

Dvir Reznik – A blog about collaboration, marketing, new media and innovation.

<http://www.dvirreznik.com>

The 101 of getting married in NYC

The government office that is responsible of marriage licenses is the [City Clerk](#), a large, renovated building [located](#) at the top of the Financial District, close to the [Court Buildings](#) and City Hall. Get off at Chambers St station (1,2,3,A,C,J,M,Z) and walk towards the Courts Buildings - City Clerk (Worth st.) is across the street. All the information mentioned here is also available [online](#).

Step 1 - opening a file

Go to the City Clerk's office at [141 Worth St.](#), both of you, with a [valid form of identification](#) (Passport works just fine). Ask the official at the information desk the forms for a marriage license, and receive a number. You can also [fill out the forms online](#) (no printing required - you receive a confirmation number) - recommended and saves time. **Important:** At this stage you have to decide about the bride's last name - change it or not. Once your number is called, go to the booth with the completed form and your IDs, pay \$35 (we used credit card), and the 1st step is over. Now you need to return [after at least 24 hours](#) (this is NOT like Vegas), to finalize the process, and GET MARRIED! You have 60 days before your request (and file) expires.

Step 2 - the marriage ceremony

For the ceremony itself you will need the following:

- Two rings (anything goes - Aldo, H&M, Macy's all has a good selection, in case you plan on buying real ones back home)
- The marriage request form + IDs you had with you at Step 1 (if you used Passport, you must come with it again)
- A witness with a valid ID - any witness is good, but the office staff cannot serve as a witness, so come prepared, or ask someone waiting with you (thank you Joelle!)

There is no dress-code for the ceremony itself, but some couples came well prepared - with the white dress, photographer, family and stuff. Once you arrive (check the [office hours](#) for planned holidays) ask the officer at the information desk for a number to the marriage ceremony, presenting the form + IDs (bride, groom, witness) from Step 1. **Important:** If you need to validate your license for international usage, make sure you mention it to the officer - he'll give you another form, *In Person Request for Marriage Records*. Once your number is up, approach the booth (all 3 of you), pay another \$25 (credit card) and then wait again for one of the 2 marriage ceremony rooms to be vacant.

A City Clerk's official conducts the ceremony, according to 'Hollywood' tradition - *Is there anyone opposing to this marriage* (between the 2 of you and the witness I doubt it, but you can never know), *Do you 'bride' take 'groom' to be your lawful wedded husband...*, *Place the ring on the groom's finger*, and *With the power invested to me by the State of New York, I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the bride!*

That's it - Mazal Tov! You're married (in the USA). The entire process (both steps) takes under an hour. No rush on doing it at 08:30, the office is open until 15:30 - we came at 12:30 and were out by 13:15.

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Step 3 - International recognition (Apostille)

The longest step of the process, only because you need to visit 2 other office buildings - the Supreme Court and State of New York. Once you receive your marriage certificate, go to the Archives Room (same place, across from the information desk), and say you want your marriage to be recognized internationally. Pay an additional \$35 (to issue another marriage certificate, 1 more is enough) and after a few minutes you'll receive it, with a note instructing what you need to do next, and where.

Step outside, cross the street and walk into the Supreme Court building ([60 Centre St.](#), famous from [Law and Order](#)), take the elevator down to the basement (B), room 141B. Stand in the 'Public Notary Desk' line and say you wish to make your marriage certificate recognized outside the US. Pay \$3 (cash preferred) at the cashier (3 steps to the right of where you're standing now), and receive your marriage certificate signed by the Clerk of the Supreme Court.

Step outside and head downtown (South) to [123 William St](#) (between John and Fulton, 15-20min walk, use a map) - Office of the State of New York. Take the elevator to the 19th floor, head to one of the available booths, with your marriage certificate. Pay \$10 (cash again), wait couple of minutes for the certificate to be signed (Apostille), and that's it!