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Folklore and the Media

November 19, 1997

Research Project

Folklore in Wedding Etiquette

Weddings have been taking place for centuries. The traditional wedding has been planned without any thought to what it means and where exactly it came from. There is always the traditional something old, something new, something borrowed, and we can't forget something blue. These weddings are thought about and planned according to the wedding folklore we have begun to think of as "tradition". Where did these traditions come from and what do they mean? No one ever thinks about these questions, they just follow the pattern of every other wedding, thinking that is the way it is supposed to be. Is there a set pattern that we must follow to be the perfect bride or have the perfect wedding?

I recently conducted a study of wedding folklore in magazines. The purpose of the study was to determine how much of wedding etiquette is folklore. The study examined the use of wedding folklore in magazine stories, advertisements and helpful hints. These magazines contained a great deal of folklore on almost every page.

To conduct this study, I copied twenty magazine articles containing wedding folklore. I used Brides magazine for a great source of my project. I used one issue of Bridal Guide to compare to see if folklore was present as well in other magazines. After photocopying the examples, I sat down and compared the articles and magazines. It was necessary to put the articles into categories. The main categories used were pre-wedding, actual wedding and post-wedding articles. Pre-wedding was broken down into the wedding consultant, the attendants, the flowers and something old, something new etc. The actual wedding was broken categorized as clothing, ceremony, the escort and the pictures. The

post-wedding was broken down into the wedding cake and the reception. These are very broad categories, but there is so much folklore in weddings that it would be impossible to pin point every one.

The results of my 1997 study is as follows: A total of twenty articles were found and copied containing wedding folklore. Fourteen of the articles contained pre-wedding folklore. Of those, two contained wedding consulting, five contained the attendants, two contained information about flowers and two contained something old, something new.

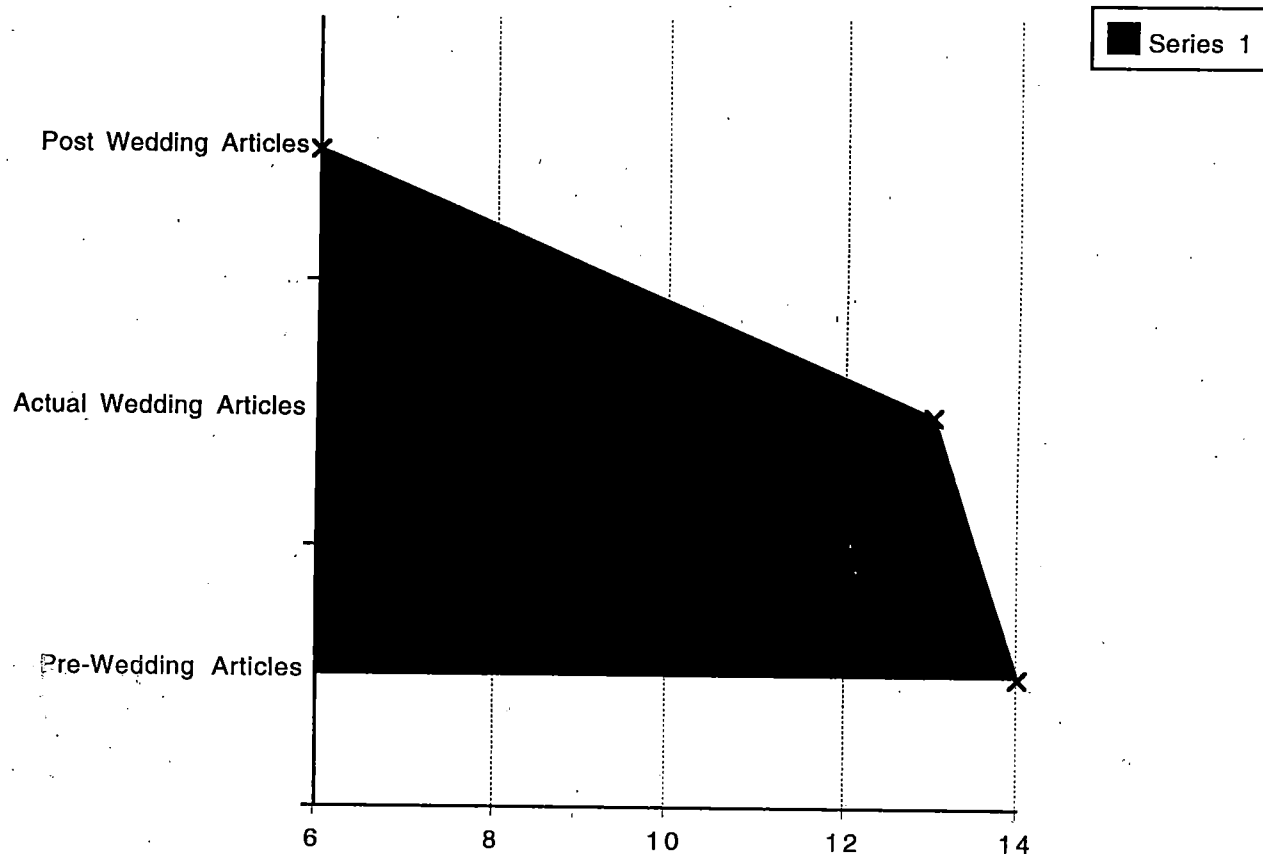
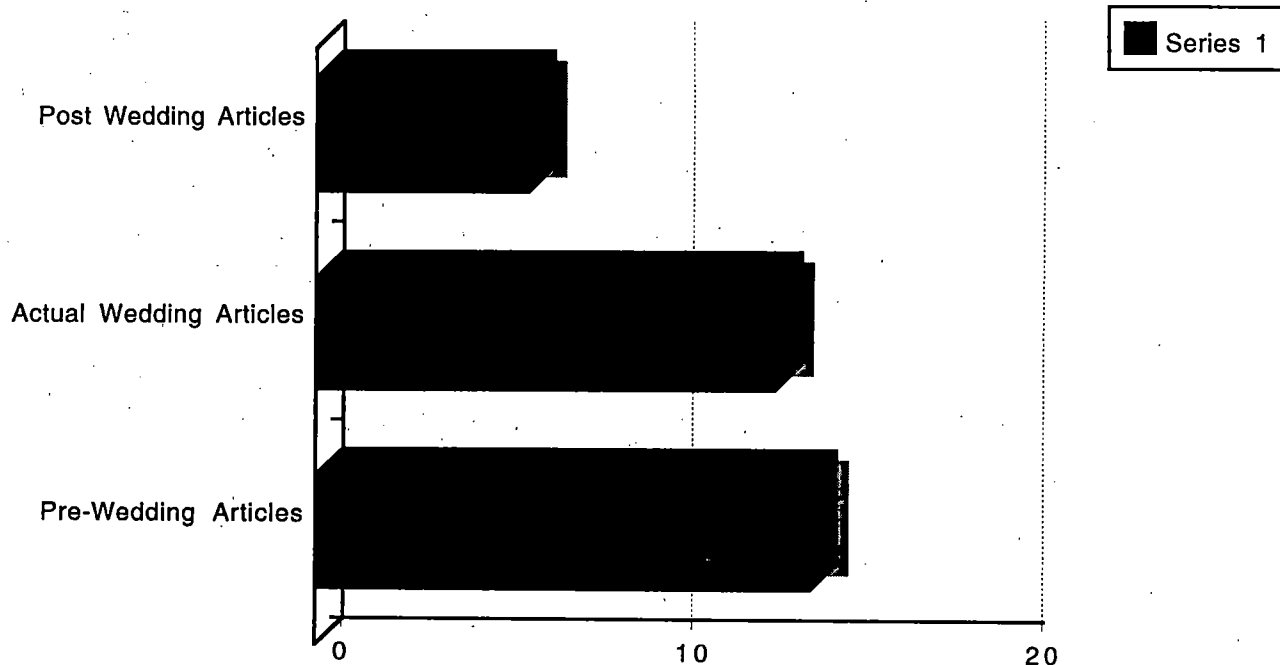
Thirteen of the articles contained actual wedding folklore. Of those, six contained clothing issues, three contained ceremony traditions, two contained information of the escort (giving the bride away) and only two contained pictures.

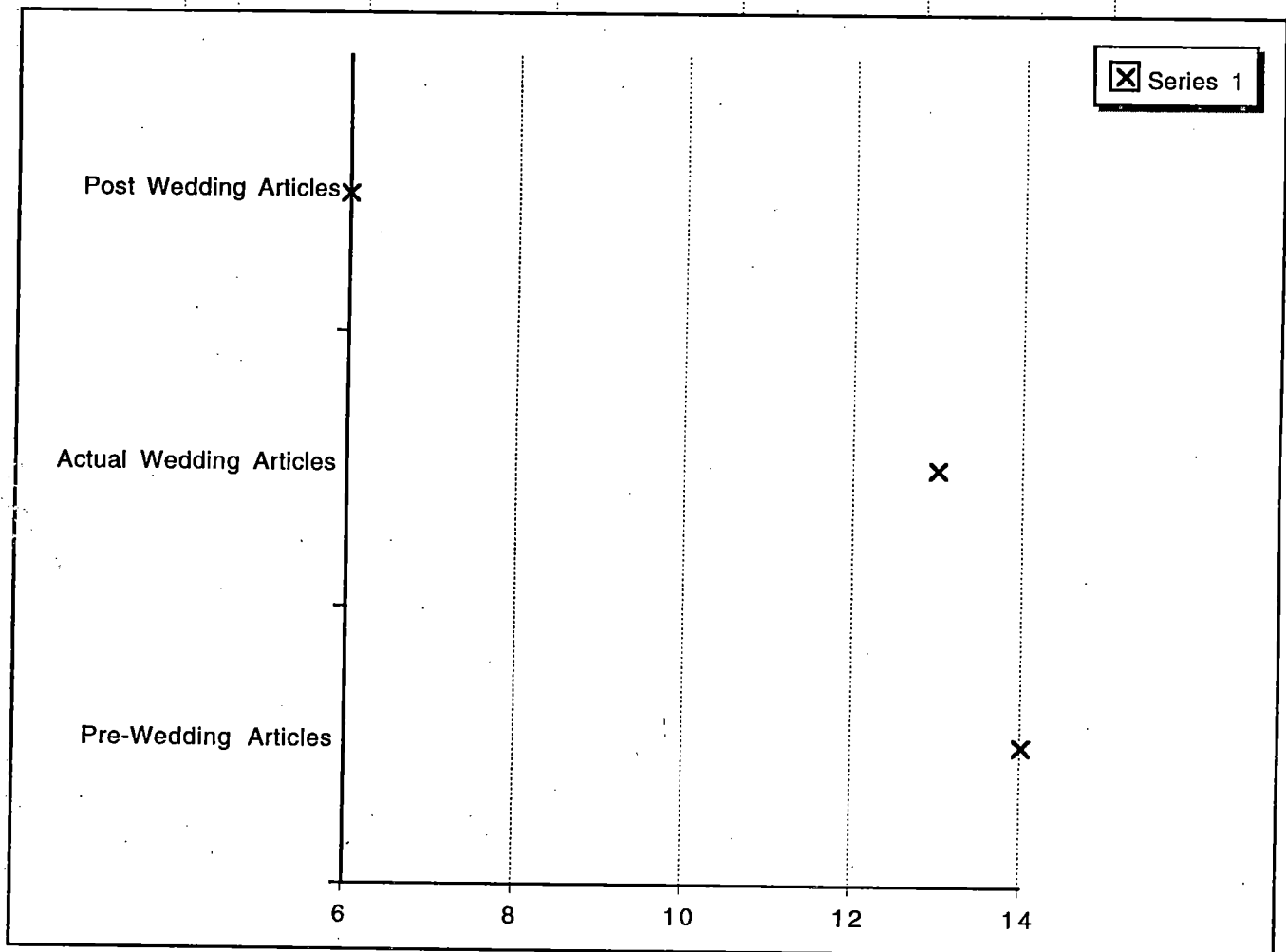
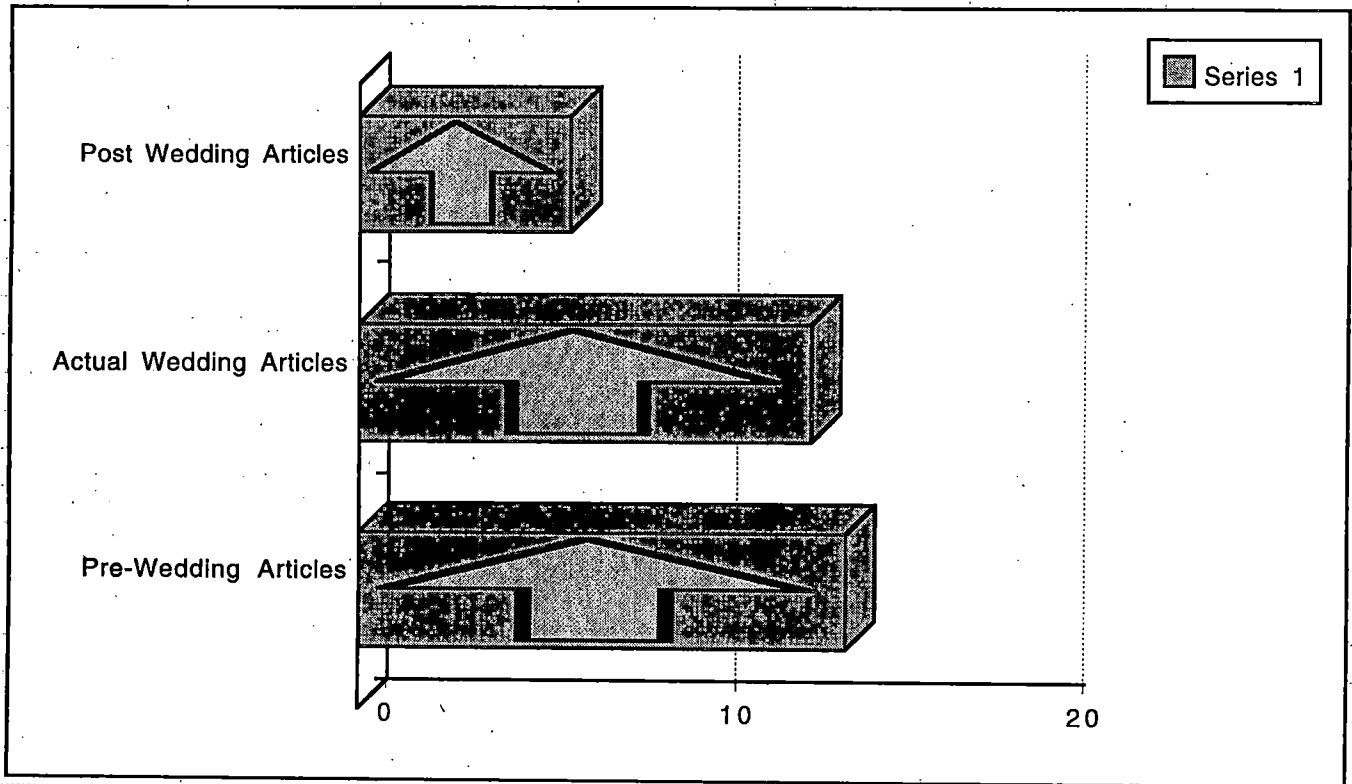
Six of the articles contained post-wedding folklore. Of those, three contained the cake and five contained the reception traditions such as the toast and tossing the bouquet.

All of these results go along with my theory that wedding ceremonies in general are all folklore. The real part of the wedding is saying "I do" and realizing the love you have for one another and that your life as two separate individuals has combined to make one. I think the true wedding values get lost in planning the traditional wedding. Planning who is going to be in the wedding or what color your flowers are going to be is not the true message of getting married. These are just examples that contain wedding folklore that people get all wrapped up in when planning their wedding. The wedding should actually contain two people who want to spend their lives together forever, and not worry about what the cake looks like or whose taking the pictures. These are just material things not a marriage.

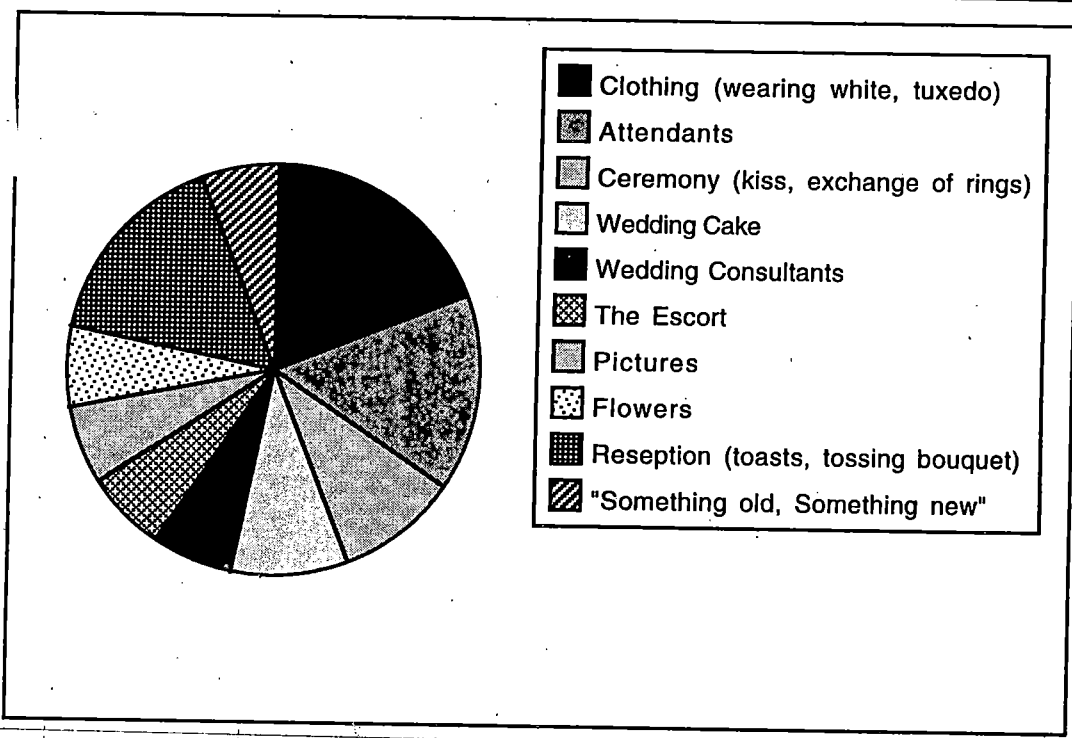
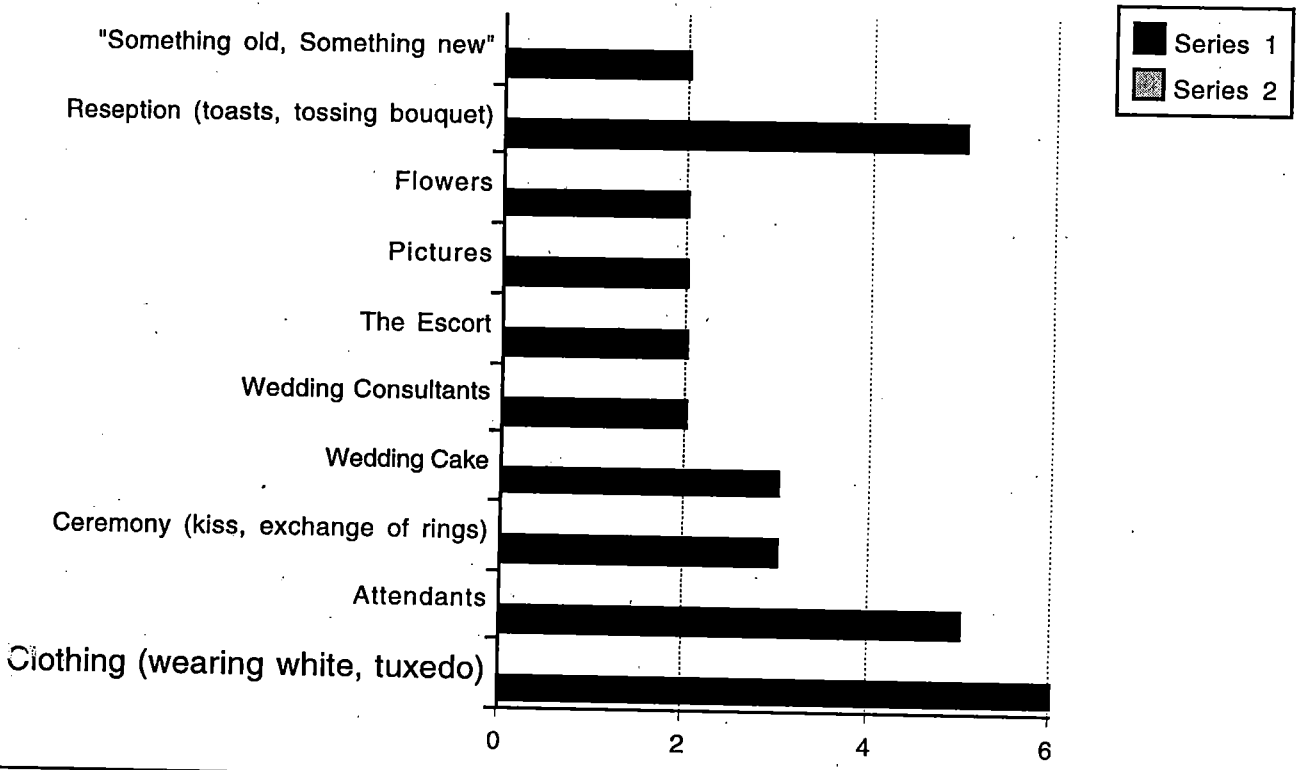
Overall, this study found that folklore plays a huge role in wedding etiquette. I found this project to be interesting and fun knowing that I am planning the same kind of wedding for April 1998. I have looked at weddings in a whole different manner now that I have done this research. I used to feel as if I had to plan my wedding to satisfy the traditions (folklore) of wedding ceremonies. I thought I had to please everyone else and make my wedding look like a traditional wedding. I have now begun to look past this and I am doing as I please in my wedding. I know the biggest part of my wedding will be at the end of the night when we have united as one.

Articles Containing Pre-Wedding, Actual Wedding and Post Wedding



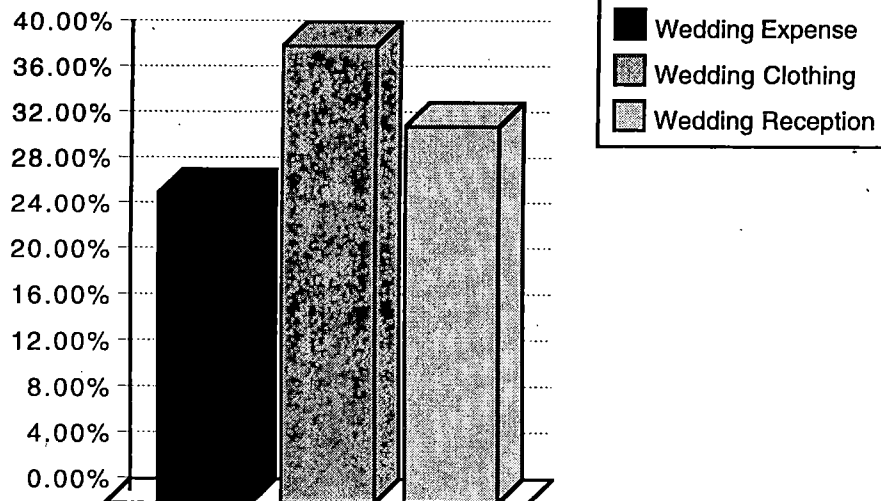
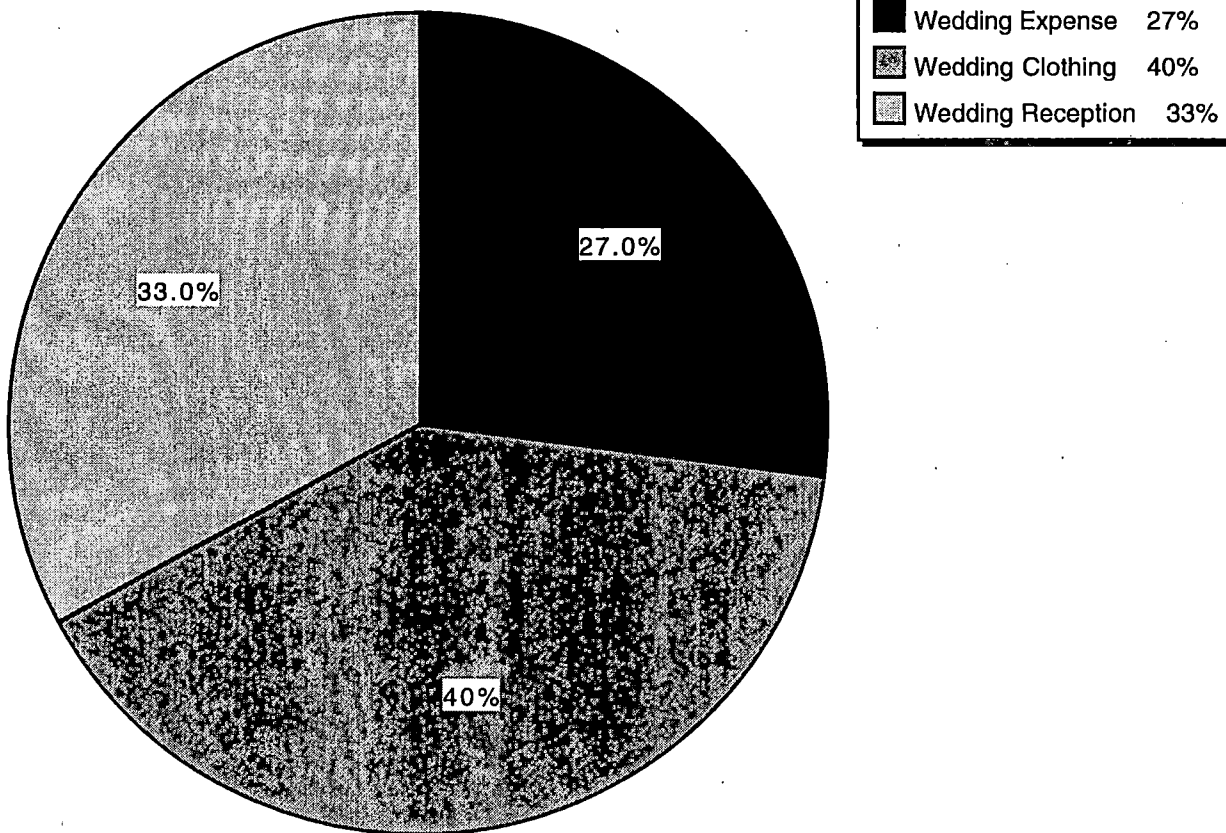


Articles Containing Folklore



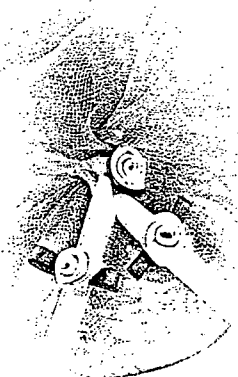
1	Clothing (we	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Attendants	1	1	1	1	1	1
3	Ceremony (kiss	1	1	1	1	1	1
4	Wedding Cake	1	1	1			
5	Wedding Consu	1	1	1			
6	The Escort	1	1				
7	Pictures	1	1				
8	Flowers	1	1				
9	Reception (toas	1	1	1	1	1	1
10	"Something old	1					

Articles Containing Wedding Expenses, Clothing and Reception



lighten up!

SOME FUN TO GET YOUR MIND OFF PLANNING



RICE-O-RAMA

The world's five top rice-exporting countries are Thailand, India, Vietnam, the United States, and Pakistan. ○ The average American eats about 25 pounds of rice a year. ○ Throw rice, blow up a bird? It's a myth—in wintertime, many birds actually use rice fields as their primary feeding grounds. Avoid instant rice, however, or it's bye-bye birdies. (And do be aware that some houses of worship ban rice to prevent people from slipping.) ○ Rice was originally thrown after a wedding to ensure fertility. ○ Plan ahead. The Annual International Rice Festival is held in Crowley, Louisiana, the second or third weekend of October.

e.z. toast

TAILOR A TRIBUTE JUST FOR HIM

"May I offer this toast to my (adorable/unpredictable/employed) husband, who has made me the happiest woman in the (universe/state/room). Today, as we make memories to share one day with

our (children/cat/lawyers), I look forward to a lifetime of (laughter/jewelry/large breakfasts) and love from the world's most amazing (poet/athlete/hugger)."

customs OF THE COUNTRY

Match the wedding custom with its land of origin.

- | | | |
|------------|---|---|
| a thailand | 1 During the wedding ceremony, the bride and groom sit on the lap of the bride's father. | man must stage a mock battle against the bride's relatives before the groom is granted entry. |
| b armenia | | |
| c scotland | 2 Ducks, which mate for life, are included in the wedding procession. | 5 The bride's shoes are unfastened, to symbolize easy childbirth. |
| d malaysia | | |
| e java | 3 Friends wash the feet of the bride and groom in order to prepare them for the path ahead. | 6 An older couple leaves a lucky talisman, like a tomato, on the bridal bed. |
| f sweden | | |
| g korea | 4 After traveling to the bride's house, the best | 7 The bride wears feathers on her head and cardboard wings. |

1-b-2-c-3-a-4-f-5-d-6-g-7-e

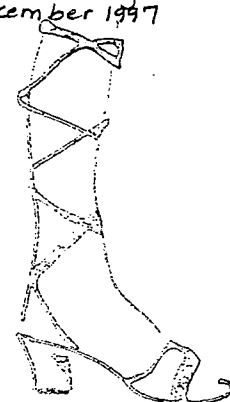
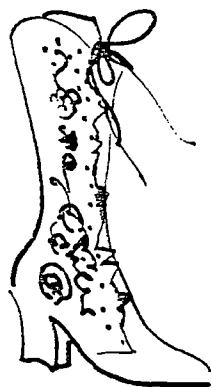
SOMETHING BLUE

"Something old, something new, something borrowed, and something...oh jeez, I forgot! For those of you too busy with seating charts to have remembered this vital part of your bridal ensemble, simply cut out this heart and tuck it in your bra.



shoes IN THE NEWS

The basic components of a wedding haven't changed much over the years—the ceremony, the party, the bouquet toss—but bridal footwear, that's another story. These shoes all appeared in the pages of BRIDE'S. Prove your style smarts (or just your age) and guess what time span it was: a 1964 to 1970 b 1971 to 1977 c 1978 to 1984



bride's basics

custom fit

ORIGINS OF SOME FAVORITE TRADITIONS

Every wedding tradition—tossing the bouquet, wearing white, serving a special cake—has a story behind it. Here are the reasons behind some of today's most popular customs:

Why does the bride wear white? White has been a symbol of celebration since Roman times. At the beginning of the 20th century, it became synonymous with purity. Today, white again symbolizes joy, but women are marrying in other colors, too.

Why do the attendants dress alike? In order to confuse evil spirits that were thought to lurk at the altar, several of the 10 witnesses required at Roman weddings dressed exactly like the bride and groom. In Europe, where wedding parties walked

to the church together, friends dressed like the bride and groom to trick rejected suitors who might see the couple and put a hex on them.

Why does the ceremony end with a kiss?

In ancient Rome, a kiss was a legal bond that sealed contracts, and thus, the betrothal. Christianity incorporated the betrothal ceremony into the marriage ritual. It was also believed that when a couple kissed, a part of their soul was left in the other, with the exchange of breath. Occurring at the end of the rites, the kiss announces a new status.

Why is there a wedding cake? A symbol of good luck and fertility, cake has been a part of weddings since Roman times, when

a bun was broken over the bride's head at the ceremony's end and guests gathered the crumbs for good luck. In Elizabethan times, bridesmaids baked buns, which became the feast's centerpiece. In the 17th century, a visiting French baker frosted a stack of the buns so they'd stand upright, creating the first tiered wedding cake.

Why is the bouquet tossed? Traditionally, as the bride left the wedding, she tossed her bouquet to a friend, so the friend would have good luck and protection. The custom evolved to imply that whoever caught it would be the next to wed.

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men in black

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE TUXEDO

○ *The jacket.* Tuxedo jackets may have notched or peak lapels, or shawl collars. Single-breasted or double-breasted styles are equally appropriate.

○ *The pants.* Trousers should hit right above the back of the heel and break about two-and-a-half to three inches above the ankle. Tuxedo pants are hemmed, never cuffed.

○ *The shirt.* Traditionally, a pleated shirt is worn with a tuxedo. The proper closures: studs in black, white, or gold, or enhanced with precious stones. One to one-and-a-half inches of shirtsleeve should show beneath the sleeve of the jacket.

○ *The cuff links.* These may either match the shirt studs or, for a dash of whimsy, can be hearts, checkerboards, ani-

mals, or other designs that suit the individual wearer's personality.

○ *The collar and tie.* Options include the wing collar, turn-down collar, and stand-up collar. All are paired with a bow tie for formal evening dress. (Bow ties rest in front of the wings.)

○ *The cummerbund.* Pleats should face upward. Cummerbunds were once referred to as crumb catchers because they caught the crumbs when a gentleman ate. In the past, the pleats held theater tickets, keys, or money, so that bulging pockets wouldn't ruin a tuxedo's slim line. (Many cummerbunds from England still have hidden pockets.) Colorfully patterned suspenders may be substituted for the cummerbund—they are never worn together.

○ *The vest.* Instead of a cummerbund, a colorful solid or patterned vest can add personality to the most conservative tuxedo. Vests also look sharp when jackets come off. (They make great usher's gifts.)

○ *The boutonniere.* It's always worn on the left lapel, never with a pocket square (pocket squares are placed in the left breast pocket). A small, vibrantly colored flower is a dramatic accent for black-and-white formalwear.

○ *The shoes.* Classic formal dress shoes are black patent-leather oxfords or pumps. They should be worn with hose that match the color of the trousers.

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The New Etiquette



Realistic Solutions to Your Wedding Dilemmas

by Diane Forden, Editor in Chief

Present Politics

My fiancé and I will be married in a different state from where we live. To avoid having to ship gifts we receive back home, we'd like our guests to send their presents to our home address instead of bringing them to the wedding. What is the most appropriate way to convey our wishes?

San Jose, CA

Any way you phrase it, this is an inappropriate request. After all, aren't you, in effect, asking your guests to incur the added inconvenience and expense of shipping their gifts so that you and your fiancé will not have to do so? Your guests are gracious enough to purchase you gifts, and you should be just as gracious to accept them any way they choose to present them to you. Only if someone asks what you would prefer should you suggest that he or she ship a gift to your home. You might consider registering for your gifts through a mail-order catalog or at a store that is based solely in your home state so that purchases can be ordered and sent directly to your address from this retailer. Besides, most registries indicate where you'd like guests to send their gifts.

Assisting Attendants

I know that attendants are supposed to pay for their own expenses, but I would like to offer to cover at least half of those mine incur. Is this acceptable?

Shreveport, LA

It's not only acceptable, it's very admirable! There's no doubt that expenditures for the wedding party add up. Most likely, your attendants will be buying you engagement, shower, and wedding gifts. Some may even have travel expenses, and, of course, there are always the costs of the bridesmaids' dresses, shoes, and accessories to consider. That's why brides sometimes opt to contribute to their attendants' expenses as their gift for being in the wedding instead of giving them each a present at the rehearsal dinner. Your generosity and sensitivity to your attendants' budgets is certainly one way of expressing how pleased you are to have them in your wedding party. I'm sure that they'll be most appreciative of your thoughtfulness.

Groomsman Guidelines

My fiancé's twelve-year-old son will be in our wedding party, but I will not have a junior bridesmaid to walk down the aisle with him. Is this all right, and, if so, should he be seated with the other attendants at the reception?

Bismarck, ND

It's perfectly fine to have a young groomsman in your wedding party without having a junior bridesmaid. In fact, asking your fiancé's son to be an attendant on your special day is a wonderful gesture that'll help make him feel confident he'll continue to be an important part of his dad's life. Make certain that he is involved by including him in as many prewedding activities as his age will allow.

During the processional, all of the groomsmen, including your fiancé's son, might wait at the head of the aisle (he can stand directly behind the best man) while the maids enter single file. Or, if you prefer to have your wedding party walk down the

aisle in pairs, he can lead the processional solo followed by the duos of bridesmaids with groomsmen; do the same for the recessional. And, by all means, sit him at the head table with the rest of your attendants. He will probably enjoy the experience and appreciate your and your fiancé's recognition of him as a significant member of the wedding party.

Color Code

I think that only the bride should wear white at a wedding. How can I tactfully ask my guests to dress accordingly?

Muncie, IN

As much as you would prefer not to see any guests dressed in white, keep in mind that it's impossible for you to control every single detail of your wedding. I am sure that other white dresses will not detract from the attention and admiration that you'll receive on your big day—the bride is always the center of attention. In fact, two very popular choices among bridal parties are the black-and-white color scheme, with attendants wearing black gowns with white accents, and the all-white wedding party, with everyone—from moms to flower girls—dressed in white or ivory dresses! The effect of both ensembles is quite sophisticated and dramatic. And, whereas a wedding guest dressed in either black or white was once frowned upon, both colors are quite acceptable today. Keep in mind that fashion rules for everyday clothing are far less rigid today than in the past, and even in wedding attire there is a relaxation of dress codes. But if guests wearing white is still your concern, the best I can suggest is for you to express your desire by word of mouth. You, your mom, and attendants can let other guests know

Continued on page 20

THEL BRICK

BEST
BRIDAL

W Finding Wedding Pros

YOU'LL LOVE

Wouldn't it be wonderful if you could just snap your fingers and make a full cast of perfectly dependable, perfectly affordable, downright perfect wedding pros appear? The reality is, finding wedding pros you'll love is no small task—and we won't pretend otherwise. Still, it can be done. And *Bridal Guide* is here to show you how.

We've tapped 12 major players in the bridal business for their expert advice on what to look for in a wedding pro. From entertainers to florists, consultants to caterers, we've investigated them all. And with a little help from our friends at the Better Business Bureau (BBB), not only will you learn how to spot talented professionals, but you'll also discover how to tell which are the trustworthy ones.

The hiring process is scary, we know. After all, as if dishing out your hard-earned cash isn't stressful enough, you're also turning your wedding-day dreams over to the experts you pick to see them through. So

Top Tips From the Best in the Business by Leah Ingram

take these three ground rules to heart before you begin the selection process.

Rule number one: *No matter how talented a pro is, if you can't deal with his or her personality, it's just not worth it.* You'll be working very closely with the people you hire in the months leading up to the main event—not to mention on the big day itself—and if there's any personal conflict between you, it will diminish the fun and increase the stress. Don't underestimate the value of a recommendation from a friend or family member who has recently worked with a pro; they can give you the best sense of what this person will act like. Also, trust your gut: Do you feel as if the pro is listen-

ing to you? Do you feel comfortable with this person? Are you confident this expert has a handle on your taste?

Rule number two: *Don't get so swept up in the excitement of your engagement that you lose your good business sense.* There's no denying that the decisions you make in planning your wedding will be emotionally charged. Still, the wedding industry is a billion-dollar business, and to get a fair deal, you'll need to treat it that way. As with any major purchase, you'll want to use the buying practices outlined by the BBB in "Back to Business" on page 72.

Rule number three: *You don't always get what you pay for.* While it's true that popular pros often charge top dollar, "The most expensive company isn't necessarily going to do the best job," warns Holly Cherico, a spokesperson for the Council of Better Business Bureaus in Arlington, VA. Be assured that no matter what your budget, there's a high-quality professional out there to accommodate it. Of course, that means you'll need a predetermined budget for what you can spend **Continued on page 70**



DO'S & don'ts

Goof-proof your wedding:
a must-have guide to avoiding
the most common faux pas,
both small and large

remove
your garter,
leave your
dignity intact

Every bride wants her wedding to be perfect. She's determined to follow proper etiquette—even if she's not sure exactly what that is. Since you've probably never planned a wedding before, the rules and planning guidelines may seem as if they're a whole new language. Receiving lines, semi-formal menswear, peau-de-soie shoes, recessional, gift registries. With the following pointers, you'll be on your way to a beautiful wedding.

• invitations

DON'T write "and Guest" on wedding invitation envelopes. If you're asking single friends to bring dates, find out the name and address of the escort and send that person his or her own invitation. (Don't feel obligated, by the way, to invite dates. If you've got to keep the guest list down and your friend isn't in a serious relationship, she should come to the wedding solo.)

DO list the full name of each guest on the outer envelope ("Mr. and Mrs. Robert Rodriguez") and just title and last name on the inner envelope ("Mr. and Mrs. Rodriguez").

DON'T list a deceased parent as host. Instead, ask the officiant to invoke his or her name during the ceremony. Or, if you're having a wedding program, include a short dedication to the deceased.

• ceremony

DO schedule your ceremony and reception close to each other rather than hours apart. For out-of-town guests, there's nothing worse than attending a 3 p.m. wedding and having nowhere to go until the 7 p.m. reception. If a lag of several hours is unavoidable, ask relatives to host an informal get-together near the ceremony or reception site. Include the information (plus directions)

with your wedding invitations.

DON'T seat divorced parents in the same pew. Put the parent who raised you in the front pew and the other one two rows behind.

DON'T overlook your stepfather. If both your father and he are amenable, have him escort you on one arm and your father

on the other. Or let them share honorary duties: Have your father walk you down the aisle and your stepdad dance with you during the father-daughter dance.

DON'T assume you must have the same number of bridesmaids as groomsmen, or vice versa. In the recessional, extra bridesmaids can walk two abreast; the same rule applies to extra groomsmen.

DO express yourselves in tailor-made vows, but don't make them too personal. Topics to avoid: past breakups with each other, family problems, ex-spouses/girlfriends/boyfriends, custody battles, sex, and your predilection toward whipped cream.

DO have a receiving line. Even if your ceremony and reception are just 60 minutes apart and you want to have pictures taken at another location in between, you must have a receiving line. It will give guests an opportunity—maybe the only one—

it's **your**
wedding,
not the
photographer's



come one, come all

THE LOGISTICS OF PLANNING A
LONG-WEEKEND WEDDING

for most women, the days of marrying the boy next door, or even in the next town, are long gone. You might have grown up in Chicago, your groom may be from San Francisco, and you may have met in Boston. In these transient times, friends and relatives will converge from all parts of the country, and sometimes from around the globe, to celebrate your wedding. A long-weekend event may be the perfect way to bring everyone together for a good time.

A weekend packed with activities will give guests who live far away more chances to really visit with people they don't see very often. Friends and relatives can host parties and get-togethers in your honor—breakfasts, barbecues—with the wedding and reception as the weekend's central event. Guests usually pay for their own travel and accommodations, although you may be able to help negotiate a group rate at a local hotel, or even with an airline if enough people will be attending from out of town; hosts pick up the tab for any events they plan. Read on to find out what's involved.

• *First things first*

Coordinating a long-weekend wedding takes more advance planning than other weddings, so before you jump in, sketch out a weekend itinerary with activities for all ages. (Keep in mind that children should be included in most activities—parents won't want to leave them for an entire weekend.) Be careful not to overextend yourself; don't plan more get-togethers than you will be able to attend, even if you only stop by for a short while.

Next, talk to close friends and family in the area to find out who will be able to host parties or put guests up for the weekend; arrange transportation for each event.

Because people will need time to make their travel plans, send a separate letter,

well in advance of the wedding invitation, with options for lodging and a general idea of what other activities will take place that weekend, along with hosts' phone numbers, suggested attire, and an RSVP card for each event. Updates with specifics can be sent out closer to the wedding date. The wedding-invitation envelope shouldn't be stuffed with RSVP cards to events other than the wedding itself. Here are some festive ideas to keep your guests in a partying mood for the whole weekend.

• *Get-acquainted tea/cocktail party*

Once long-distance guests arrive in town, invite them to an informal gathering. A buffet dinner with a local theme, such as Cajun food and music for a New Orleans wedding, can break the ice and help everyone get acquainted before the wedding.

• *Dinner for out-of-towners*

Make sure guests who are not included in the rehearsal dinner aren't left stranded: Arrange for a friend or relative to host an event for them. Or, if the wedding is on Saturday, consider having the rehearsal dinner on Thursday and a party for long-distance guests on Friday.

• *Barbecue/pool party*

A country club or backyard could accommodate this gathering. Brew up some iced tea, stoke the grill, hire a band to play on the deck.

• *Wedding-day breakfast*

A casual, morning meal at the bride's or a relative's home provides a gathering place for out-of-towners.

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cakewalk

ESCORT OPTIONS FOR YOUR STROLL DOWN THE AISLE

traditionally, the bride is escorted down the aisle on her wedding day by her father. But many couples, regardless of religion, choose to follow the Jewish custom of having both parents escort the bride and groom. Here are some guidelines for several nontraditional family situations.

○ *If your father has passed away,* you can walk alone. Or, consider asking your mother, stepfather, brother, uncle, another relative, or a close family friend to escort you. Whoever takes the place of your absent father will sit in the front row or pew after the procession.

Your escort can also respond when your clergyman asks, "Who gives/supports this woman in marriage?" Even if your mother has not walked you down the aisle, she can still respond, "I do," from her place in the first pew, or she can be escorted to your side on the altar at the appropriate time by the best man.

○ *If your mother has died,* and you have asked an aunt or your grandmother to take your mother's place during the wedding, she can join your father in escorting you down the aisle and be seated last in the front pew.

○ *If your parents are divorced* and your mother has remarried, you could find yourself in an awkward situation: Should your father or your stepfather walk you down the aisle? There is no single, correct answer to this question. Each family situation is different.

If you've remained close to your father, you may want him to fulfill his traditional role. There is no need for your stepfather to be completely left out, though. If your father and stepfather are on good terms, you may ask both of them to walk you down the aisle (one on each arm). Together, they should respond, "We do," when

the clergyman asks, "Who gives/supports this woman in marriage?"

Or, your stepfather could walk you halfway down the aisle and then sit down in a front row or pew as you take your father's arm to the altar where he can then give you away. If your stepfather has been more responsible in raising you, you may want to have him stand with you on the altar. When there is rancor over this issue, some brides simply walk down the aisle alone, or with their grooms.

○ *In a Jewish procession,* many divorced parents still escort their son or daughter down the aisle together, on either side of him or her. They stand together under the huppah; their spouses sit in the second and third pews.

○ *When a marriage takes place during* a worship service, such as a Quaker meeting, the bride and groom are seated at the front and simply step forward at the appropriate time.

○ *If this is a remarriage,* there are several options for the processional. You may choose to walk down the aisle with your groom, with your children preceding you down the aisle together. Or, you can be escorted by one or all of your children.

If there are more than two, have one on each arm, with any others walking in front of you, singly or in pairs. The inclusion of children is a clear statement that "We are making this important step together."

It is acceptable for the second-time bride to be escorted again by her father or whoever escorted her the first time. There is no reason why this person can't bless and support your marriage more than once.

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freeze frame

STRIKE THE RIGHT POSE IN YOUR BRIDAL PORTRAIT

Your bridal portrait is one of the most important pictures you'll ever pose for—chances are it's the photo that will be published in your newspaper and displayed in your home.

Today, many newspapers are publishing photographs of couples, so you may want to make an appointment to go to the photographer's studio together. (While there, you can also have some lifestyle photos taken, in everyday clothes, to display at the reception and in the wedding album.) Either solo or together, here are a few wedding-day tips for looking picture-perfect.

○ *How to look your best*

Select an unobtrusive background for results that will stand the test of time. This is also a good opportunity to have a dress rehearsal for your wedding hairstyle; bring your headpiece to your stylist the day of your portrait shooting and experiment with different looks.

Precise makeup application is the key to a flawless look, so if your budget allows, hire a makeup artist before posing for your bridal portrait, as well as for your wedding day.

Wear neutral shades (olive, brown, taupe) and avoid frosted shadow; the flash will make it look like tinfoil. Remove any stray eyebrows that interrupt the natural curve of your eye socket, then brush brows upward with clear mascara to hold them in place. Since color film intensifies bold hues, opt for a soft color on lips and cheeks that complements your natural skin tones.

Black-and-white film whitens pale shades, and darkens rich, vibrant colors. A subtle lipstick works better than red, which photographs as black. Your best bet is to choose hues that enhance, rather than cover up, your natural skin tone. Make sure to blend all makeup, taking care to eliminate any harsh lines that will be even more apparent in this dramatic medium.

○ *When to have it taken*

Most newspapers require that wedding photographs be submitted at least 10 days before the scheduled publication date. To allow enough time, plan on having your portrait snapped one to three months before the wedding.

○ *Where to go*

If the proper facilities are available, you can arrange to have your portrait taken at your local bridal salon during your final fitting. Otherwise, make certain that your dress will be ready in time for you to make a prewedding trip to the photographer's studio. The advantages of studio photography? You'll have the necessary lighting and appropriate background.

○ *What to bring*

Your bridal portrait should look as if it were taken on your wedding day, so bring along all accessories—shoes, slip, gloves, jewelry, and headpiece. If you want to be photographed with your bouquet, order a replica from your florist.

○ *How to pose*

Your photographer will take several different shots of you in a variety of poses, then supply the proofs. Choose one look for publicity purposes, after calling to find out about any specifications for the publications in which you wish to be mentioned (some newspapers will work with color if it's sharply focused, though most require a 5-by-7 black-and-white glossy for their wedding columns). Then, select another pose for display in your home and to give to your family. Order at least one black-and-white print for yourself, too; color may fade over time.

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do the right thing

ANSWERS TO YOUR ETIQUETTE QUESTIONS

☐ I want to include my 13-year-old niece in my wedding. She's too old to be a flower girl and would feel out of place with my bridesmaids.

Where will she fit in? ?

Make her a junior bridesmaid, which is traditionally a girl between the ages of 9 and 14. She can wear a white ballet-length dress or a gown similar in color and fabric to those of the bridesmaids, but in a style more appropriate for a young girl. You can also single her out by giving her the position of candlelighter, or have her distribute wedding programs.

shoulder this responsibility by themselves, you can offer to be a "silent" cohost, which means working behind the scenes and keeping your name off the invitations.

☐ I recently attended a wedding where everyone in the couple's immediate family toasted them. Is this normally done? I don't want guests to sit through long speeches and possibly be bored at my reception. ?

There's no reason why they should have to. Traditionally, the best man makes the first toast. Then the groom raises his glass to his new bride and both sets of parents. He is followed by the bride, and then the couple's parents often add a few words of their own. You can end the toasting at any time by arranging beforehand to have the band or 'dj start the music right after the designated last person has spoken. Asking your best man to act as moderator can also curtail the speeches and keep things moving along. But don't be too quick to silence people who want to say something nice about you and your groom.

☐ Although our parents are helping us out, my fiancé and I are footing the major bills for our wedding. Who gets listed on the invitation? ?

Since you and your fiancé are the hosts and are accepting most of the financial responsibility for your wedding, don't feel obligated to list your parents' names. Invitations can be worded as follows: *"The honour of your presence is requested at the marriage of Miss Monica Neal to Mr. Orlando James, Saturday, the fifth of May, at eleven o'clock, Saint Stephen's Church, Columbia, South Carolina."*

☐ I assist two managers. One I'm very close to—the other, well, let's just say our relationship is prickly. Do I have to invite them both to my wedding? ?

Your situation calls for diplomacy—and a decision to either invite or exclude them both. You don't want to risk offending one manager while putting the other in an awkward position. Consider it a wise career move, one that should prevent a prickly relationship from turning into a war of the roses.

☐ My sister is getting married in two months and so far none of her bridesmaids have mentioned throwing a shower. Since I'm her maid of honor, should I start planning it? ?

As a rule, immediate-family members—meaning mother and sisters—do not host the shower; you don't want it to seem as if you're asking for gifts for the bride. Instead, urge her other attendants, or even close friends, to organize the event. If they're reluctant to

Send your wedding-etiquette questions to Do the Right Thing, BRIDE'S, 140 E. 45th St., New York, NY 10017; fax 212-880-6689; or e-mail letters@brides.com

guide to wedding clothes

	BRIDE	GROOM & USHERS	BRIDESMAIDS	MOMS	GUESTS
VERY FORMAL EVENING	Dress with a long train. Veil often the same length as train. Long sleeves or gloves. Full bouquet or prayer book trimmed with flowers.	Full-dress tailcoats with matching trousers; white waistcoats and bow ties; wing-collared shirts. (Optional: black top hats, white gloves.)	Between 4 and 12 attendants, including honor attendant. Long dresses; gloves optional. Any style bouquet. Hair ornaments or flowers.	Long or short evening dresses—in colors that complement the bridesmaids'. Evening hats are optional.	Women: long or short evening (or cocktail) dresses. Men: black-tie (tuxedos) or white-tie (tails).
VERY FORMAL DAYTIME	Same as very formal evening, but a shorter train is also appropriate.	Cutaway coats, striped trousers, waistcoats, wing-collared shirts, and ascots or striped ties. (Optional: top hats, spats, gloves.)	Between 4 and 12 attendants, including honor attendant. Same overall style as very formal evening, but dresses may be less elaborate.	Long or short dresses, not as formal as those for evening. Hats are optional.	Women: elegant short dresses or daytime suits. Men: suits.
FORMAL EVENING	Long dress with a chapel, sweep, or detachable train; any length veil. Accessories the same as for very formal evening.	Tuxedos with matching trousers, dress shirts, bow ties, and vests or cummerbunds. (Summer option: white or ivory dinner jackets.)	Between 2 and 6 attendants, including honor attendant. Similar to very formal, but dresses may be short. Gloves are optional.	Long or short dresses, or evening suits.	Women: elegant long or short dresses or suits. Men: black-tie (tuxedos).
FORMAL DAYTIME	Same as formal evening, or a shorter dress that may have a detachable train. Hat or veil.	Strollers, waistcoats, striped trousers and ties. Or suits with dress shirts, bow ties, and vests.	Between 2 and 6 attendants, including honor attendant. Dresses either long or short, but not too elaborate.	Elegant dresses or suits. Hats optional.	Women: elegant daytime dresses or luncheon suits. Men: suits.
INFORMAL EVENING	Long or short dress, white or pastel. No train. Any length veil. Accessories same as for a formal wedding, but with a simpler bouquet.	Dark suits, dress shirts, four-in-hand ties.	Seldom more than one bridesmaid, plus an honor attendant. Cocktail-length dresses and small bouquets.	Stylish short dresses or dinner suits.	Women: short dresses or dinner suits. Men: suits.
INFORMAL DAYTIME	Simple dress in white or pastel; short veil. No train. Small bouquet or flower-trimmed prayer book.	Suits or blazers (navy and gray are good choices), dress shirts, and four-in-hand ties.	Seldom more than an honor attendant. Suit or dress, less elaborate than informal evening. Small bouquet.	Daytime luncheon suits, or dresses somewhat less elaborate than informal evening.	Women: dresses or luncheon suits. Men: suits.

1-20
Something old,

SOMETHING

new,

Something

with a yard

and

2 or 3

BEDROOMS



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good timing

THE RECEPTION: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN

This is a sample schedule for a three-hour reception. Give your timetable to an attendant or your wedding consultant and ask him or her to make sure the caterer, photographer, and band or dj stick to it. They all should be directed to discuss any scheduling problems with this person.

The Reception

You, the groom, and the wedding party should arrive at the reception site before the guests begin to gather, if possible.

The First Half Hour

If you did not have a receiving line at the ceremony, assemble one now to greet guests as they arrive. Photographs of you and your groom alone and with the bridal party may be taken during this time, if the receiving line was at the ceremony site.

The Second Half Hour

The band or dj starts playing music. Drinks are poured and hors d'oeuvres are served (these can also be offered to guests in the receiving line). Guests mingle and pick up place cards; you and the groom begin making your rounds of the room. The photographer begins taking candid shots of relatives and friends.

After One Hour

Dinner is announced; the wedding party is seated. Your clergy member or parents may say a blessing. Guests line up for the buffet or sit for table service. The wedding party is served. The best man toasts the couple, and the bride and groom may follow with their own thoughts and thanks.

After One and a Half Hours

The first course is cleared from the head table, then from the guests' tables. The couple dances their first dance as husband and wife, followed by the father-daughter dance, etc. (These dances may also take place before dinner begins or after the entrée; consult with your bandleader or dj.) Everyone then sits down to enjoy the main course.

After Two Hours

Tables are cleared; the cake-cutting ceremony takes place. Dancing resumes while cake and other desserts are cut and served.

The Last Half Hour

The single women gather for the bride's bouquet toss, and the groom throws her garter to a group of bachelors. The couple may slip away to change and say good-bye to their parents before they make their exit, but most stay and dance until the very end.

ye shall receive

After the ceremony, your guests will be eager to congratulate you. A receiving line is an efficient way for you and your parents to give everyone a warm welcome. At large weddings, it may be the only chance you get to speak to each guest.

○ A day or two before the wedding, go over the guest list with your groom and parents so names will be fresh in your mind.

○ Remind receiving-line participants to keep comments brief.

○ Position the line in a spot where guests can move down it easily.

○ Nearby, consider setting up a photo display of old family wedding pictures or childhood snapshots of the two of you.

○ If you don't know a guest, simply introduce yourself—they will no doubt offer their name in return.

○ Remove gloves for handshaking.

○ Hold your bouquet in your left hand, or set it aside.

bride's basics

last details

HANDLING ACCESSORIES AT THE RECEPTION

after a few hours in full bridal regalia, you'll be ready to slip off some of your accessories and really celebrate in a laid-back style. After all, dancing the night away can get a little awkward in a long veil, and you certainly don't want your train tripping up your smooth moves. Read on to find out the right time to shed some of these embellishments.

HANDS-ON-APPROACH If you're wearing gloves, remove them immediately after the recessional in preparation for the receiving line. Remember, you should never shake hands or eat with your gloves on, so make sure they're off by the time you get to the reception.

VEILED THREATS Don't remove your veil or bustle your train right after the ceremony; you'll want the formal photographs to show off your full ensemble. Once the last shot is snapped, though, you can put your veil away (remember to bring the bag) and bustle your train. If you decide to leave your veil on, be careful when you're eating (so it doesn't take a bath in the salad dressing) and standing near candles.

It's fine to wait until you get to the reception to bustle your train, but, to avoid 150 of your closest friends and relatives tripping over it on the dance floor, take a few minutes to fasten it securely.

REALLY ROSIE Even the most beautiful bouquet is sure to lose its bloom if you clutch it throughout the evening. To free up your hands, simply put it down at your place at the head table.

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bride's basics

flower facts

WHO GIVES,
WHO RECEIVES

Flowers are an easy way to personalize your ceremony and reception. A formal wedding with all of the trimmings will be lavishly decorated with blossoms, and even a bride who is planning a small wedding or has limited resources will want stylish—if smaller—floral flourishes.

Finding a good florist who understands your basic style and budget is the first step. Shop around and ask to look at pictures of other weddings they've done. If you aren't impressed by the shop, the staff, and the photos, keep looking until you are satisfied. Next comes figuring out where the blooms will go and who is going to pay for them; the following guidelines will help. Keep in mind, though, that any of the following suggestions can be altered to best suit your situation.

The bride's family

The bulk of floral expenses is traditionally paid for by the bride and her family. They take care of flowers for the ceremony and reception sites, as well as all the bouquets or corsages for the attendants and the flower girl.

The groom's family

Traditionally, the groom and his family pay for the bride's bouquet and going-away corsage, boutonnières for the men in the wedding party, as well as the fathers, and corsages for the mothers.

Shared responsibility

The expenses for the following should be divided between your two families: the organist or soloist and any honored guests, including the grandparents.

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decisions, decisions

HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR BRIDESMAIDS

he asked. You said yes. You told your families. And some friends. Now, how do you select the people who you want to stand by your side at the wedding and in the exciting months ahead? What exactly are their responsibilities? Read on for some things to consider when making your decision.

ASKING

Once you and your fiancé have figured out the size of your wedding party, it's time to ask close confidantes to be part of the group. But think carefully about the numbers. It's easy to ask eight friends to stand up for you in your postacceptance glow, not as easy to pare that back to a party of four. There is no polite way to "unask" someone to be in your wedding, so consider who will be the most positive and helpful as you plan.

You have the right to ask whomever you want to be in your wedding. No one should begrudge you not including your best friend from childhood, even though you made a pact on the monkey bars, if the two of you are no longer close.

If your fiancé has a sister, it's a nice, but not mandatory, gesture to ask her to be in the wedding. If you don't know her, or she and your fiancé are not close, it might be more comfortable to include her on the guest list rather than in the wedding party. Ditto any young cousins who your aunts think would make darling flower girls even though you haven't seen them in years.

WEDDING

Don't worry about having an even number of bridesmaids and groomsmen. A wedding party with an uneven male-to-female ratio is not uncommon. While bridesmaids are traditionally escorted by groomsmen during the recession, it's quite alright to have bridesmaids walk in pairs, or even

solo. Your wedding coordinator or officiant can help you with the aesthetics of the procession and recession.

Unless she is due on your wedding date or extremely close to it, a bridesmaid who is pregnant doesn't necessarily add a complication. Her dress may not look exactly like the other women's, but provided she has not expressed a particular concern, there is no reason not to go ahead as planned.

BEFORE THE WEDDING

While you're planning your wedding, bridesmaids can be invaluable: running errands, addressing invitations, and acting as a sounding board to help you keep your sanity. They can pitch in by locating service vendors, such as florists and dj's, for you to look into, and keep tabs on their progress as the wedding draws near.

Since bridesmaids generally assume financial responsibility for their entire wedding outfit, you should try to keep different heights and shapes of your friends in mind as well as budgets. Your maid of honor should coordinate fittings for the other bridesmaids. In addition, she is generally in charge of planning a shower and/or bachelorette party.

ON THE WEDDING DAY

On your wedding day, your maid of honor will help you get ready and take care of last-minute details. Ask a reliable, well-organized attendant to put together an emergency kit to bring to

the ceremony site. The kit should include aspirin, safety pins, a nail file, glue, needle and thread, scissors, comb and brush, hairpins, extra panty hose, a light snack, and clear nail polish. It's also wise to ask one bridesmaid (or your maid of honor) to deposit in the bank any cash gifts you may receive. She should make sure to write down the amounts and names and give you the list when you return from your honeymoon.

Finally, don't forget to thank your bridesmaids for all their help. After all, who else in the world has been so happy that you've found the perfect dress, hall, flowers, musicians, buttercream cake, and most of all, the perfect guy.

defining roles

A bridesmaid can be anyone who is close to the bride—single or married, young or old. The bride's attendants are usually female. It is perfectly acceptable for a bride to have two honor attendants, especially when one of them lives far from the bride or the wedding site. Here, a list of terms and definitions for various female attendants.

- **MATRON OF HONOR** Married woman responsible for coordinating the rest of the bridal party and assisting the bride during wedding planning.
- **MAID OF HONOR** Single woman with similar responsibilities as matron of honor.
- **MAIDEN OF HONOR** A girl over 14 who is particularly close to the bride; a ceremonial role for the most part.
- **JUNIOR BRIDESMAID** Girl between the ages of 9 and 14; another ceremonial role.
- **FLOWER GIRL** Young girl between the ages of four and eight—along with the ring bearer, the most frequently included child attendant.

bride's basics going to the chapel

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AT A RELIGIOUS CEREMONY

no matter how many weddings you've been to, when it comes to your own ceremony, you're bound to have questions about some of the specifics. Most religious weddings include the following elements, many of which you and your fiancé can personalize, but be sure to get your officiant's approval first.

Greeting/Call to worship These first words will welcome your guests and set the tone. For example, the greeting from The Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church is: *"Dearly beloved: We have come together in the presence of God to witness and bless the joining together of this man and this woman in Holy Matrimony..."* Some couples use this time to include a favorite poem or quotation, a wish for their families, or a reading from a friend about love and friendship. Your clergy member might also express your personal philosophy about marriage: *"Melissa and Kevin feel that they've each found their lifelong companion because..."*

Charge to the couple This determines that you have voluntarily come together to marry. An example from the Protestant ceremony: *"Will you have this woman/man to be your wedded wife/husband to live together in holy matrimony?"*

Presentation/Giving away Traditionally, the clergy member asks, *"Who gives this woman to be married to this man?"* The bride's father, or whoever has escorted her down the aisle, replies, *"I do."* Today, many couples choose to vary these traditional words. For example, the minister might ask, *"Who blesses/supports this marriage?"* Both your parents and your groom's parents (and sometimes the entire wedding party and congregation as well) may respond, *"We*

do." Next, you and your fiancé, and your attendants, if the altar is large enough, ascend the altar for the exchange of vows.

Vows These public promises join you together emotionally and describe your intentions to love, honor, and trust each another. In traditional Christian weddings, the couple promises, *"to have and to hold...for better or for worse."* Most couples today substitute the word *"cherish"* in the traditional pledge for the words *"to obey."* Generally, clergy members will be happy to help you create your own vows if the traditional vows do not include all that you want to say, or if you prefer less formal language.

Exchange of rings Traditionally, the bride and groom place a wedding ring on each other's finger, stating, *"With this ring, I thee wed."* You may, however, also state what the rings mean to you as a couple: *"Let this ring be a symbol of our eternal love."*

Pronouncement At the end of the ceremony, the officiant will declare to those assembled that you are legally wed. At one time it was common for clergy members to announce, *"I now pronounce you man and wife. Those whom God has joined together, let no man put asunder."* Today, most clergy members have changed the pronouncement to the more egalitarian, *"I now pronounce you husband and wife."* He or she might also personalize the pronouncement.

Remember to keep your kiss at the altar in good taste. After all, your grandmother is watching from the second pew.

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? do the ? right thing

ANSWERS TO YOUR ETIQUETTE QUESTIONS

Ten years ago I was a bridesmaid in a friend's wedding, but since that time we haven't been particularly close. Now that I'm getting married, am I expected to include her in my wedding party?

Not at all. Once upon a time it was customary for a bride to choose her attendants based on the weddings she had previously participated in. Over the years, this has become less practical as people move apart and friendships change, so don't feel obligated to make her a part of your bridal party.

Purple is my favorite color, and I would like to incorporate it into the decorations for my July wedding. My mother insists that it is not an appropriate shade for a summer ceremony. Is she right?

As in much of life, Mom knows best. The general rule of thumb is to avoid jewel tones, like cranberry, teal, and purple, in the summer. These deep hues are better suited for a winter wedding. But this doesn't mean you should shy away from color. Lavender or mauve would be beautiful choices. And if you really want to use purple, reserve it for your bouquet, where you can mix purple pansies or violets with an array of white flowers.

I love my fiancé, but I hate my engagement ring! It's a family heirloom that looks very old-fashioned. Should I let him know I'm disappointed?

That depends. If the ring has been sitting in a vault for 20 years, and you believe that your fiancé's attachment to it is based more on family obligation than sentiment, you could then gently broach the subject. Per-

haps ask if it would be okay to have the ring reset, therefore enhancing its "beauty" while adding a personalized touch. However, if the heirloom belonged to a relative who was dear to his heart, then you may want to keep mum and learn to love it.

Is there a nice way to tell my guests that I don't want children at my wedding?

Yes. Start by not including them on the invitations, and ask your bridesmaids to discreetly pass the word that kids are not invited. If, despite your efforts, you learn in advance that some guests will be bringing children, set aside a special kids' room at the ceremony and reception.

I mailed my invitations last month, but now, because of a family illness, I have to change the date. What is the best way to inform my guests of the postponement?

For a formal wedding, notify your guests as soon as possible with printed cards. For example: "Mr. and Mrs. Albert Finn announce that the marriage of their daughter, Hilary Ann, to Everton Frank Clarke has been postponed from Saturday, the Fourth of June until Saturday, the Eighteenth of October, at four o'clock, St. John's Episcopal Church, Brooklyn, NY"

Mentioning the cause, unless there has been a death in the family, is optional. If there is no time to get cards made up, or if your ceremony is an informal affair, then invitations may be recalled with personal notes or by phone, fax, or e-mail.

Send your wedding-etiquette questions to Do the Right Thing, BRIDE'S, 140 E. 45th St., New York, NY 10017; fax 212-880-6689; or e-mail letters@brides.com

shall we proceed?

GETTING DOWN THE AISLE IN STYLE

the practice procession overseen by your officiant is an important part of your ceremony rehearsal. Most houses of worship have one center aisle, used for both the procession and recession. Some sanctuaries have two center aisles; in this case, use the left aisle for the procession and the right for the recession, or close one off.

The Protestant Procession

The groom and best man stand next to the officiant as the procession begins. The groomsmen enter first, from the back of the church, in pairs (leaving three to four pews between each pair), by height from shortest to tallest. If there is an extra groomsman, the shortest walks in first, alone. The bridesmaids are next, starting four to five pews behind the groomsmen. If there are four or fewer, they walk alone; otherwise, they are paired according to height. If there is an uneven number of bridesmaids, the shortest leads, alone. The junior bridesmaid precedes the honor attendant. If there are two junior bridesmaids, they may walk together. If there are child attendants, the honor attendant precedes them. Otherwise, she precedes the bride. If there are two honor attendants, they may walk either together or separately. The ring bearer walks alone or with the flower girl, who precedes the bride. The bride and her father enter last, the bride on her father's left. The pages (if there are any) end the procession, carrying the bride's train.

Christian Procession

1. Clergymember
2. Groom
3. Best man
4. Groomsmen
5. Bridesmaids
6. Honor attendant
7. Ring bearer
8. Flower girl
9. Bride
10. Bride's father

The Catholic Procession

The same order is followed as in a Protestant procession, although the groomsmen may join the priest, groom, and best man at the altar instead of walking down the aisle.

The Jewish Procession

Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Jewish processions vary according to local customs and the family's preferences.

In the most formal procession, the rabbi and cantor (walking on the rabbi's right) go down the aisle first, followed by the bride's grandparents, the groom's grandparents, then the groomsmen in pairs, by height from shortest to tallest; the best man; the groom, between his parents, with his father on his left, his mother on his right; the bridesmaids, individually by height. If there are more than four, they may walk in pairs. If there is an uneven number of bridesmaids, the shortest walks alone. Next are the honor attendant(s); the ring bearer, the flower girl, and finally, the bride and her parents, her father on her left, her mother on her right.

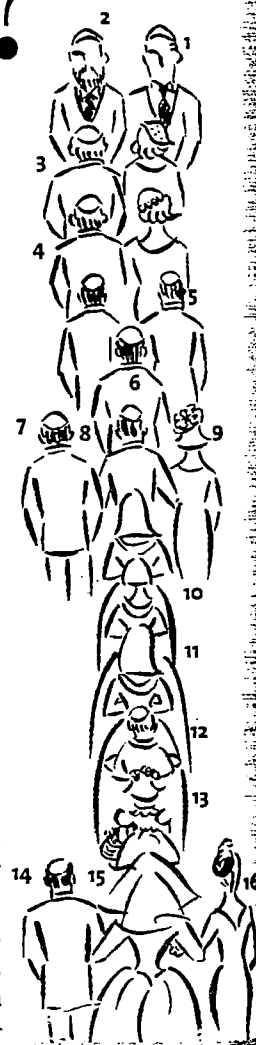
In the most simple Jewish procession, the groomsmen walk down the aisle first, in pairs, followed by the bridesmaids in pairs, the best man, the groom, the honor attendant, the flower girl, and the bride, walking with her father on her left. It's optional for the groom's parents and the bride's mother to join this procession.

The Informal Procession

At very small weddings, such as simple civil ceremonies, the bride is preceded by one attendant and escorted by her father. Or, a couple may forgo a procession completely: The bride and groom can stand before the officiant, with the guests in a semicircle around them.

For a large civil ceremony in a ballroom or other formal setting, choose the procession that best suits the site.

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Jewish Procession

1. Cantor
2. Rabbi
3. Bride's grandparents
4. Groom's grandparents
5. Groomsmen
6. Best man
7. Groom's father
8. Groom
9. Groom's mother
10. Bridesmaids
11. Honor attendant
12. Ring bearer
13. Flower girl
14. Bride's father
15. Bride
16. Bride's mother

bride's basics

bride's calendar

WEDDING-PLANNING GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW FOR A YEARLONG ENGAGEMENT

12 months before

- ☐ Buy a wedding planner or date book.
- ☐ Consult with fiancé and all parents about budget and style, from colors to cake.
- ☐ Select your attendants.
- ☐ Decide on wedding and reception sites and reserve both.
- ☐ Book consultant, caterer, photographer, videographer, florist, and musicians.

9 months before

- ☐ With fiancé, visit clergy member or justice of the peace.
- ☐ Choose and order dress and accessories.
- ☐ Register gifts.
- ☐ Begin guest list; have fiancé start his.
- ☐ Consult travel agent about honeymoon.

6 months before

- ☐ Plan details with wedding professionals.
- ☐ Book calligrapher, portrait photographer, and limousine for wedding party.
- ☐ Order invitations and announcements.
- ☐ Complete honeymoon plans with fiancé.
- ☐ Set date to order attendants' dresses.
- ☐ Discuss rehearsal dinner with fiancé.

3 months before

- ☐ Finalize guest list.
- ☐ Shop for lingerie and honeymoon clothes.
- ☐ Order wedding rings.
- ☐ Check state requirement for blood tests.
- ☐ Make appointment with hair stylist.
- ☐ Talk to fiancé about reserving a block of rooms for out-of-town guests.

6-8 weeks before

- ☐ Mail your invitations.
- ☐ Buy groom's wedding gift.
- ☐ Choose gifts for your attendants.
- ☐ Have final dress and headpiece fitting.
- ☐ Have portrait taken.
- ☐ Pick up rings.
- ☐ Plan your bridesmaids' party.
- ☐ Write thank-you notes as you receive gifts.
- ☐ Send announcement to newspapers.

2 weeks before

- ☐ Get marriage license with fiancé.
- ☐ Confirm honeymoon reservations.
- ☐ Submit request lists to photographer, videographer, and musicians.
- ☐ Address announcements to mail on wedding day.
- ☐ Arrange to move belongings to new home.

1 week before

- ☐ Pack, get going-away outfit ready.
- ☐ Purchase traveler's checks; inquire about ATMs near your honeymoon site.
- ☐ Give final guest count to caterer.
- ☐ Give the bridesmaids' party.
- ☐ Check final details with wedding professionals.
- ☐ Keep up with gift acknowledgments.
- ☐ Remind attendants of rehearsal dinner details.