

## Choosing the Wedding Party

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Think that choosing the bridal party for your wedding is easy? Think again.

There is actually a lot of thought that should go into choosing your wedding party. You may think that you should just pick your best friends, and often this will be true, but there is much more to consider before making the decision.

First, it is a good idea to make a list of the potential people you and your fiancé would like to include in your wedding party. You may discover that you would like to have 5 people stand up on your side, while he only really wants 2 people to stand up on his side. There is no rule that says that you have to have the same number on both sides, so discuss what you think is right for you both.

Second, take a good look at the people on your list. Keep in mind that standing up in a wedding can be expensive. Is there anyone on your list that you don't feel you could place this burden on? Are there other ways to include this person in your wedding (for example, a reader, personal attendant, etc.)?

Next, are there any people on your list who you think may be overly critical or undermining of your plans? On your wedding day and the months before you don't want someone questioning your every move. Constructive criticism is helpful, but a controlling personality could raise tensions and bring lots of stress. If there are people like this, try and find a role for them that better suits their personality. Maybe you need someone to coordinate the wedding party as to when they should walk down the aisle. Or, someone to make sure the cake is in the right spot and on time.

When choosing your maid of honor and best man, think about who has been there in times of trouble in your life? Who do you think will always be there for you in the future? Hopefully, there will be one person who stands out, but if there are more you can always have two maids of honor. In fact, you can pretty much do whatever you want, within reason. It is your wedding!

Don't feel pressured to choose bridesmaids based upon whose weddings you were asked to stand up in. You may hurt some feelings slightly, but you need to do what is right for you. In the end, a true friend will understand your decision and be supportive of it, despite their initial feelings.

Finally, don't forget to keep in mind things like - how much room there will be at the bridal table (can you fit everyone?), pictures (are there too many people to fit in a photo?), the ceremony (will there be a place for everyone to stand?), and other issues that may affect your decision.

Your wedding is a time to celebrate the love that you share, not a time to concentrate on cultivating your friendships. Surround yourselves with the people who support this love, who have helped you along the way, and who you think will uplift your marriage in the future!