

Creating a Seating Chart for Your Wedding

Weddings are such tiresome events where organizers assume too many responsibilities, from creating the guest list, to putting out and distributing invitations, down to making sure everyone is seated where he or she should be during the ceremony and for the reception.

Organizers should pay particular attention to this because placing a person with the wrong company during weddings can instigate a great and scandalous uproar. Wedding etiquette guides advise organizers to learn about everyone first, or at least do more research about personalities and backgrounds prior to assigning seats.

People with hostile personal histories would not want to seat beside each other even for a few minutes. It's important to be sensitive and scrupulous to these and more issues.

Seating arrangement in the chapel

Wedding etiquette usually assumes that weddings, as traditions have it, take place inside chapels. Or those ceremonies are church rites, at least.

According to proper wedding etiquette, the family of the bride should be seated on the left side and the groom's family on the right side of the venue. Traditionally, the two families are segregated.

The couple's parents should sit in the first pew, in front of the other important and significant guests. Seating arrangements in churches and other venues should be marked by organizers so guests would know where they should be seated.

Divorced parents

There are special cases when seating arrangements in weddings are revised. However, the modifications should still follow strict wedding etiquettes.

For one, if the parents are divorced, how should the organizer arrange seats for them? If the parents of either the bride or the groom, or both, are divorced, both of them can be seated along the front row with their current spouses. Short-term girlfriends or boyfriends of the parents are excluded and should be seated elsewhere.

If the parents' separation or divorce was a vicious one, and they still are not civil with each other, then the mom and dad should be seated in separate pews where they could scarcely see each other.

It is the challenge for the wedding organizer to be creative, wise and sensible in assigning seat arrangements during weddings.

The mother should be guided to her seat in the first pew by an assigned usher. If she remarried, her husband should walk just behind the mother and the usher. As a rule in wedding customs, at least during the ceremonies, he should let his wife lead.

The bride's or groom's father should still escort the bride or groom to the aisle along with the mother. Traditionally, stepmothers and stepfathers do not participate in this part.

In traditional weddings, organizers arrange a seat plan in such a way that stepmothers and stepfathers are seated along with the grandparents or along with other significant or very special guests. Some brides and grooms choose to have their stepparents participate in the ceremony, especially if the stepparent has been married to the parent since the bride or groom was a small child.

Seating arrangements during weddings should also vary and change, based on the clergy and religion. Wedding etiquette allows guests to inquire about the seating arrangements for the clergy.

Seating for the Reception

There are wedding protocols governing seating arrangements in the church during the wedding ceremony. Of course, certain seating arrangements should also be justly followed for the reception.

Formal receptions will have the bride's support and family assigned to particular spots or seats in the reception.

The following will give guidance when arranging or assigning seats or chairs in formal wedding receptions.

The top table must be composed or be seated with the wedding party or wedding party only. However, several very important guests can be included in the top table if the bride and the groom or their family desires. In those instances, the person should be seated on either side of the wedding party.

The bride and the groom's families are still separated to distinguish which family is that of the bride's and which one is the groom's.

Here's the traditional arrangement on top tables on wedding receptions, in accordance to appropriate and proper wedding etiquettes:

Ordered from left to right, facing the guests: maid of honor, groom's mother, bride's father, the bride, the groom, the bride's mother, the groom's father, then the best man.

Wedding etiquettes advise that the table should be occupied only by 12 people, at the maximum.

Other people should be then seated at other tables. Meticulously limit the occupants of the top table, if possible.

Also, keep in mind that in assigning seating arrangements for receptions, the bride should always stand or be seated to the left side of the groom. Again, this is for symbolic reasons. But as with all traditions, things are variable as long as they feel right and suit the needs of those involved.