

RULES OF ETIQUETTE

RSVP Etiquette for Guest:

There was a time when there was not the frustration that is, today, so prevalently thrust upon brides, grooms, and their parents by individuals who insist on ignoring RSVP requests.

It is certain that the bride and groom and their families will expend much energy and expense to include and accommodate each guest on their special day. If you receive an invitation that requests an RSVP, please do so. And do so within the timeline indicated on the invitation, as there is much to do, to make certain a guest is well accommodated. If you do not accept an invitation, DO NOT just show up, and if you accept, and care to maintain a friendship with the bride and groom, I exhort you to make good on your acceptance.

Wardrobe Etiquette for Guest:

If you are invited to a wedding, or other formal event, it is appropriate to dress in formal attire. A formal event requires a suit. Unless you have been explicitly told by the bride (and don't ask her) that you need not wear formal attire, wear it. Also good to remember: tuxedos are inappropriate before 6 p.m.

Ladies - you will, or have had, your time to shine. Showing up dressed to kill is hardly supportive of your friend on her special day. Dress elegantly, but do not attempt to outshine the bride.

Thank You Cards Etiquette for Bride & Groom:

In the good old days (not that I know anything about that), a thank you card would be well received within one year from the date of receipt of a gift. However, by contemporary standards, a thank you card received two to five weeks will be received well. Each person will be waiting to hear just how much you like the gift that was so carefully considered for you on your special day, so you don't keep them waiting.

Don't Undress for the Reception:

I have seen this now several times, and each time the bride was miffed, when after the wedding, the maid of honor or a bridesmaid change her dress for the reception. Remember that the bride has carefully chosen your dress to best compliment herself on HER special day. No matter how bad you think it is, do not trade out your attire for the hot little number that you would rather be seen in. You have been honored with, and agreed to, the position of maid of honor or bridesmaid, and there are certain expectations that you must meet with such honor. Photographs will continue to be taken during the reception, there is the bouquet toss and other special moments. I know of many of friendship lost over such poor judgment.

Where To Sit at the Wedding Ceremony:

In a Christian ceremony, family and friends of the bride sit on the left, facing the alter, with the grooms family and friends on the right. The first rows are generally reserved for parents, siblings and other family members (with parents in the front row next to the aisle). If it is a small wedding, it may not matter which side family and friends sit.

Seating for a Jewish ceremony is just opposite with the parents standing under the Huppah (canopy). Hakuna matada, ushers will generally ask the guest whether they are friend for family of the bride or groom and will seat you accordingly.

There is certainly other tradition and etiquette for cultures for which I have no knowledge, but you can always google . I bought a book of etiquette in 1969, when I first married, and while things have changed a bit, it is still very useful.

WEDDING COLOR TRENDS

When choosing your color scheme, the first thing to remember is the time of year that you will exchange your vows. Keeping the season in mind will make it easier to choose between the deep, rich colors, generally worn in winter months, and the cool, tropical colors you will be anxious to wear in the spring or summer. We all know, likely without realizing it, what colors and/or depth of colors work well with a particular season.

After checking my resources, the consensus is that 2011's colors are bright and fun! Such colors as: apple green, olive, moss, emerald, pine, celadon, midnight green, mauve, lilac, purple, violet, hot pink, coral, orange, cayenne, brick red, yellow, gold, antique gold, browns (mocha, dark, taupe, khaki) grey (slate, gray taupe, or oyster), blue (navy, deep blue, agate blue), shell, and antique white are all forecast for this new year.

I suggest staying away from using simply one color. Often, once we girls choose our color, we get caught up in looking for EVERYTHING in OUR color and risk the dreaded, outdated matchy, matchy look. If you do this, you may find no distinction between the tablecloth and the bridesmaids' dresses in the long awaited photos – you know, like the commercial where people simply blend into the background. Of course, I am not one to share my opinion ;-).

One tip is to purchase an artist's color wheel to help with an original color scheme while keeping in mind the current trends and how easy or difficult it may be to find items you will need in such colors. There is also a great little Pantone Wedding Color Fan Guide that can be purchased from the Dressy Group for \$40. You might want to check this out.

Curry, chartreuse, leaf, moss, sage, poppy, papaya, strawberry, rhubarb, red, fuchsia, beet, blossom, plum, violet, grape, night , lake, pool, bluebell, black, chocolate, gravel, cement

Sample Wedding Vows

It can truly be difficult to remember to enjoy the moment and to keep in mind the reason for your spectacular event. It takes quite a bit of concentration to remember that it is not about how beautiful the dress is or the decorations and ambiance (well maybe to some degree ;-), but it is about two people commemorating the commitment they feel in your hearts, the love they expressed when they became engaged. Vows should have special meaning, whether romantic, reminiscent, humorous, or downright corny, speak from the heart.

Okay - having said that, while there are many on the internet, below are some sample wedding vows by Nina Callaway – About.com:

I, (Bride/Groom), take you (Groom/Bride), to be my (wife/husband), to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish; from this day forward until death do us part.

I, (name), take you, (name), to be my [opt: lawfully wedded] (husband/wife), my constant friend, my faithful partner and my love from this day forward. In the presence of God, our family and friends, I offer you my solemn vow to be your faithful partner in sickness and in health, in good times and in bad, and in joy as well as in sorrow. I promise to love you unconditionally, to support you in your goals, to honor and respect you, to laugh with you and cry with you, and to cherish you for as long as we both shall live.

I (name), take you (name) to be my (husband/wife), my partner in life and my one true love. I will cherish our union and love you more each day than I did the day before. I will trust you and respect you, laugh with you and cry with you, loving you faithfully through good times and bad, regardless of the obstacles we may face together. I give you my hand, my heart, and my love, from this day forward for as long as we both shall live.

In the presence of God and these our friends I take thee to be my husband/wife, promising with Divine assistance to be unto thee a loving and faithful husband/wife so long as we both shall live.

I, (name), take you, (name), to be my friend, my lover, the (mother/father) of my children and my (husband/wife). I will be yours in times of plenty and in times of want, in times of sickness and in times of health, in times of joy and in times of sorrow, in times of failure and in times of triumph. I promise to cherish and respect you, to care and protect you, to comfort and encourage you, and stay with you, for all eternity.

I, [name], choose you [name] to be my [husband/wife], to respect you in your successes and in your failures, to care for you in sickness and in health, to nurture you, and to grow with you throughout the seasons of life.

I, (name), take you, (name), to be my partner, loving what I know of you, and trusting what I do not yet know. I eagerly anticipate the chance to grow together, getting to know the (man/woman) you will become, and falling in love a little more every day. I promise to love and cherish you through whatever life may bring us.

After both have said individual vows, they may wish to say something in unison such as:

Entreat me not to leave you, or to return from following after you, for where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. And where you die, I will die and there I will be buried. May the Lord do with me and more if anything but death parts you from me.

Popular Wedding Songs

Bride & Groom First Dance Songs:

1. At Last – Etta James
2. Amazed – Lonestar
3. Can't Take My Eyes Off of You – Frankie Valli
4. From This Moment – Shania Twain
5. At Last – Etta James
6. Because You Loved Me – Celine Dion
7. You Had Me From Hello – Kenny Chesne
8. Cross My Heart – George Straight
9. By Your Side - Sade
10. Someone Like You – Van Morrison
11. Spend My Life With You – Eric Benet
12. I Do – Paul Brandt
13. It's Your Love- George Straight, Faith Hill
14. When You Kiss Me – Shania Twain
15. Wonderful Tonight – Eric Clapton
16. Have I Told You Lately – Rod Stewart
17. The Way you Love Me – Faith Hill
18. I Swear – All 4 One
19. Unchained Melody - Righteous Brothers
20. Come What May – Ewan McGregor, Nicole Kidman
21. Groovy Kind Of Love – Phil Collins
22. I Knew I Loved You – Savage Garden
23. Always & Forever – Heatwave
24. The Way You Look Tonight – Frank Sinatra
25. True Companion – Marc Cohn
26. Endless Love- Lionel Richey, Diana Ross
27. I Can't Help Falling In Love – Elvis Presley
28. I Do (Cherish You) – 98 Degrees
29. It Had To Be You – Harry Connick, Jr.
30. Could I Have This Dance – Anne Murray
31. Here and Now – Luther Vandross
32. Unchained Melody – Righteous Brothers
33. Truly, Madly, Deeply – Savage Garden
34. Everything I Do – Bryan Adams
35. I Could Not Ask For More – Edwin McCain
36. All My Life – Casey & Jo Jo

37. Taking You Home – Don Henley
38. You Are The Love Of My Life- George Benson
39. Beautiful In My Eyes – Joshua Kadison
40. When A Man Loves A Woman – Michael Bolton
41. When A Man Loves A Woman – Percy Sledge
42. Breathe – Faith Hill
43. What A Wonderful World – Louis Armstrong
44. Grow Old With Me – Mary Chapin Carpenter
45. In My Life – Beatles
46. Unforgettable – Nat King Cole & Natalie
47. My Heart Will Go On – Celine Dion
48. We've Got A Groovy Kind Of Love – Phil Collins
49. I Got You Babe – Sonny & Cher

Father and Daughter Dance Songs:

1. Isn't She Lovely – Stevie Wonder
2. Butterfly Kisses - Bob Carlisle
3. Daddy's Girl – Red Sevine
4. Unforgettable - Natalie Cole
5. Dance With My Father – Luther Vandross
6. Wind Beneath My Wings -. Bette Midler
7. Because You Loved Me - Celine Dion
8. The Way You Look Tonight - Frank Sinatra or Tony Bennett
9. Just The Way You Are – Billy Joel
10. And Then They Do – Trace Adkins
11. Father's Eyes – Amy Grant
12. Daddy's Hands - Holly Dunn
13. There You'll Be – Faith Hill
14. Child of Mine – Carol King
15. Through the Years - Kenny Rogers
16. My Girl - Temptations
17. Can You Feel The Love Tonight – Elton John
18. Hero - Mariah Carey
19. Always Be My Baby – Sarah Evans
20. Have I Told You Lately - Van Morrison
21. Wonderful Tonight - Eric Clapton
22. You Raise Me Up – Josh Groban
23. Daughter of Mine - John McDermott
24. Through the Years – Kenny Rogers
25. Times of Your Life - Paul Anka

26. What a Wonderful World - Louie Armstrong
27. I Hope You Dance – Le Ann Womack
28. Daddy- Beyonce
29. Isn't She Lovely - Stevie Wonder
30. A Song for My Daughter - Mikki Viereck
31. You're the Inspiration - Chicago
32. My Special Angel - Bobby Helms
33. You Decorated My Life - Kenny Rogers

Mother and Son Dance Songs:

1. A Song for Mama. Boyz II Men
2. Through the Years. Kenny Rogers Wind Beneath My Wings. Bette Midler
3. A Song for My Son. Mikki Viereck
4. What a Wonderful World. Louis Armstrong
5. Because You Loved Me. Celine Dion
6. Unforgettable. Natalie & Nat King Cole
7. Have I Told You Lately. Rod Stewart
8. Forever Young. Alphaville
9. Sunrise Sunset. Fiddler on the Roof Soundtrack
10. In My Life. Beatles
11. The Perfect Fan. Backstreet Boys
12. The Rose. Bette Midler
13. I am Your Child. Barry Manilow
14. Could I Have This Dance. Anne Murray
15. Hero. Mariah Carey
16. Beautiful In My Eyes. Joshua Kadison
17. A Smile Like Yours. Natalie Cole
18. Memories. Elvis Presley

Songs For Bouquet Toss:

1. This One Is for The Girls – Martina McBride
2. Single Ladies – Beyonce
3. All I Want To Do – Sheryl Crow
4. Girls Just Want to Have Fun – Cyndi Lauper
5. I Feel Like A Woman – Shania Twain
6. Hit Me With Your Best Shot – Pat Benatar
7. Who Let The Dogs Out – Baha Mean
8. Fever – Peggy Lee
9. Diamonds Are A Girls Best Friend – Marilyn Monroe

10. Another One Bites The Dust – Queen

Songs For The Garter Toss:

1. You Can Leave Your Hat On – Joe Cocker
2. You Sexy Thing – Hot Chocolate
3. Wild Thing – Tone Loc
4. Stripper – David Rose
5. Foxy Lady – Jimmi Hendrix
6. Another One Bites The Dust – Queen
7. Hot Legs – Rod Stewart
8. Bad To The Bone – George Thorogood
9. Hot Mama- Trace Adkins
10. Mr. Big Stuff – Jean Knight
11. Man, I Feel Like A Woman – Shania Twain
12. Ladies Night – Kool & The Gang
13. Let's Get It Started – Black Eyed Peas
14. Fever – Madonna
15. I Like It, I Love It – Tim McGraw
16. Take It Off – Kiss
17. Let's Get It On – Marvin Gaye
18. She's A Lady – Tom Jones
19. Oh Yeah - Yello

Reception Party Songs:

Any of the above &:

1. That's What Friends are For - Dionne Warwick
2. Celebration - Kool & the Gang
3. We Are Family - Sister Sledge
4. Theme from Friends
5. Thank You - Dido
6. Respect - Aretha Franklin
7. All My Life - KC & Jojo
8. Lean on Me - Club Nouveau
9. With A Little Help from my Friends - Beatles
10. Thank you for Being a Friend - Andrew Gold
11. You've got a Friend - James Taylor
12. You've got a Friend in Me - Randy Newman
13. I Will Survive - Gloria Gaynor
14. Let's Stay Together - Al Green
15. Save The Last Dance For Me – Harry Connick, Jr.
16. Can't Take My Eyes Off You – Lauryn Hill
17. Chicks Dig It – Chris Cagle