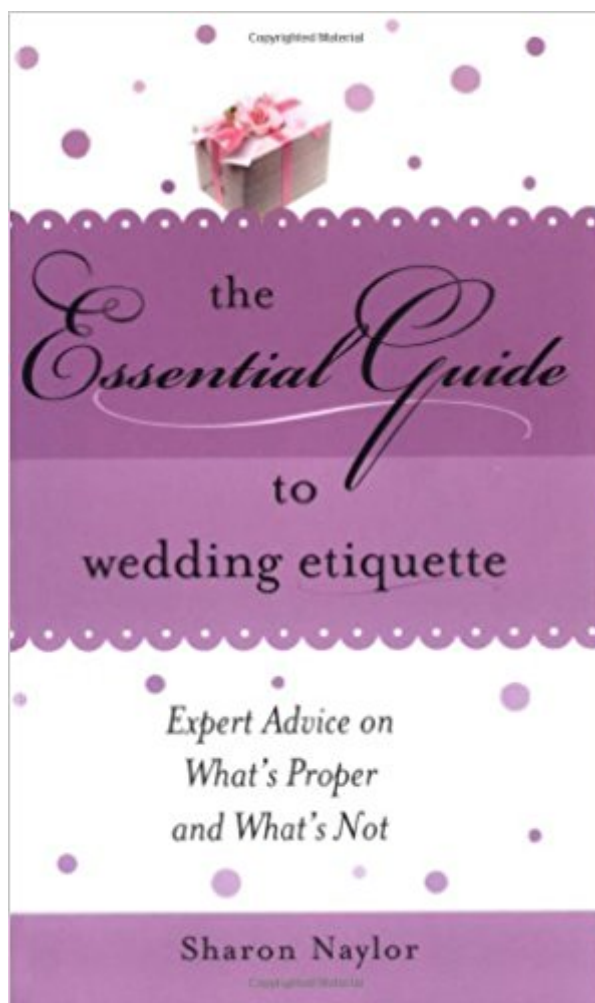


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Essential Guide To Wedding Etiquette



Synopsis

A wedding is a minefield of social rules, for everyone from the bride and groom to the wedding party, the mothers, fathers and extended families. This comprehensive guide by one of the leading experts in the wedding category will help everyone involved. Providing the most up to date, current and socially important etiquette rules, this ultimate guide to the etiquette of weddings includes:--Sharing the good news of the engagement, wedding announcements and engagement parties--The roles of bridal party members, selecting the bridal party, and what to do if a bridal party member has to be removed--Parents' roles and responsibilities, and parent issues--Budgeting, who pays for what, the etiquette of legalities, how to ask others to help financially--Cutting down the guest list, sticky guest list issues--Ceremony style etiquette, working with an officiant, and reception planning and seating charts--The etiquette of group shopping, long-distance organizing, ordering and paying

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Customer Reviews

Sharon Naylor is the bestselling and internationally-renowned author of over 35 wedding books, including *The Complete Outdoor Wedding Planner*, *Bridesmaid on a Budget*, *The Mother of the Bride Book*, *Mother of the Groom*, and many more award-winning titles. She has been featured in *Bridal Guide*, *Southern Bride*, *Brides*, *InStyle Weddings*, *New York Weddings*, *Destination I Do*, *VOWS*, and many other top bridal publications, as well as in *Glamour*, *Redbook*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Woman's Day*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times* and others. She has appeared on *Good Morning America*, *Martha Stewart Weddings* satellite radio, the

BBC, Lifetime, ABC News, and countless other media programs. She is a syndicated wedding columnist and the green weddings expert at GorgeouslyGreen.com, as well as the Q&A maven at iVillage Weddings, WeddingMapper.com and more. She is also the destination wedding and honeymoon spokesperson for the Best-Of award-winning Rosewood Resorts Caneel Bay and Jumby Bay. Visit her website sharonnaylor.net and follow her on Twitter @sharonnaylorwed for her latest news and to potentially be featured in her upcoming wedding articles, blogs, and television segments.

Building Your Guest List
What Will People Think? This concern haunts many a couple who, together, agree fully that they need and want a prenuptial agreement to protect their assets in the future. They have no problem with it. But their families most certainly might. Here are some helpful etiquette tips for this situation:

- 0 Stay quiet about it. No one needs to know your personal business, and this is one issue that you should consider sacred between the two of you.
- 0 If someone asks you about whether or not you're getting a prenup, you can be vague. "We're talking about it," followed by a natural change of subject gently and politely lets the inquiring mind know that it's none of his business.
- 0 Think for yourself. Problems arise when partners approach everyone they know for their opinion, to vent about the process, or to ask for legal advice. You've then invited everyone else's baggage, fears, and egos to interfere with your thought process. It's bad etiquette to advertise private matters within your partnership, as you'd be disrespecting your partner's privacy as well, and now is an early lesson on that. Discretion always.
- 0 If family and friends hear about your prenuptial agreement and approach you with hideous etiquette of their own ("What were you thinking, man?"), don't take the bait. You don't have to explain anything, and you won't indulge their need for drama and gossip (which is what's behind most ambushes launched by very bored people). Simply say, "We're both happy with what we've decided, thanks. Now we're on to other things." You're calm and cool about it, you thank them for their "thoughtfulness," and you smoothly divert the subject.

Keep It Quiet
Ask parents, politely, to stay quiet about their guest wish list until you can devise a final guest list for the wedding: "I think it's best if we don't share any details about the guest list until we have a final master list. I wouldn't want to create any misunderstandings." You're talking about a major etiquette breach—overeager parents inform everyone on their wish list that they are invited to the wedding before the master guest list is created. Unintentionally or intentionally, they've created a huge etiquette problem. The bride and groom would not have chosen Mom's Bunco partners for the wedding guest list, but they have now been invited. You cannot uninvite people who would realistically expect to be invited. And a direct invitation from the mother of the bride constitutes just

that. Yikes. So avoid this etiquette nightmare by asking your entire team to be discreet about the guest list for right now, and you will do the same. The Deed Is Done0 After you complete your prenuptial agreement, after all is signed and sealed, put it away and let it fade from your thoughts. Get on with your life together.0 Never, ever, ever bring up the topic of the prenap as ammunition in an argument. ("Oh yeah? Well at least I trusted you enough not to think about drawing up a prenap!") A hot temper and a careless comment can erode the start of a marriage. Words do last between partners, so never use a prenap as a way to cut off your partner at the knees. Since the size of your guest list determines the kind of wedding you'll have, where you'll have it, and just about every other detail beyond the basics (how many invitations you'll need, your menu, and so on), and since working together with your parents presents etiquette issues to be handled well, let's start off by defining your wished-for size of wedding so that you can inform parents about parameters:0 Small: Under 50 guests0 Medium: 50 to 100 guests0 Average: 100 to 150 guests (Note: the average guest list size in the country right now is 141 guests)0 Large: 150 to 200 guests0 Extra-Large: 200+ guestsThree ListsAs you begin the selection of your invited guests, you'll invite your parents to submit their guest wish lists. Use the term "wish list," since you will ultimately decide who makes the final cut. Yes, parents who are paying for all or part of the wedding might think otherwise, but it's ultimately your choice of who you want to share your day with. Parents should of course be given the chance to invite some of their closest friends, but as a matter of honor to you, they should never be invited in place of your friends. The bride and groom will have one list of your relatives and friends; the bride's parents will compile their list; the groom's parents will compile their list. If you have more than two sets of parents, such as remarried parents, they get a list too. Remind your parents at the start that you wish to share your wedding day only with the people you're closest to. Make it clear that you expect your guest list to be "worked on" by asking parents to star or underline the people on their list who are absolute must have's. And you'll do the same with your list. When parents perceive fairness all the way around, many etiquette problems are avoided. Parents' Guest List Etiquette0 Invite only those friends and family that the bride and groom know.0 Don't shift your IOU's onto your son or daughter. Just because your friends invited you to their daughter's wedding does not automatically mean that you have to invite them to your children's wedding.0 Remember that it's the bride and groom's wedding, and keep it foremost in your mind that you've had your wedding day with your favorite people. Now it's their turn.0 Be a dream partner. Volunteer to cut several of your distant friends so that the bride and groom can add some of their closest friends.0 Deliver your list to the bride and groom on time, if not early.0 Help the bride and groom to create a complete guest list, reminding them of first cousins they

"Mom, Is Cousin Lena

Single Again?"Parents are an invaluable resource when it comes to offering an "And Guest" to the right people. For instance, it would be horrifically rude of you to send an invitation to your Cousin Lena and Guest when Cousin Lena is engaged to Tom. That's a huge show of ignorance and implied disrespect to Tom. Your parents can check over your "And Guest" list and update you about family and friends' marital status. may have forgotten and thus saving them from etiquette snafus in their invitation process. 0 When you compile lists, cross the duplicate names off of your printed list, not theirs.0 Voluntarily star or underline names that can be added to the backup list. If the bride and groom receive regrets from expected guests, they can look to their backup list to send out invitations to others they'd like to have at the wedding (but could not include on the master list).Compiling Your Master ListUsing everyone's wish list, you'll compile one master list in an organized fashion. "And Guest" Additions0 Every single guest over the age of eighteen (in some families, the rule is "over sixteen") is given an "And Guest" indication that he or she may invite a date to the wedding.0 It is improper not to allow an "And Guest" to single adults as a way to save money or open up spaces to additional guests.0 Included in the singles list are elderly guests, who should be allowed to bring a date, friend, or assistant.0 If a single guest responds that she's bringing a fun friend of hers instead of a date (as you'd intended), you cannot tell her that she only gets an "And Guest" if she brings an actual date. ?You don't get to choose who your guests bring as a companion for the event. 0 The officiant must be invited to the reception, sParents Say..."But you were their flower girl twenty years ago! We have to invite them!""But my friends are likely to give you much better gifts than your friends! We have to invite them!""But my friends are so much fun! We have to invite them!"You Reply..."I don't know them at all. I understand how you feel about this, but I'd rather invite friends and family that I'm close with. That couple will understand."(Be careful not to let your jaw hit the floor. Parents who claim this one have lost sight of the true meaning of the day. Be understanding.) "It's not the gifts that matter to us. It's having our closest friends there with us on the wedding day.""I know your friends are fun, and it's great that you all have such a good time together. But I just don't have room on the guest list for any people who aren't very close to the two of us." Parents Say..."But they're FAMILY! We have to invite them!"You Reply..."I wish we could invite all the cousins, all fifty of them. But it's just not possible. We're not close with them. You had to tell me some of their names, after all." (Give a smile here.) "So I'm sorry, but we'll have to put them on the backup list." along with his or her spouse or partner.0 The wedding coordinator is counted as a guest, together with an assistant. Wedding coordinators, who are on the job, do not bring dates to weddings. But they do sit down to eat, which makes them part of the final guest count.0 The same goes for the photographer and his or her assistant.0 The DJ or band members0 The videographer

and assistant0 Finally, the members of your wedding party are either invited together with their spouses, fiancÃ©s, or significant others, and single members of your wedding party are each given an "And Guest" as a matter of respect to them. Yes, they're paired up for the ceremony and the first dance, but it's an etiquette mistake not to give them an "And Guest" for the reception. They can choose to turn down the offer if they wish.

Ceremony Style Etiquette

Cutting out the Kids

It's a common practice to eliminate guests' children from your wedding guest list, but you should invite your siblings' children even if they are not in the wedding party. The #1 Etiquette Mistake in Cutting Guests from List

While it's not likely that your aunt and uncle who now live in New Zealand will be able to attend your wedding in Florida, you absolutely must invite them to the wedding. Never cut a guest from your list just because you assume they won't be able to come. It's hideous etiquette when close relatives hear about your wedding and don't receive the invitation they expect as a matter of family practice and honor. Sure, your aunt and uncle might not be likely to attend, but honor them with an invitation anyway. They just might hop on a plane to see you. If not, you're free to invite other guests.

The mirror image to this dilemma is sending invitations to guests you're sure won't come as a matter of family diplomacy only. They just might say yes, so be sure you've counted them in your final head count list.

The area that requires the most decorum, besides your wedding invitations (which we'll cover in Part 9), is your ceremony style. While the elements and expressions within your ceremony are highly important to you, it's essential that you follow proper etiquette for the type of ceremony you'll plan. It's a matter of honor and respect for a house of worship-if you'll have a religious wedding-or longstanding propriety in a secular ceremony of any type.

Religious Ceremonies

When you'll marry within any house of worship, they will dictate their rules of conduct to you. Some religions are known for being less exacting than others, and it is up to you to take these rules into consideration when you're deciding where to marry.

0 You may ask for permission to alter the traditional religious ceremony script, such as adding a musical interlude or writing your own vows. Your officiant must approve any changes you desire for your ceremony.

0 Never attempt to "go over the officiant's head" by slipping in new wording to your vows or sneaking some sheet music to the choir. You are a guest in the house of worship and must abide by the rules.

0 Your guests must be educated about the rules of the house as well. Be sure to include instructions ?in your wedding program, such as notification that flash photography is not allowed inside the house of worship.

Interfaith Ceremonies

If the two of you are of different faiths, you might decide to honor both of your belief systems by planning an interfaith wedding. These personally-styled ceremonies intertwine the rituals, readings, and symbolism of your religions.

0 You have two options regarding the officiants who will create the style and substance of your ceremony:

hire one interfaith minister or have two separate officiants (one from each of your faiths) work together to conduct your ceremony. Each will then enact the rituals and readings of his or her faith.⁰ Note that some houses of worship will not allow you to bring in a separate officiant from another religion. If you find yourself "stuck" in a situation such as this, search for a different house of worship that will allow you to bring in a separate officiant and thus style your ceremony the way you wish.⁰ If you cannot find a willing house of worship to share officiating duties, or if your faiths are too conflicting by nature to realistically allow for one shared ceremony that expresses both sets of beliefs, it may be best if you plan a secular wedding. You can incorporate the readings and rituals you both cherish in your own styled ceremony led by a secular or non-denominational officiant.⁰ If you hire an interfaith minister to cocreate your ceremony style with you, come prepared with your wishes on which elements you'd both like to include in your ceremony. Interfaith and non-denominational ministers tell me they appreciate a couple taking these preparatory steps, as it is their goal to help the couple plan a deeply meaningful and personalized ceremony. Partner with this expert as equals, in a respectful and open working manner.⁰ If your interfaith situation just seems too complicated and your faiths do not mesh well, then you might opt to plan a civil ceremony.

Secular Ceremonies⁰ A secular ceremony may include some religious elements, such as the readings of psalms and offerings to saints, but they do not take place in a house of worship.⁰ You may host a secular ceremony anywhere you please, such as in a hotel ballroom, a garden, the beach, your home, and so on.⁰ You'll either hire a licensed independent minister to perform your ceremony, or you'll find out at your town hall or county courthouse which accredited authorities you may hire to officiate your wedding. Different states have different rules about who may conduct wedding ceremonies legally, so check your state's laws about having the mayor, a superior court judge, an appellate judge, a member of the town council, or even a friend who has been ordained conduct your ceremony.⁰ You are free to set the formality level and style of your ceremony exactly as you wish as long as all of your plans work in tandem with your set formality and theme.⁰ Secular officiants can "work" a wedding of any style. Ask your hired minister to show you his or her formal attire (such as robes) or informal attire choices (such as a suit or flowing dress with flowers). You may request that your officiant dress appropriately for the style and formality of your wedding.

Civil Ceremonies⁰ A civil ceremony is a quick and simple process, often lasting only minutes. You'll be married at town hall, in the mayor's office, or at the justice of the peace.⁰ You'll make an appointment for your civil ceremony and speak to the justice of the peace, for instance, about what's involved in their usual civil ceremony script. He or she may hand you the script, and you are allowed to ask for personalizations to the wording.⁰ You will not be allowed to add musical numbers,

additional rituals, or other time-stretching elements. The code of the civil ceremony is that it is designed to make your marriage legal. Once your license is signed, it's official. You can then move forward to celebrating your marriage.

DÃfÂ©cor is usually not allowed at a civil ceremony site. But you could ask for permission.

The bride may carry a bouquet if she wishes, and the groom may wear a boutonniere.

In the past, it was considered improper for the bride to wear anything other than a business suit for her civil wedding. Now, you might choose to wear a stylish dress, or a suit dress or pantsuit. A formal bridal gown does not match the formality level, so skip the veil and train.

The groom wears a suit, not a tuxedo, in most cases. Again, the tuxedo is just too formal for the civil setting.

You do need to have two witnesses in attendance to sign your marriage license. The civil officiant signs as well, and you'll file your license with the state in the same manner as all other marriages in your state.

You may bring additional guests to the civil ceremony, but keep your guest count limited only to close relatives and friends. You cannot march 150 people into the judge's chambers.

You may plan any type of post-ceremony reception you wish, either on the same day or on a ?future date.

Second Wedding Ceremonies

In years past, etiquette handled second weddings delicately. There was a sense that second weddings were to be kept modest. Second-time brides were not allowed to wear white, since that was the color for first-time brides to convey their virginity. Times have changed. All of wedding planning creativity is now the same domain for the second-time bride.

Note, though, that the second-time bride may not wear a traditional veil covering her face as a first-time bride would. You may wear a veil and headpiece if you wish, but it should be kept to the back, not covering your face.

While you can wear a white gown, you are encouraged to avoid styles that are too reminiscent of a first-time bride. All brides have freedom to choose their gowns in a style and color of their choosing, provided the gowns match the formality of the wedding (and fit the rules of the house of worship).

The size, style, and formality of the wedding are completely up to you.

You'll find more second-wedding etiquette details in the chapters to follow, such as invitation wording.

Destination Wedding Ceremonies

For a destination wedding, you'll invite a handful of your closest family and friends to an exotic or foreign location where your ceremony will be held. You may plan, with the on-site or your own wedding coordinator's help, a ceremony in the style of your choosing. You can arrange a traditional religious wedding in a house of worship, or a secular wedding with or without generous helpings of the local culture's beliefs and rituals.

You will adhere, of course, to all legal rules for making your marriage official.

You will celebrate with your guests at the destination resort, and then choose the nature of your honeymoon. You can either stay at that same resort or depart for another resort to give yourselves privacy.

You may offer to pay for your guests' airfare and lodging if you wish, but many destination weddings are thrown where guests pay

for what amounts to their own family vacations. It's a gracious offer-and you may find that it costs far less than a traditional wedding-but it is not mandatory.0 You will send wedding announcements to all of your friends and family when you return from your honeymoon.0 You may plan a group celebration with all of your loved ones at a date later in time.0 You may create a personalized wedding website including links to your bridal registry...and yes, you may register for gifts if you plan to host a group celebration later.

The Double Wedding

While it may be rare these days, there are etiquette rules for the double wedding:0 A double wedding may be shared by two sisters, friends, cousins, even brother-sister pairings (and by that I mean the brother is the groom with his fiancée, and the sister is the bride with her fiancé).0 The guest list is a shared proposition, with both wedding couples getting half of the guest list to themselves.0 The brides wear their own choices of bridal gowns, not matching gowns. They will match in formality, though, to be proper fits to their wedding's style.0 Each bride arranges for her bridesmaids and Maid of Honor to wear gowns in colors that coordinate, if not matching colors. Usually, each bride wants her bridal party to be identified as "hers" so she might choose a lighter color while the other bride chooses a darker shade for her maids.0 The grooms and men of the wedding party may all wear matching styles and color of tuxedos, or they may differentiate each set with a different color of tie or coordinating color vests (such as black for one set and a stylish black and gray for the other set.)0 All sets of parents are seated in the front row at the ceremony.0 When it comes to the processional and the order in which each couple is addressed by the officiant at the ceremony, the usual order is "eldest bride first." So, the older sister would be first to be escorted down the aisle following her own bridesmaids, and when the second bride makes her way down the aisle following her bridesmaids, it's the first, eldest bride who is addressed by the officiant during each element of the ceremony.0 Or, you may arrange to alternate being first. The first bride down the aisle may be the second bride to take her vows, for instance. You'll create an honorable sense of top importance when the order is alternated.0 The officiant will perform one ceremony, not two separate ones with the same elements. He or she may, for instance, perform the ceremony readings and then address each couple separately to repeat their vows.0 Try to keep the ceremony short. The double nature of the ceremony elements extends the duration of the ceremony, so extra musical performances can be eliminated.0 When it's time for the couples to kiss to seal their vows, the officiant performs this element separately so that the photographer can capture each moment for each couple.0 The couples are then announced as husband and wife, starting with the elder bride and then announcing the younger.0 The recessional begins with the elder bride and her husband (unless a switch has been arranged for the younger bride to exit first), followed by the other bridal couple, and then both sets of wedding parties paired

and exiting together.0 They may form two separate receiving lines at the exit of the church, or the brides may stand together with their grooms at their sides and parents on either side of them. With such a large entourage, wedding party members may be excused from the lineup, although Maids of Honor and Best Men can still be asked to join.0 The couples are introduced into the reception hall either together or separately, according to individual preference, and they'll take turns dancing their first dance in solo spotlights.?

Seating Chart Etiquette

location, formality level, color scheme, time of the wedding, and season of the wedding. All of these essential facts must be finalized before your caterer can build a menu that suits the particulars of your day. You cannot expect the caterer to plan a menu without knowing your wedding date, for instance. And some caterers have a policy against doing outdoor or beach weddings, so that's an important fact to share up-front.

Not Just for Some...

Be sure to provide seating assignments for all of your guests. It's improper etiquette to provide table assignments for what you'd consider your "main tables," such as the parents' tables, and then not have seating assignments for the rest of your guests. While it may seem to make sense in order to convey who sits in reserved seating (just like with the pew cards at your ceremony), it's actually quite the insult to your guests. They then become "everyone else."

Particulars of your day.

You cannot expect the caterer to plan a menu without knowing your wedding date, for instance. And some caterers have a policy against doing outdoor or beach weddings, so that's an important fact to share up-front.0 When you're asked to make your selections from a list of appetizer and entrÃ©e options, you are free to take the list home, review it fully, and fax in your choices the next day. 0 Always deliver requested information within twenty-four hours, so that the caterer can do his or her job in a timely manner. It's rude for you to put off answering your caterer's questions, or to expect the caterer to fulfill your desires when you've stalled in delivering vital information. A speedy response is a must.

Varying Sizes

You can request tables of varying sizes that can be arranged attractively in your ballroom. This new etiquette-friendly option allows you to seat "natural groups" of close relatives and friends together without leaving anyone out. For instance, that group of fourteen extremely close cousins and their spouses can be seated at a rectangular table at the side of the room, while that group of ten great-aunts and great-uncles can share the same round table. Ask your site manager for a layout chart of the room and some help arranging the best placement of different-sized or shaped tables....

free to take the list home, review it fully, and fax in your choices the next day.

0 Always deliver requested information within twenty-four hours, so that the caterer can do his or her job in a timely manner. It's rude for you to put off answering your caterer's questions, or to expect the caterer to fulfill your desires when you've stalled in delivering vital information. A speedy response is a must.

Occupying Children

It's fast becoming a must to provide

kid-friendly games and activities (such as coloring books) as a way to keep kids entertained during the reception. This thoughtful offering on your part is as much for your adult guests' relief as for the kids' enjoyment. Also, create a special kids' menu featuring food choices they'll like.0 If you'd like to request specialty dishes or changes to menu items on the caterer's list, always ask if the caterer can fulfill that request. Avoid the all-too-common problem of demanding that a caterer style a dish the way you want. 0 On the flip side, the caterer must not assume a "you work for me" attitude with you. If your caterer appears to be snobbish about your lack of insights into the farm-raised salmon vs. wild salmon dilemma, you can and should make an assertive yet polite statement that returns the chef to terra firma: "Come on, now. There's no need for insulting us. We're depending on your expertise, so if you'd kindly explain the difference, we'd appreciate it." Smile when you say it, so that the chef can tell you're not being sarcastic.0 Inform the caterer or chef of all food allergies in your family at the outset. Ask the caterer how he or she usually handles unknown food allergies, such as printing up menu cards that let guests know the salmon is crusted with chopped walnuts.0 When you do need to call to ask a question, always begin by asking "Is this a good time for you?" If it's not a good time, ask for a better time when you can call him back.0 If the expert has an assistant, treat that person with a friendly and respectful demeanor at all times.0 Send in your final guest headcount by the set deadline as well as your final selections of menu options. Caterers hate it when indecisive couples change their menu selections endlessly before the wedding day.0 Ask the caterer or site manager for his or her policy regarding last-minute guest headcount changes. If a guest calls two days before the wedding to say he can't attend, will the caterer be willing to adjust your bill? Find out the absolute last day that changes can be made.0 Pay your deposit and your final payments on time. 0 Compliment the caterer and the site manager during your wedding. They appreciate it when brides and grooms express their awe and appreciation for the work they've devoted so much attention to. Some couples even take the microphone and ask their guests to applaud the caterer for his or her outstanding menu. Sharing the spotlight on your big day...that's quite a gift to give the expert.0 And of course, send a thank-you note after your wedding if the manager or caterer truly outdid your expectations or went the extra mile for you.

A cocktail party does not require a seating chart and very rarely has one. If you'll have a dessert reception only, you also may opt not to have assigned seating. For all other types of parties, a seating plan is essential.

Who Works on Creating the Seating Chart?The bride and groom create their plan of the reception seating chart and may then consult with parents for insight and further guidance.

His Side and Her SideIn decades past, it was the norm to seat all of the bride's guests at tables on one side of the room, and all of the groom's guests at tables on the other side of the room. Now you can mix up your seating

assignments any way you wish. The Kids' Table If you'll have a number of child guests in addition to the flower girls and ringbearer, then you'll likely arrange for a kids' table. Be sure to seat the parents of these children at the table closest to this one so that they can mind their own children's behavior. It's a bad move to seat the parents far away and obligate another guest to cut the children's chicken for them. ?Dear Sharon: Where do our wedding party's guests sit? At the main table with us so that they can eat with their husband or wife? This arrangement has always presented this challenge. Some brides and grooms are against having spouses or dates join them up at the main table, since that addition can expand the size of the table by far. Some choose to place a special table right up front where the wedding party members' dates can all sit together and be right nearby to spend time with their partners. Brides and grooms who choose to sit at a Sweetheart table do eliminate this problem, by specifying table assignments where their wedding party members are seated with their dates or spouses (and kids, if necessary

I truly wanted to like this book, since our society is fast losing its civility, but unfortunately this manual of etiquette seems to have been researched from wedding websites and bridal magazines (which are, of course, designed by the industry with profits in mind rather than manners) rather than accepted rules of civility. The author includes some excellent advice, such as how to announce your engagement to family and friends, but other advice is just plain bad, particularly in bringing up money (sorry, brides and grooms, but it's no longer your parents' job to pay unless they offer) and who should pay for what (these "rules" went out the window when couples stopped being married directly from their parents' homes). The most egregious advice is perhaps that of the wedding party: the author assures the couple that the wedding party isn't just to have dear friends stand up for you. It is their job and thus entirely reasonable to expect them to spend their personal time working the wedding (no - that's what a professional wedding coordinator does) and their personal funds to host parties (showers and bachelorettes are gifts, not entitlements). I was particularly appalled at the section on how to "remove" a wedding party member. There is in fact no way to do this unless a couple is prepared to end the friendship permanently, because it will. If you're looking for true wedding etiquette, and want to adhere to accepted rules of polite society, then I recommend the excellent works of Judith Martin, aka "Miss Manners" or Emily Post rather than this tome.

I love this book! I was so overwhelmed when I found out how many books were available about wedding planning. The first and only book I bought during my engagement was this little etiquette book and it was the only one I needed! I recommend it to all my engaged friends. It has lots of

helpful tips regarding ceremony, invitation, guest list, etc.

I knew very little about wedding etiquette, and after reading this book, I practically feel like an expert myself. I found bits on etiquette in this book that I had never even heard of before. I found the sections on ceremony etiquette and wedding party etiquette especially helpful. Highly recommended!

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