

# Wedding Duties:

The duties of the "Wedding Entourage" do vary so much and can obviously depend upon how many family members or friends there are involved in your wedding. Generally the overall organizing of the wedding will be in the capable hands of the Bride and hopefully the Groom too! These days the duties of the chief bridesmaid, best man or ushers, mothers and fathers of the bride and groom can generally work out best by being shared between the main wedding party so that everybody involved in the wedding can "do their bit" to help ensure the smooth running of your wedding and so each member of the family and close friends will feel they have been a big help towards making your day special and will also enjoy being part of it.

Although it was traditionally known that the Bride's family pay for the wedding celebrations, these days both the Bride and the Groom's family tend to share the expense for most if not all of the wedding costs and proceedings.

**Traditionally:**

**Mother & Father of the Bride and Groom:**

Some obvious traditional duties include for instance the Father of the Bride to travel to the ceremony with the Bride and also to walk her down the aisle (bride holding her father's right arm – facing the altar - bride's family on the left, groom's family on the right). The mother of the Bride usually will travel to the ceremony with the bridesmaids and both sets of parents will help to take the wedding presents and other items home from the reception. However due to various family circumstances, duties and obligations will differ and nowadays everyone tends to give as much help and support as is required.

**Chief Bridesmaid to:**

Arrange the hen night. Help with the planning of the wedding. Help to choose the bridal gown and bridesmaid dresses. Help with addressing the invitations. Help the Bride dressing on her wedding day. Arrange the bridesmaids and flower girls. Act as a witness by signing the marriage certificate. Hold the bouquet during the ceremony where necessary. Lift the Bride's veil at the altar. Dance with the best man during the first dance. Help the Bride to change into her going away outfit. Help to organize for the presents to be taken to the house of the Bride and Groom.

**Best Man to:**

Arrange the stag night. Help the Groom to dress and make sure he "gets to the church on time". Escort the Chief Bridesmaid/Matron of Honour down the aisle. Keep hold of the rings at the ceremony until required. Act as a witness by signing the marriage certificate. Hand over to the wedding official the envelope with the fee for the ceremony. Dance with the Chief Bridesmaid/Matron of Honour during the first dance. Read the telegrams and messages during the speeches. Help to organize people for photographs. Arrange for formal wear hire to be returned. Help the Chief Bridesmaid/Matron of Honour to organize for the presents to be taken to the house of the Bride and Groom.

**Bridesmaids to:**

Help the Chief Bridesmaid/Maid of Honour. Generally help with the planning of the wedding where necessary.

**Ushers/Groomsmen to:**

Seat guests at the ceremony (seating the Bride's family on the left and the Groom's family on the right). Escort the Mother of the Bride and the Mother of the Groom to their seats. Distribute hymn books and order of service sheets. Help the best man to organize people for the photographs.

# General Info

Dream castles and luxurious hotels, local favourite establishments and the unique - Whether your Wedding Breakfast, Evening Reception or indeed your actual Wedding Ceremony are to take place at a castle, hotel or racecourse, or if you wish to hold your reception celebrations in a marquee in the garden, it is a good idea to firstly ensure that your preferred chosen date for your wedding is available with either the Church, Registrar or your Wedding Official before you fully confirm your Venue. Of course your venue can be provisionally booked and when your actual preferred date for your ceremony is decided and confirmed with your Wedding Officials you would be free to go ahead and confirm your Venue in writing and make any necessary payments and arrangements, then the rest can follow as you so wish!

If your wedding ceremony is to take place by a Registrar it will be yourselves (the bride and groom) who need to deal with the Registrar's Office and make any necessary arrangements - it is your responsibility to organize the Registrar and not the actual Venue's responsibility as the Registrar needs to deal directly with the bride and groom.

**Wedding Breakfast:** called "breakfast" as this is the first meal together of your married life.

It was known of old that the latest time a marriage ceremony could take place was by 4pm. This was said to be because in the olden days when there was no electricity and as it got darker during the day, especially in Winter, that if a bride was to change her mind about the marriage some time in the future she could say that she was not sure who she had in fact married as she could not clearly see who she was marrying!

Traditionally walking down the aisle, the Bride is normally on the right with her Father on the left, the Father gives the Bride's right hand to the Groom to "give her away". Facing the altar the Bride is on the left and the Groom on the right. The Bride's family and friends sit on the left of the church and the Grooms on the right. The tradition of the Bride being on the left and the Groom on the right during the ceremony originating from the olden days when a Groom would capture his Bride by kidnapping her and if the Groom had to fend off any other men who were interested in her he would keep hold of his Bride with his left hand so enabling his right hand to be free to use his sword!

**For a Winter Wedding:** Mulled wine is a wonderful and warming aperitif as a welcome drink for the reception served warm in a chunky crystal tumbler. The mixture of the aroma of the spices from the mulled wine in the air and a decor of holly and berries makes the occasion truly atmospheric. Extra heating can be hired if necessary at most venues for winter weddings.

The "traditional" arrangement for both the wedding breakfast seating and the receiving line does seem to vary so much and especially these days as there can be many different variations of arrangement due to individual family circumstances. For instance some say that there should be no men in the receiving line except for the groom while others say that only the bride's parents should be with the bride and groom in the receiving line together with the chief bridesmaid and bridesmaids.

A convenient seating arrangement for a Wedding Breakfast/Reception could be: (facing guests)

C/B Maid	FOG	MOB	Groom	Bride	FOB	MOG	B/Man
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A convenient line-up for the Receiving Line could be from end to beginning:

C/B Maid	B/Man	MOG	FOG	MOB	FOB	Bride	Groom
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A Receiving Line is a good idea so that the Bride and Groom, and their entourage, may meet and greet each and every one of their family and guests to welcome them into the Wedding Breakfast and thank them for attending their special day. The receiving line can of course include as many or as little of the wedding party as is individually desired.

**FOB:** Father of Bride, **MOB:** Mother of Bride, **MOG:** Mother of Groom, **FOG:** Father of Groom.

As soon as all of the guests are seated at the wedding breakfast/reception either the best man or toastmaster can then announce the "Grand Entrance" of the Bride and Groom.

**At the Wedding Breakfast/Reception if the ceremony of the cutting of the wedding cake is performed before the champagne, speeches and coffee, the cake can then be taken away to the kitchen so that the chef can cut the cake into slices. In the meantime the champagne can be served and the speeches and toasts can be done. By this time the wedding cake will have been cut in good time to serve with the coffee after the speeches and toasts have been performed. This arrangement always seemed to work well!**

**A good idea is to have a "Kiddies Table" or two with maybe some "goodie bags" to include small packets of crayons or coloured pencils and pads or colouring books so that the children can keep occupied during the speeches.**

**Speeches: Traditionally the first to make a speech is the father of the bride, then the groom followed by the best man, however these days sometimes the bride may wish to make a speech or maybe another member of the wedding party and although sometimes a nerve racking experience is always memorable!**