



Holding space for life's most meaningful moments

YOUR NAME AFTER MARRIAGE

A simple guide to choosing and changing your name

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You've just had your wedding.

The ceremony is done. The celebration has passed.

And now... the practical things begin.

Changing your name is one of them.

For some, it's straightforward.

For others, it feels bigger than expected.

Not because it's difficult...

but because it touches identity, history, and what comes next.

This guide is here to make it simple.

But before we get into the process, it's important to pause for a moment.

Because there's a common assumption I see quite often.

That once you're married... you *have* to change your surname.

You don't.

There is no rule.

There is no legal requirement.

And there is no expectation you need to meet.

This is a personal decision, and it's yours.

You might choose to take your partner's surname.

You might keep your own.

You might combine both or create something entirely new.

All of these are valid.

Some people make the change because it feels like a natural step into a shared life.

Others don't, because their name already feels like home.

Neither choice is more right than the other.

What matters is that the decision is made intentionally.

Not out of habit.

Not out of pressure.

And not because it feels expected.

Just because it's right for you.

And if you do decide to change your name, the process itself is quite straightforward.

The next steps will guide you through it, one piece at a time.

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STEP 1

Get clear on your details

If you've decided to change your name, the first step isn't paperwork.

It's clarity.

Before you begin updating anything, take a moment to be clear on exactly how your name will appear across all documents.

This includes:

- Your full legal name (first, middle, and surname)
- The format you'll use consistently (especially if combining or hyphenating names)
- Your signature, if it's likely to change

Consistency matters.

Using different versions of your name across organisations can create delays, confusion, and extra paperwork later on.

Taking a few minutes to get this right at the start will make everything that follows much smoother.

STEP 2

Get your marriage certificate

This is the document that allows you to change your name officially.

After your ceremony, I register your marriage with Births, Deaths and Marriages.

From there, you have two options:

- You can apply for your official marriage certificate yourself
- Or I can arrange it for you at the time of lodgement, so it arrives in the post without you needing to do anything

Most couples choose to have it arranged for them, simply because it makes the process easier.

Once you have this certificate, you're ready to begin updating your details.

STEP 3

Update your driver's licence first

This is the best place to start.

Once your licence reflects your new name, it becomes much easier to update everything else.

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Visit your local service centre with:

- Your marriage certificate
- Your current licence

From there, they will issue an updated licence in your new name.

STEP 4

Update your bank accounts and financial details

Next, update your:

- Bank accounts
- Credit cards
- Loans (if applicable)

Most banks will require you to attend in person with:

- Your marriage certificate
- Photo ID

Once this is done, your financial records will match your new name, which helps with everything that follows.

STEP 5

Update everything else

This is the part that takes a little time, but it's mostly straightforward.

Work through it gradually. There's no need to do everything at once.

Common places to update include:

- Passport
- Medicare
- Superannuation
- Employer / payroll
- Australian Taxation Office
- Insurance policies
- Utilities (electricity, gas, water)
- Phone and internet providers
- Electoral enrolment

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A simple approach is to make a list and tick things off as you go.

A FEW IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

- There is no time limit to change your name
 - You don't have to change your name at all
 - You can take your time and do this in stages
 - Some people choose to use different names in different parts of life, but consistency makes things easier
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A FINAL NOTE

This process is practical.

But it's also personal.

For some, changing a name is exciting.

For others, it can feel like a bigger shift.

There's no right or wrong way to approach it.

Just take it one step at a time.

And if you need guidance along the way, I'm always here to help.

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