, is the camp chair umbrella which, like the golf

umbrella holder, has a clamp to attach to your PA upright, and it has a flexible arm to allow you to tilt toward the sun. Just check that the clamp is large enough for your tripod.

What has not been mentioned are transparent, plastic PC covers. Designed for older style, bulky PC screens or PC casing, they are very cheap at variety stores and can be used to protect your PA from rain but may muffle sound and prevent heat from escaping.

[Camp Chair Umbrella - Navy - Kmart](#)

WARNING

Do not use an umbrella in windy conditions as the umbrella can become a sail, tipping over your PA, or it could snap off and become an airborne projectile, so use only when safe.

Are Lithium Batteries safe in your PA system?

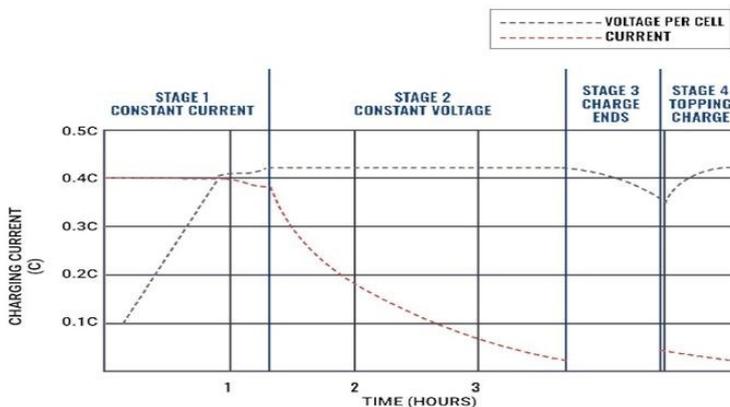
Article by Celebrant &
Engineer,
Phil Timbrell



If you have purchased a public address (PA) system in the last few years, chances are it has a Lithium battery fitted. If you don't live under a rock, the chances are you have heard of many houses and units catching on fire due to Lithium batteries exploding. So how safe are Lithium batteries and are they worth the risk?

I will keep this article as least technical as possible, however it is worth understanding the differences between Lithium batteries (LiFePO4) and Lead Acid (SLA) batteries, as we rarely hear of an SLA battery exploding.

I will start with a simple graph. The dotted line at the top of the graph represents the voltage of the lithium battery whilst it is being charged. Soon after reaching nominal voltage the current being pushed into the battery (the lower dotted line) starts to drop off according to a well defined curve. If the current being pushed in is too high then the battery may overheat and finally catch fire and explode. Lithium batteries do explode more violently than SLA batteries.



The reason batteries are not catching fire and exploding during the charge cycle in people's PA systems, is that they are fitted with what is called an "intelligent charger" which monitors the voltage and time and then gradually reduces the current source. Eventually the intelligent charger will switch off or go into sleep mode. So if you have purchased a good name brand PA from a shop front here in Australia, you can rest easy that your system should not catch fire.

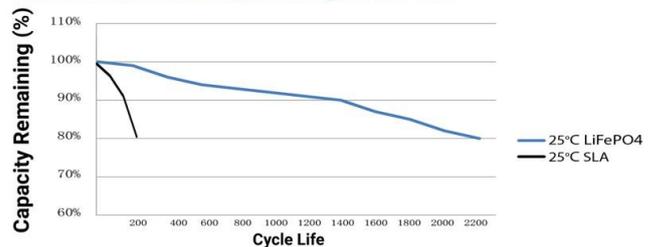
The charge cycle for an SLA battery is quite different. In fact I have an intelligent charger that can be programmed for LiFePO4 or for SLA.

The charger has a specific charge cycle to work with a Lithium battery and a different charge cycle to work with a Lead Acid battery.



CYCLE LIFE of LiFePO4 vs SLA at 25°C
0.2C CHARGE/0.5C DISCHARGE @ 100% DOD

POWERPSONIC



Comparing LiFePO4 vs SLA battery cycle life

I have found a local company selling replacement lithium batteries for a Mipro 707, 708 and 808 claiming the Lithium batteries (these use a pair of batteries) for \$650 are drop in replacements. I seriously warn against this. I believe if a system is designed for a lead acid battery and you want to change battery technology then change the whole PA system. The nominal voltage for a 4S LiFePO4 battery is roughly 13.5 volts against approximately 12 volts for a lead acid, and whilst this may not cause any damage to the system it is not the voltage (VCC) the system was designed for and more importantly the battery management system was designed for.

The final question then is, should you embrace the lithium technology when you next buy a PA system or avoid it? I say embrace it if it is purchased from a local reputable dealer. LiFePO4 batteries are lighter, hold a greater charge, charge more quickly and can hold a charge longer than SLA batteries. They can also withstand 10 times as many charge recharge cycles as an SLA battery (see chart below) so will probably outlast your PA system. The only downside is they are more expensive.

So why do so many eBikes and eScooters catch on fire? If you listen carefully to the news, most catch fire early in the morning whilst on charge. Clearly the on line, faceless vendor, is selling a charging system

From previous page

that is not suited to the batteries in order to save cost – the batteries overcharge after a few hours of charging eventually catching fire and exploding early in the morning.

One final word however – **you should never leave any batteries on charge overnight.**

Charging a PA system should be done where you can keep an eye on it. To prolong battery life for both SLA and LiFePO4 batteries, they should be stored with fully charged batteries in a room or garage that does not experience extreme heat or cold. Hope this clarifies the situation.



ALKALINE BATTERY TIP

To extend the life of disposable batteries in microphones and senders, take the batteries out after use and store them in a cool, dry place.

BATTERY TESTER



How many batteries have you thrown out after your microphone has cut out or crackled during a ceremony because you suspected they were flat or your microphone was indicating that the charge was low?

Commonly when this occurs, it is the PA batteries which last about 2 years that are at fault but it can just as easily be the microphone batteries.

You check the charge indicator on your microphone and it shows low power and so you immediately replace all the batteries however that may not be necessary because just one battery out of the two or four batteries inside the microphone or sender might be faulty or low in charge and yet you replace 2 or 4 not knowing that you are disposing of good batteries. The solution is an easy to use a battery tester to make certain that only faulty or depleted batteries are disposed of.

Duracell batteries used to be the very best battery for a great many years but now they often weaken or come close to depletion after just one ceremony and so have to be replaced before the next.

Eveready have overtaken Duracell as the most reliable and durable alkaline battery but they still need to be checked regularly.

The best advice is to keep a stock of spare batteries which you probably already do but you can also quickly and easily test your batteries before and after each ceremony.

The Arlec Battery Tester, is a little beauty device that is simple to use and gives you an instant battery indication. The photo show its actual size on an A4 print.

The contacts on the base enables testing of 9V batteries while the sliding contact on the side of the device enables testing of small button type lithium batteries up to D cells but of course you will most likely only use it for testing 9V or AA batteries.

The Arlec battery tester was recommended by Celebrant Phil Timbrell, and is now an essential tool for all Celebrants.

You can find the tester at Bunnings and Jaycar for about \$12 to \$18 or on eBay for anywhere from \$7 to \$28. Batteries also are sometimes cheaper there.

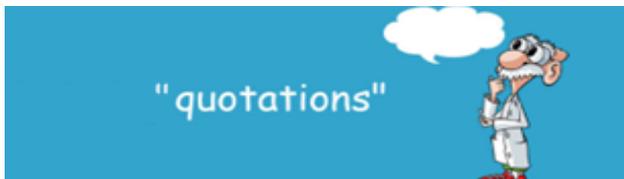
TIP: To extend the life of your alkaline batteries, remove them from your microphone after use and keep them in a cool, dry place. Do Not leave them in your car where they can overheat. Using ‘budget’ batteries is NOT recommended because although they may be cheaper, the discharge rate may be erratic and worse still, they might leak and damage equipment.



These nifty battery holders are available from Jaycar and other distributors for about \$3 and online, to help keep your batteries tidy and in good condition.

12 TIPS TO PROLONG LITHIUM BATTERIES

- 1) Power off the PA and Mics when not in use
- 2) Fully charge before storing
- 3) Most lithium-ion polymer batteries use a fast charge to 90% over two hours and then trickle charge over another 2 hours to full capacity if the PA is not in use. Give it time.
- 4) Full discharges, especially if repeated, reduce battery life.
- 5) A partial discharge only, and then full recharge, prolongs the battery life, even if repeated.
- 6) Avoid keeping the battery in high temperatures, especially when fully charged.
- 7) If the PA has built-in automatic protection circuitry, it is OK to leave the PA plugged in as it will auto-shutoff when fully charged and so this won't harm the system. If it does not have built-in automatic protection circuitry, never leave it unattended.
- 8) If the PA is not in regular use, give it a full charge every 3-6 months, regardless.
- 9) Never freeze the battery.
- 10) Never allow the battery to overheat.
- 11) Store the PA/batteries in a cool, dry place away from extreme temperatures.
- 12) Use only quality batteries from reliable sources.



20 Wedding Instagram Captions for Newlyweds

These wedding captions found on Instagram.

1. "Two souls, one heart #ForeverYours"
2. "Happily ever after starts now"
3. "Our love story begins today #JustMarried"
4. "Together is a beautiful place to be"
5. "From this day forward, you'll never walk alone"
6. "The best part of our wedding? We got each other"
7. "Sealed with a kiss #Newlyweds"
8. "Forever and always starts here"
9. "The beginning of our forever #WeddingBliss"
10. "We did a thing—now let's live happily ever after!"
11. "I choose you, today and every day"
12. "Together forever, never apart"
13. "The adventure of a lifetime begins now"
14. "Now we can annoy each other forever #MarriedLife"
15. "You're my today and all of my tomorrows"
16. "Here's to love, laughter, and our happily ever after"
17. "I've found my forever #FinallyHitched"
18. "Love is the greatest adventure, and ours just began"
19. "You're my happily ever after"
20. "We said yes to forever"

https://www.edimakor.net/video-editing-tips/wedding-captions-for-instagram.html?gad_source=5&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIiqL94qvjAMVKyWDAx0DOWk8EAAYBCAAEgL36fD_BwE



I Place A Rose

By Lou Szymkow (a funeral poem)

I want to say, that I love you,
I feel an emptiness inside

I want to say, I miss you
I just want to hide

I want to say, so much to you
I just don't know how

This wretched pain inside of me
My throat, my heart, my now.

And so I have a gift for you,
My love, in the form of a rose
I'll hold it to my lips
And whisper my loving prose

It's my special message just for you
It's private and from my soul
I want you to remember me,
Though impossible to console,

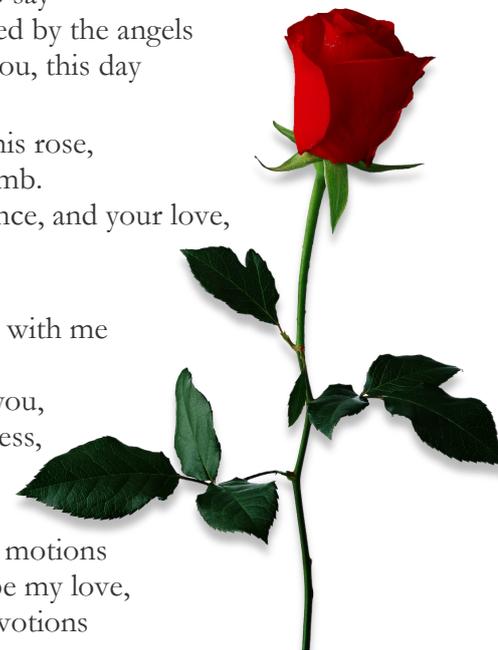
My words, my love, are meant for you
And reaches from my heart
I just don't know how to live,
Now we are apart

And so I whisper to the petals
The words I want to say
So they will be carried by the angels
From my heart, to you, this day

I breath and place this rose,
gently upon your tomb.
And feel your presence, and your love,
in this very room

I know now you are with me
I feel your caress
I'll go on living for you,
I could do nothing less,

I'll walk, I'll talk,
And go through the motions
But every step will be my love,
for you, my daily devotions





TIME FOR OPD 2025

New Guidelines

The Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 for authorised celebrants has been a long-valued resource for authorised celebrants, and includes a comprehensive outline of legal requirements set out in the Marriage Act and Marriage Regulations 2017 and best practice. Given that law and policies evolve over time, we are pleased to announce that an overhaul of the Guidelines is close to completion. MLCS has been working with the Celebrant Associations and Networks to prepare new draft Guidelines that will soon be open for a three-month consultation. Expect an email with further information, a link to the draft, and instructions on how to provide feedback.

The **compulsory professional development activities for 2025** are now available for completion via the Marriage Celebrants Portal, free of charge.

The activities are set out in the:

[Marriage \(Celebrant Professional Development\) Statement 2025](#)

That is available on the Federal Register of Legislation.

The compulsory activities are:

- ◇ **Real Consent (2025 refresher)**
⇒ 60-minute duration
- ◇ **Knowledge of the Law (No 1)**
⇒ 60-minute duration

Your obligations

You must complete the compulsory activities by **11.59PM on 31 December 2025 (Canberra local time)**.

Under s 39G(1)(b) of the *Marriage Act 1961* it is a legal obligation for registered marriage celebrants to undertake all professional development activities required by the Registrar of Marriage Celebrants.



Failure to do so (subject to any exemption granted) may result in disciplinary measures being taken, which may include a caution, additional professional development activities, suspension or deregistration.

Exemption applications

If you have an exceptional circumstance that will prevent you from undertaking this important obligation for a significant period of the professional development year, you may apply for an exemption:

[Guidelines for exemption from ongoing professional development requirements | Attorney-General's Department \(ag.gov.au\)](#).

Marriage Celebrants Portal

Information on accessing the marriage celebrants portal is available at: [Marcel Portal \(ag.gov.au\)](#).

Please note: Celebrants accessing the portal for the first time will need to set up multifactor authentication using your registered email address. If you have not accessed the portal in the past twelve (12) months, you will need to reset your password.

Please contact MLCS (AG) via the details below if you have any questions about completing your compulsory professional development for 2025, or if you do not have access to the Marriage Celebrants Portal.

Marriage Law & Celebrants Section
Attorney-General's Department
3-5 National Circuit Barton ACT 2600

E: marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au

T: 1800 550 343

USEFUL LINKS ON THE AG'S WEBPAGE



- [Marriage forms](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [Downloads](#)
- [Contact details](#)
- [Related links](#)
- Visit [CanPrint Communications](#) or [email them](#) for more information.
- **A copy of AG approval letter for CanPrint: [Authorisation of CanPrint to supply the Form 15 Certificate of Marriage](#)**
- [Template for Certificate of Marriage for Civil Ceremonies](#)
- [Template for Certificate of Marriage for Religious Ceremonies](#)
- [Sample Certificate of Marriage for Civil Ceremonies](#)
- [Sample Certificate of Marriage for Religious Ceremonies](#)
- [Statutory declarations](#)
- [Marriage Celebrants Self Service Portal](#)

[Federal Register of Legislation - Marriage Act 1961](#)



Avoiding 'Place of Marriage' errors in eRegistry

The NSW BDM has issued instructions to ensure accurate information is entered into the 'Place of Marriage' fields on Lifelink.

NSW BDM says that when completing a marriage notification in eRegistry, it's important to enter the correct details in the appropriate fields to avoid errors.

- **Location Field:** Only use the 'Location' field if you are recording a specific place name, such as a park, restaurant, beach, church, or any other distinct venue.

Suburb/Town/City Field: The 'Suburb/Town/City' field should be used to list the general area of the marriage, such as the suburb or town.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

If you enter the same suburb name in both the 'Location' field and the 'Suburb/Town/City' field, the name will appear twice on the marriage certificate. This will result in an error that requires a correction.

Correct	Incorrect
<p>Place of Marriage</p> <p>Location * <input type="text" value="Governor Park"/></p> <p>Country <input type="text" value="Australia"/></p> <p>Address Line 1 * <input type="text"/></p> <p>Address Line 2 <input type="text"/></p> <p>Suburb/Town/City * <input type="text" value="Palm Beach"/></p> <p>State/Territory <input type="text" value="NSW"/></p>	<p>Place of Marriage</p> <p>Location * <input type="text" value="Governor Park, Palm Beach"/></p> <p>Country <input type="text" value="Australia"/></p> <p>Address Line 1 * <input type="text"/></p> <p>Address Line 2 <input type="text"/></p> <p>Suburb/Town/City * <input type="text" value="Palm Beach"/></p> <p>State/Territory <input type="text" value="NSW"/></p>

Marriage Celebrant Quick Reference Guide

The NSW BDM has created a Marriage Celebrant Quick Reference Guide.

This quick reference guide covers the frequently asked questions they receive about eRegistry notifications, ordering certificates and correcting errors.

Due to the high volume of enquiries they receive, they recommend that you read this document and watch the eRegistry tutorial videos on the NSW BDM website before contacting the NSW BDM.

[Marriage Celebrant Quick Reference Guide](#)



Marriage Celebrant Quick Reference Guide

This quick reference guide covers the frequently asked questions we receive about eRegistry notifications, ordering certificates and correcting errors.

Due to the high volume of enquiries we receive, we recommend that you read this document and watch the eRegistry tutorial videos on our website before contacting us.

NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages | November 2024

Click this link for Lifelink Tutorials: [\(68\) eMarriage Video Tutorials - YouTube](#)

NSW BDM SURVEY

The NSW BDM asserts that they are dedicated to enhancing the way they support and communicate with Marriage Celebrants. and have introduced an ongoing survey that will be included in their newsletters.

They invite you to take part in this survey and share your feedback on our communications with you.

[Complete the NSW BDM survey](#)



Pulse Survey - Marriage Celebrants

At the Registry, we are committed to continually improving the way we communicate and deliver our services. Your feedback will help us ensure we are meeting your needs.

Participation is voluntary and will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

For more information on how your personal information may be collected please see our [Privacy Collection Notice](#).



Why Network? What's in it for me?

Article based on training, experience &:

<https://www.michaelpage.com.au/advice/career-advice/career-progression/benefits-networking>

It's a question that you may ask when considering whether to take part in a mutual support group such as the AMC South Coast Region, but also ask yourself, "How can I contribute?"

I have been a member of business networks for all of my professional life and benefitted from all. One business network resulted in a number of lifelong friendships and for me as a Celebrant, has also resulted in about 6 ceremonies so far while another network has given me about 15 referrals over time. Each ceremony you do, creates opportunity for the next.

We are all members of networks from birth, beginning with family, school, friends, clubs, sports and work. Each has its benefits when beginning with trust and support, and when it comes to a professional network, being willing to learn and to contribute, can be the difference between a mediocre and a professional.

Here are some advantages of being a part of a local Celebrancy support group.



Overcome isolation & Gain friendships

Isolation has two forms, physical and emotional.

It can take 3-4 hours to drive from one end of our region to another and so maybe there are no backup celebrant close by, so there are great benefits in knowing who else is around and what their style of delivery is. Only another celebrant can help you in such a circumstance.

It is wonderful delivering a ceremony but can be exhausting. Only a Celebrant knows the foibles, emotions and exhaustion experienced by the delivery of

a ceremony . You can debrief with a walk, partner, spouse, or bottle of wine but it is your Celebrant buddy who will best understand how you feel when your mic crackles and the Bluetooth fails.

That like mindedness can also lead to long term, strong friendships.



Strengthen in local connections

If you are to go to a new venue or deal with another vendor, other local celebrants might be able to give you guidance to help you get the most out of the occasion. e.g. when I by chance met Robyn Foster at a site she knew well, she was able to give me some valuable tips and tricks unique to the site.

Networking is about sharing, not taking. It is about forming trust and helping one another toward goals. Regularly engaging with your contacts and finding opportunities to assist them helps to strengthen the relationship. By doing this, you sow the seeds for reciprocal assistance when you need help to achieve your goals.

Get fresh ideas

Other Celebrants can be an excellent source of innovative ideas and trends to help you in your role. Exchanging information on challenges,



experiences, venues, vendors and goals is a key benefit of being a part of this group as it allows you to gain new insights or alternate ideas that you may not have otherwise thought of.

Celebrants usually love helping others and most enjoy being asked for help as it can be flattering and makes them feel useful.

Offering helpful ideas in return is an excellent way to build your reputation as an innovative thinker.

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Raise your profile & Reputation

It is often said that all advertising is good advertising and the other group member, rather than being your direct competition, may be a source of inspiration and good for business.

Being visible, by regularly attending professional and social events will help make your face known and getting noticed is a benefit of networking that's essential to business growth.

If I have a couple who want a ceremony on a beach two hours south of me but don't have the budget to cover my travel fees, I know there are other Celebrants I can refer them to. That keeps the business on the South Coast, benefits a group member, and instils a level of trust that will be remembered so that when that same client has friend who wants another ceremony, that client will know two celebrants that they can refer, and I have confidence that the other celebrant will reciprocate.



Gain more knowledge

Samuel Johnson is quoted as saying:

“Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it.”

This group and the wider AMC are an incredible opportunity to exchange best ideas, trends, practical knowledge, techniques and so much more.

None of us has all the answers but collectively but the knowledge of the many, is far greater than the knowledge of the one.

Get advice and support

Gaining the advice of other Celebrants is an important benefit of membership.

You can gain guidance by discussing familiar challenges and opportunities while gaining an incite problem solving.

Offering genuine assistance to your contacts also sets a durable foundation for receiving support in return when you need it.

Build confidence

By stepping outside your comfort zone you can build on

social skills and self-confidence. The more you network, the more you'll grow and learn how to make lasting connections.



Gain a different perspective

It's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day and end up in a rut or writer's block.

By sharing with other Celebrants, you can gain insights that only come from viewing a situation with fresh eyes. Asking for opinions from contacts you trust or admire can help you see things in a new light and overcome roadblocks that you might not have known how to circumvent otherwise.



Get an answer to every question

As long as you have a strong network of professional connections, you can be confident that someone within your sphere will be able to answer even your toughest questions. And, if there's no definitive answer, you'll have a solid sounding board to bounce ideas off and put into action step-by-step plans to tackle bigger problems.

Maybe get referrals while building trust



If I have a couple who want a ceremony on a beach two hours south of me, but they don't have the

budget to cover my travel fees, I know there are other Celebrants I can refer them to. That instils a level of trust that will be remembered so that when that same client has friend who wants another ceremony, that client will know two celebrants that they can refer.

If there is a double booking at a venue, your

Continued next page

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being able to refer the venue and/or client to another trusted celebrant in the region can build trust and faith in your ability to deliver and that celebrant is then more likely to reciprocate.

If a couple is not a good fit for you, or you not for them, referring them to another local celebrant who you know will be a good match, highlights your professionalism while instilling a level of trust that will be remembered and when that same client has friend who wants another ceremony, or the other celebrant finds themselves in a similar circumstance, you can be confident of a cross referral.



I have made so many friends on social media, I thought I would try to emulate this in real life, applying the very same principles.

Every day I walk down the street and tell passers-by what I have had to eat, how I feel at that moment, what I did the night before, and what I will do later and with whom.

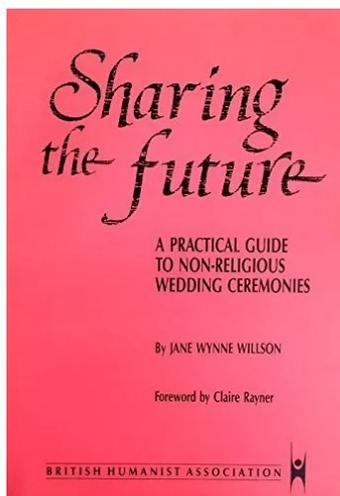
I give them pictures of my family, my dog, my lawn, and of me gardening, taking things apart in the shed, watering the lawn, standing in front of landmarks, driving around town, having a beer and doing what anyone does every day.

I also listen to their conversations, give them the 'thumbs up' or 'thumbs down' and tell them that I either like them, or that I don't and what I think of their opinions.

And so far it is working as I already have four people following me, two Police officers, a private investigator and a psychiatrist.

COMMON WORD ERRORS

WORD PAIR	MEANING	EXAMPLE
Vow/Vowel	Vow: to make a determined decision or promise Vowel: A sound from the vocal cords, forming the prominent sound of a syllable	I vow to love you for all of my life and to pronounce the vowels a, e, i, o, u, w, correctly
Affect/Effect	Affect: to influence Effect: a result or outcome	The weather can affect your mood, but sunshine has a positive effect
Accept/Except	Accept: to receive Except: Not including	I will accept all the weddings gifts, except the toasters
Compliment/Complement	Compliment: a flattering comment Complement: something that completes or goes well with something	She gave me a nice compliment , saying my shoes complement my wedding dress
Principle/Principal	Principle: A fundamental assumption or guiding belief. Principal: A person in charge	The principal explained the school's principle of moral education.
Stationary/Stationery	Stationary: Not moving Stationery: writing materials	The car was stationary while I was in the store buying stationery
Their/Their/They're	Their: belonging to them There: in that place They're: they are	They're bringing their own flowers to put there .
Your/You're	Your: belonging to you You're: you are	Your ideas are always great as you're so creative
Lose/Loose	Lose: to not win, or to misplace Loose: not tight	The bride could lose her footing on the loose steps.
Then/Than	Then: next or afterwards Than: used for comparison	We had a ceremony, then a reception and the groom's speech was better than expected
Advice/Advise	Advice: a recommendation or guidance Advise: to give guidance or suggestions	The celebrant gave good advice when we were advised to use words



Sharing the Future: A Practical Guide to Non-religious Wedding Ceremonies.

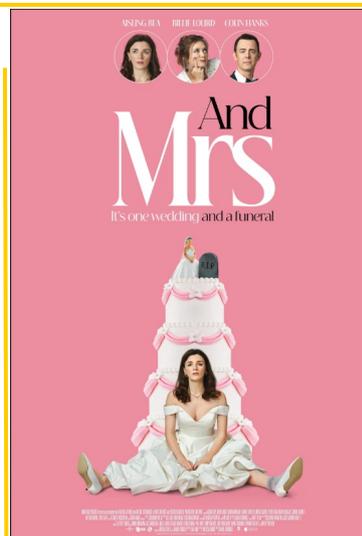
The author, Jane Wynne Willson has been involved in the humanist movement locally (UK), nationally and internationally since the 1960s and has written a number of books on non-

religious ceremonies including *Funerals Without God* (1989), *New Arrivals*, and of course *Sharing the Future*. Born in 1933, she is a British teacher, writer, campaigner and Humanist. She was a vice-president and now a patron of Humanists UK. *Sharing the Future* was first published as *To Love and to Cherish*, 1988 as a 32 pages, paperback 15 years after Civil Ceremonies began in Australia but is still highly regarded by Humanists. If you take out the music scores which happen to be religious, and you have a few less pages and so it is fairly quick read. She does mention that “*God has all the best tunes*”.

Sample Ceremonies and excerpts from others are included and given the age of the publication, you may find some of the language, terminology and references to law outdated however it is still an interesting read that can offer ideas on wording and content of a wedding ceremony, and has some historical value in the development of humanist ceremonies.

In September 2021, the Jane Wynne Willson Celebrant Training Bursary was announced, to be awarded annually to help more people in the UK West Midlands, especially those from low income socio-economic backgrounds and currently underrepresented groups, to train as Humanist celebrants.

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Wynne_Willson
- <https://newhumanist.org.uk/contributors/2304/jane-wynne-willson>
- <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2672166-sharing-the-future>



And Mrs A movie review by Kim Piper



AND MRS is a comedy, released on 20th September 2024 and is currently streaming on Netflix. It is a touching and compelling dive into feelings of commitment and the thought of everlasting love.

As the title implies, there is no Mr...he passes away before the big day.

As the story back tracks to their courtship, it reveals a reluctant bride Gemma, (*BAFTA winner Aisling Bea*), living in London, becoming engaged to romantic American, Nathan, (*Emmy-nominee Colin Hanks*) as she drags her feet through pre-wedding planning. She loves him, but is not convinced of the whole “*everlasting love*” thing.

After his sudden passing shortly before their wedding day, and with some help and encouragement from her slightly crazy, almost sister-in-law, Audrey (*Billie Lourd*), she decides to go ahead and marry him anyway.

Yes, she wants to marry a dead man!

To do this she has to overcome the law of the land, public opinion, his family’s complexities, and the objections of her own family.

This is a beautifully crafted, heartfelt script that tugs at all emotions. Oh, and look for the Aussies.

It’s a dark, but somewhat comedic look at love, grief, loss and how everyone handles it differently.

As for Ceremony ideas, you get not one, but two innovative ceremonies including an insight into a funeral Celebrant appallingly just making stuff up!

It’s raw, real and earthy, including the language, and all set to the background music of *The Partridge Family*’s, “*I think I love you*”.

It also contains some memorable quotes to linger on:

- ◇ “*I’ve been sitting alone in the dark, and I didn’t realise it, till you turned on the lights*”.
- ◇ “*One, or one hundred and one, you are never ready to say goodbye*”.

And the best for last for all we fellow Celebrants.. “*People do weird shit for love*”.

Watch it, have a laugh, cry and enjoy.

PS the credits are extra special and an emotional journey alone.



CELEBRANT CHECKLIST



Keep yourself organised with Checklists to remove doubt, guesswork, and stress ensuring you have absolutely everything ready. Each Celebrant has their own method of preparation and so it is best to create your own unique checklist. Start by going to the Guidelines and exploring the checklist on document preparation. The next step is to list every single task you undertake to prepare for a ceremony and what you need to take with you. Grouping items can simplify the process. In the sample below, clothing items are included because the one time that I didn't take a spare clothing, there was a coffee spill and a trouser tear, but a checklist ensures the same problem never occurs twice.

Going through step by step ensures everything is covered, and then add or remove items as needed and/or suits your own work process

Take into consideration anything you have left behind in past ceremonies—they are a must list. Consider what backups you have when things go wrong, who to call and what equipment you might need to work around an unexpected problem—expect the unexpected.

In the sample below, you will notice that each item has a checkbox to the left and to the right. I go over the checklist and tick the left for items that I need and then once the car is packed, I tick the box on the right showing every item is in the car. That way nothing is left to chance or forgotten in a focused rush to get to a ceremony. Then consider creating a checklist for marketing or for business success.

What will you add to your checklist?

DOCS		RITUALS		CANDLES	
<input type="checkbox"/> Legal Docs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ring Cushion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Candle Lantern	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Certificate Envelope	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Signing Pens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Lantern stand/table	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> NOIM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Registry Stand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Candle Large	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Ceremony booklet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Lectern	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Lighter	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Reader 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Lectern cover	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Reader 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Lectern pegs/clips	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Party 1 Vows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Cords/Ribbons	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Party 2 Vows	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		
EQUIPMENT		MUSIC & TECH		CLOTHING	
<input type="checkbox"/> PA/s	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Music List	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Shirt	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> speaker tripod/s	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Music up/downloaded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tie	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Microphones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> iPad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Shirt spare	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Microphone Stand/s	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> iPad stand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Trousers & belt spare	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Signing Table or lectern	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Music on CD/DVD/USB	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Jacket	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Signing Table cover	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Batteries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Jacket spare	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Equip Weather Cover	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Phone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Shoes	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Tripod Weights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ZOOM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Vest	<input type="checkbox"/>
EMERGENCY CONTACTS		SUNDRY			
<input type="checkbox"/> Bride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sewing Kit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Screwdriver	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Groom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Nail clippers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Venue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Panadol & Ibuprofen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Stanley knife	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Wedding Planner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Deodorant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Table Clips	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Backup Celebrant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Comb/Brush	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pliers	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Phone List		<input type="checkbox"/> Water/drinks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Backup Box		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

COORDINATOR COMMENTS



Hard to believe it is May 2025 already but so much has taken place in just a few months which were extraordinarily busy for me and I hope they were for you as well.

There are horrific wars on the other side of the world; a change of government in the USA & a stock market crash that followed which saw superannuation funds take a dive. It is hard to rationalise that a change in government in another country might impact on our work as Celebrants but the resulting stock market losses may mean that investors, who are Mums & Dads in Australia may have less cash for weddings. That is just crazy but we have to wait and see and just keep on going as we always do because love never fails and people still wish to marry.

In May of course we have a Federal election and many Celebrants, including the writer, bring in some extra income working casually for the AEC. While all that is happening, I am pleased to add to that our AMC has continued its incredible advances that have brought an astounding leap forward in governance. There is still a lot of work going on in the background but progress is being made. I know that a part of the future strategy is to work on growing the AMC even further to bring in new and younger members while working toward better communication and services for existing members. Many are impressed with the new committee especially in their diligence in regard to good governance.

Well done AMC!

I hope you have enjoyed this newsletter edition as it was an incredible amount of work to put together and special thanks to contributors such as Phil Timbrell. What a great and helpful guy he is, ever generous with his good counsel!

The front page article outlines content and so I will just add that I sincerely hope that you find it all helpful making this newsletter a valuable resource.

Next month, I will tackle some of the OPD questions. Keep well, keep smiling and happy Celebrating. **YOU GOT THIS!**

KNOWLEDGE BASE

QUESTION: How do I perform a marriage ceremony with a co-celebrant?

This is confusing for some but it shouldn't be as the Guidelines are clear and specific.

Any number of other people can be involved in the ceremony but it is You, as the Authorised Celebrant, who gives the monitum and then can step back allowing the ceremony to continue while you remain in proximity to watch and listen so as to ensure there are no breaches of the Marriage Act, and you step back in for the signing of the certificates.

The reference to Ministers Of Religion in the below context refers to a minister who is authorised to conduct a marriage ceremony. If the minister conducting the ceremony is not authorised, the Civil Celebrant treats the ceremony in the same manner as if the person was not a minister.

Guidelines 5.4 involvement of others in marriages solemnised by authorised celebrants who are not ministers of religion.

When a marriage is being solemnised by an authorised celebrant who is not a minister of religion, and the couple wants someone else to be centrally involved in the ceremony, the authorised celebrant should ensure that they have the following minimum role:

- consent to be present at the ceremony as the responsible authorised celebrant
- identify themselves to the assembled parties, witnesses and guests as the celebrant authorised to solemnise the marriage
- be responsible for ensuring that the marriage ceremony is carried out according to law
- say the words required by subsection 46(1) of the Marriage Act in the presence of the parties, the formal witnesses and the guests before the marriage is solemnised (see [Part 5.6](#) of the guidelines)
- be in close proximity to the ceremonial group or part of it, see and hear the vows required by subsection 45(2) and ensure that those vows comply with the requirements of the Marriage Act (see further [Part 5.7 of the guidelines](#))
- be available to intervene (and exercise the responsibility to intervene) if events demonstrate the need for it during the ceremony
- receive and sign the papers required by the Marriage Act, including receiving the NOIM, and sighting the supporting documents each party is required to produce and sign the marriage certificates (see [Part 6](#) of the guidelines), and
- register the marriage with the appropriate BDM as required under the Marriage Act (see [Part 7](#) of the guidelines).