



*Planning,
gifts,
dresses,
duties,
& so much more...*



Bridesmaid Manual 2005

Everything you ever wanted (and needed)
to know about being the best bridesmaid ever!



Contents

The All-American Series: Bridesmaid Manual 2005 will help you make this special honor go off without a "hitch" (excuse the pun)! Enjoy!

- @ Definition
- @ Bridesmaid Duties
- @ Bridesmaid Planning
- @ Dresses
- @ Bachelorette party
- @ The big day!
- @ What is a friend?
- @ Your planner
- @ Always the bridesmaid?
- @ Keepsakes



Definition

Brides-Maid - n. A woman who attends on a bride at her wedding (Websters Revised Unabridged Dictionary, 1997)

A Bridesmaid is usually a close friend or sister who takes more of an active part in the wedding experience. Many times there are multiple bridesmaids that the bride chooses. In history, the bridesmaid would protect the bride against evil by wearing similar clothing to the bride's attire. This would confuse any "evil spirit" as to who the bride was.

Being a bridesmaid has some important and fun tasks such as helping with the Bridal Shower and Bachelorette Party. Your support for the bride as well as being a great listener will help keep your friend focused and relaxed while having a great time.

Check out the [Bridesmaid Duties](#), [Bridesmaid Planning](#), [Bridesmaid Gifts](#), and [Bridesmaid Dresses](#) for more information on great ideas to make the wedding experience a great time!









Bridesmaid Duties

*As a Bridesmaid you have a strong supportive role you **must** play during the entire wedding experience! While the Maid of Honor may be there, your friend will also need your comfort and opinions (in most cases)*

Here are some of the top Bridesmaid's duties:





Pre-Wedding

-  If the bride asks about helping her with ideas on where to have the wedding, help her with scouting around and going to the different places. It may be a great idea to drive so she can focus on each location.
-  If you have great penmanship it is always nice to volunteer to address at least some the invitations if the bride agrees. Many times a bride may outsource her invitations but if they need to be addressed by the family, your help will be key in reducing the load of tasks to complete.
-  Your friend may need help in ordering and choosing decorations and favors, your opinions may be helpful in making decisions for narrowing down choices and making sure the decorations are in on time for the wedding, shower and bachelorette parties.
-  It is a major treat to go with the bride when she is shopping for her wedding dress. She may even invite you to be involved in picking out the Bridesmaid Dresses. It is very important to help make sure the dresses are ordered and arrive in enough time for alterations!
-  Make sure to pick up your bridesmaid dress in a "reasonable" amount of time in case of additional fittings.
-  Many times the groom does not want to go to register with his bride-to-be. You can be very supportive by going with your friend to register for her wedding gifts as well as letting other guests know where the bride and groom are registered. This is a very fun experience so take part in the choosing if she needs help.









Bridesmaid Duties

(continued)

-  Help the bride in the seating arrangement. This can be a very difficult process with the more people coming to the wedding. Many times it makes it easier to draw out the tables and move people around until you have a close to perfect fit. Note: It is very helpful to bring this drawing to the wedding just in case there are any mix-ups, you will save the day!
-  Help Plan the Bridal Shower with the Maid of Honor as well as the Bachelorette Party!
-  Be a good communicator with information. Many times information prior to a wedding does not reach everyone. Friends will appreciate confirming plans of each shower and party as well as wedding day information.
-  Attend and help out during the rehearsal dinner. Many times the bride, groom and their families are pre-occupied and forget about things which is where you can save the day by being supportive.

Wedding Day

-  Assist the bride in getting into her dress and makeup
-  Ask if the bride needs anything (food, water, etc) all the way up till the time she is walking down the aisle. She will really appreciate it!
-  Direct the other bridesmaids on placement and timing, especially if they're late!
-  Help make sure the bride has privacy if she needs some quiet time before the ceremony.
-  Be the witness in the signing of the marriage license which is an honor!
-  Assist the guests to their seats and be social prior to the wedding. The guests love to see the bridesmaids and groomsmen out and about!



Bridesmaid Duties

(continued)



Take some deep breaths and walk slow when you walk down the aisle since it is common to speed up. If a groomsman walks down the aisle with you, make him refrain from talking or fooling around.



Always look for the unexpected since it is common for the most uncommon things to happen (i.e, something falling down at the alter). If you are close enough, fix what needs to be fixin so the bride, groom and their families can focus on the ceremony.



If you are single, make sure to mingle and have a great time at the party! It is mandatory to catch the bridal bouquet!



If you are with your partner, make sure to dance and socialize since it means a lot to the bride and groom (when they have time to sit down) to see their friends having and creating a good time for themselves and the other guests.



Last, but not least, provide moral support and be a great listener throughout the process since it is a very wonderful and "positively" stressful time for your friend. You can really make the difference!





Bridesmaid Planning

After receiving the honor from your friend to be a Bridesmaid in her wedding, planning will become one of both excitement and time management. You will become more and more busy as the wedding approaches.

A bridesmaid that plans ahead will enjoy the experience much more than one who will stress at the last minute preparations including getting things ordered, picked up, sent out, brought in and just right!

The Bridesmaid Manual will aid in this planning process through helping you manage your time including listing the order of events and actions of what "is" and "may be" expected of you. Much of your timing depends on the span of time between the engagement and wedding. A great idea is to purchase a calendar (if not already using one) that gives you space to write down the important events and tasks!

i. Planning

1. Does the bride need help with the following:
 - Ⓜ Finding a place for the wedding
 - Ⓜ Flowers
 - Ⓜ Theme for the wedding
 - Ⓜ Invitations (picking them out and addressing them)
 - Ⓜ Decorations
 - Ⓜ Food and Beverage
 - Ⓜ Seating arrangement
 - Ⓜ Who to invite

2. Bridesmaid Dress and Wedding Dress
 - Ⓜ Going with the bride to pick out the dresses. Check out Perfect Bridesmaid Dresses, for great deals!
 - Ⓜ Attending all her fittings to give her feedback
 - Ⓜ Going to all your fittings - make sure to do this as early as possible
 - Ⓜ Picking up your dress, trying it on and inspecting it for any flaws



Bridesmaid Planning

(continued)

ii. Wedding Shower

Pre-Shower

- Ⓢ Do you have a dress for the event
- Ⓢ Are you going to bring a gift and what will it be
- Ⓢ Where and Where
- Ⓢ Theme?
- Ⓢ Decorations (make sure to order and pick up in enough time)
- Ⓢ Games to play
- Ⓢ Break down responsibilities between friends to make it easier on yourself.

During Shower

- Ⓢ Arrive early to help set up if necessary
- Ⓢ Give an informal toast or roast if you would like
- Ⓢ Collect bows from presents for creating the rehearsal dinner Bridal Bouquet
- Ⓢ Write down who gave what presents to the bride
- Ⓢ Help clean up

iii. Bachelorette Party

Pre Party

- Ⓢ When and Where will it be. If in Vegas check out VIP Vegas Connections!
- Ⓢ How will you and the others get there
- Ⓢ Communicate with the other girls when planning as early as possible
- Ⓢ Decorations
- Ⓢ Games and Entertainment
- Ⓢ If in California check out LaBare Hollywood for Hot Male Entertainment!
- Ⓢ Pick out a cute outfit for the evening or event
- Ⓢ Call ahead of time for wherever you are having the party
- Ⓢ Help Maid of Honor with collecting money if all girls are chipping in



Bridesmaid Planning

(continued)

The Party

- 🕒 Arrive early to help decorate
- 🕒 Re-confirm reservations
- 🕒 Make sure no-one gets out of hand if alcohol is present
- 🕒 Help clean up after party
- 🕒 Protect the bride from leachy men!
- 🕒 Help participate in games played

iv. Rehearsal Dinner

- 🕒 The bride may need help in planning where and when to plan the dinner
- 🕒 Do you have a dress?
- 🕒 Arrive early to help set up and decorate
- 🕒 Give an informal toast
- 🕒 Help clean up if needed

v. Wedding

- 🕒 Make sure you have all your makeup, dress and shoes
- 🕒 Arrive early for pictures and support for your friend
- 🕒 Bring gift (unless mailing or having it shipped)
- 🕒 Direct guests to their seat
- 🕒 After ceremony, meet and greet guests (as well as if you bring a boyfriend or your husband)
- 🕒 Make sure the bride and groom eat during the wedding
- 🕒 Bring your Wedding Speech or Toast if you are the Maid of Honor, bridesmaid, and/or sister who would like to say a few words.
- 🕒 Help clean up (if needed) after the wedding
- 🕒 Offer to drive bride and groom to the airport if they are going and leaving for their honeymoon right after.

All in all, make sure you and the bride have a rockin time throughout the whole wedding process since it is a very special time for the both of you!



Bachelorette Party

It's great to have it around a month prior to the wedding so the girls can share a closeness and remember all the inside jokes that come from partying together and build an excitement about the big Wedding day as well since that is the reason for the party to begin with!

Bachelorette Parties usually take place about a month before the wedding and should not be prior to two weeks of her special day! This is to make sure there are no accidents to get in the way of her wedding day (falling and spraining ankle, etc).

We've come up with an itinerary of the most important bachelorette planning timeline that we hope you find helpful!

Four Months Till Party



Have the Bachelorette give you a list of all the girls she wants to have go to the party. Make sure she includes the email, phone number, and address of each girl.



Ask the Bride-To-Be if she wants to help plan or have you and the girls plan. Ask her if there are any girls who want to help plan the party, since there usually are a few girls that want to participate. It is important to check with a few of the Bachelorette's close friends on what general things they would like to do so the party can be well received by the majority!



Think of where you want to go and what date seems to work out for most of the girls who are invited. You will never find a perfect date for everyone so pick the best date for the majority!



It is important to answer the following questions...Is the party going to be:

1. Home or away? Are people driving or do you need transportation?
2. How long?
3. Do any of the girls have special needs (allergies, handicap, etc)?
4. How are girls going to pay (many times an issue...are you going to ask them for money up-front or have the girls pay for themselves)?
5. How much are you going to pay for gifts and decorations?
6. Are you going to pay for the Bride-To-Be (or figure that into the cost)?
7. Does the Bachelorette want to have a conservative party or one that is wild?



Bachelorette Party

(continued)

Three Months Till Party



Send out an initial email between 4 and 3 months before the party. Let the girls know the scoop, including where the party will be, how much the basic cost will be, what girls will need (i.e., type of clothes, anything they need to bring, etc), travel arrangements if possible, and any other important information. It is very helpful to send a group email by CC'ing all the girls so they can share each-other's email and communicate to each other as a group! You may want to have some of the girls to give you any suggestions they still have on making the party more of a success but be careful since there are always those who want it their way only!



Make sure to have the girls RSVP to you or the person you appoint and stay on top of this since there are always the slackers who don't respond until you send them a few emails or calls. You may want the Bride to call those girls who don't get back to you after a few times (if you don't know them that well).



Let the girls know the final basic itinerary, including the reservations, transportation, places you will be eating, party supplies, and how money collection will be handled!

Two Months Till Party



About 2 ½ months out, confirm with the girls who are going and make sure you follow up with them. Make sure everyone who is going knows all the information necessary and see if anyone still needs help with their planning, especially if you are going away and have reservations!

One Month Till Party



You are getting real close now! The excitement should be building! Send out an email with the final plans! Make sure if you are items/gifts for your party that you take care of it now since it is getting late! Confirm the following information:



Bachelorette Party

(continued)



Confirm the following information:

1. Hotel and Travel
2. Transportation
3. Food/Drink
4. Entertainment
5. Who is responsible for bringing what
6. Gifts/Games (check out Bachelorette Party Fun)
7. If in California check out LaBare Hollywood for Hot Male Entertainment!



Make sure to delegate some responsibility to the other girls who want to help and that you know are more responsible so you don't have to take all the stress of planning on yourself (unless you enjoy all the planning!)

Two Weeks Till Party



Check in with all the girls again to make sure everything is set. By now you should have everything you want to bring ready to go! If you are having the girls pay you back, let them know at this time again how much they owe you and when they need to pay you! It is important to receive the money before the party so you don't have to think about it when you are having a good time!



Many times, issues come up that cause one of the girls to not attend the party after RSVPing. Make sure you have a backup plan that includes how to cover the possible room assignment and additional fees for covering the Bachelorette (and anything else that may come up).

One Week Till Party



Send an email to all the girls to increase the spirit and excitement for the party. It is always good to go over all the basics one more time for those who are a little party-challenged. You are about to experience a memorable time...Make sure the Bride-To-Be is always pampered and has the time of her life as well as relaxing and going with the flow when you get to your party destination!



Remind yourself that you did an excellent job!



The Big Day

Her Big Day has finally arrived! Before you breathe a huge sigh of relief, remember to do the following to make things go smoothly and painlessly!

Plan Ahead

Don't leave anything for the last minute. The night before the wedding, make sure your dress, accessories, and other necessities (like cosmetics and toiletries) are in order. Our handy BridesmaidAid kit (chock full of goodies like bobby pins, breath mints, and clear nail polish) prepares you for all last-minute emergencies. Fill out our short survey and you could win a free kit!

Get There Early

Ask the bride what time she'd like you to be at the wedding site and be there early. She is counting on you and doesn't need the extra stress of wondering whether a bridesmaid has gone AWOL.

Offer to help

There's countless chores and errands to be done in the hours before the wedding, from helping the bride get dressed (and, yes, helping her go to the bathroom once she's swathed in satin) to fetching people for photographs. Ask the bride, her mother, the maid-of-honor, or the wedding coordinator what you can do to help.

Congratulate the Bride

This seems obvious, but you'd be surprised how many people forget this extra nicety. Before the wedding chaos ensues, take a moment to congratulate the bride (it doesn't hurt to tell her how beautiful she looks, either). If you'd rather express mushy sentiments in writing, give the bride a congratulatory card she and the groom will treasure forever. Also, be sure to congratulate the groom, too!

Capture the Moment

Make sure to snap pictures of her getting ready for the wedding. The official photographer often does not document these special moments. Another nice memento for the bride (and her groom) is a copy of the newspaper from her wedding day, wrapped in a ribbon. At the very least, he'll enjoy the sports pages...

Enjoy the Ceremony

During the ceremony, stand up straight, keep your flowers up, and enjoy the moment. No matter what other aggravation you may have had as a bridesmaid, be happy that you are witnessing yet an example of two lovebirds finding each other.



The Big Day

(continued)

Smile for the photos

When everyone is dressed and ready to go, an annoying wedding coordinator will probably order everyone around and tell you where to go and what to do. Do as she says and be glad you don't have that horrid job. Flash your biggest smile. You'll be immortalized forever in the couple's wedding album so you should look happy!

Be the Life of the Party

Sure, you've danced the Macarena a dozen times before. Yes, you've met the bride's Aunt Sadie on ten other occasions. No, you do not want to participate in the bouquet toss. It doesn't matter! You have to be an active participant for the bride's sake, so you might as well enjoy yourself. Have some wine, kick up your heels, flirt with that cute usher, and have a great time at the reception. Remember it's a party and you're a guest as well as a bridesmaid, so have fun and enjoy.

Make Sure the Bride is OK

In the midst of the reception, you may catch the bride stuck talking to a particularly tedious relative (rescue her), fretting about the songs the band is playing (reassure her everything sounds great), bickering with her groom (flash her a knowing smile), trying to snag something to eat or drink (bring her refreshments), or fussing with her dress or headpiece (help her). It's your job to make her as comfortable as possible.

It's Not Over . . .

Until the last guest goes home. Stay at the party until the end (or as close to the end as you can muster) to show the bride that you care. Offer to help with any remaining little tasks (helping carry gifts to the car or escorting older guests to the parking lot, for example). Be sure to also personally congratulate the all parents of the bride and the groom, and tell them how beautiful the wedding was.

But Wait, There's More!

Do you want to be a really stellar bridesmaid? Of course! After the wedding, send a note and copies of your pictures to the happy couple (it'll be a wonderful present waiting for them when they return from their honeymoon; if you don't have copies of pictures yet, they'll appreciate a nice note). Leave a message on their answering machine, welcoming them back from their trip. Thank them for giving you such an important role in their celebration. Then, kick back and relax. Your job is done. . . until you're bridesmaid again at another friend's wedding!



What Is A Friend?

*A friend is somebody
Who knows you and likes you
Exactly the way that you are.*

*Someone who's special
And so close in thought
That no distance can ever seem far.*

*A friend understands you
Without any words,
Stands by you
When nothing goes right.*

*And willingly talks
Over problems with you
Till they somehow
Just vanish from sight.*

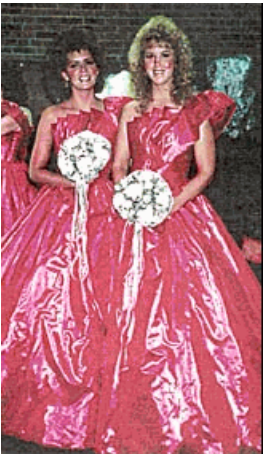
*And whether you're neighbors
Or live miles apart,
A word from a friend gives a lift
To your heart and spirit.*

*That shows you once more
Why friendship is life's dearest gift!*



Dresses

Your bridesmaid dress is the ultimate keepsake from the big day so help the bride select the perfect bridesmaid dress. Don't delay in ordering and going in for a fitting! Take care of this as soon as the bride chooses the dress. Buy your accessories, too, to get that out of the way. Here are some dresses we love!





Keepsakes

To remember the special day!

The invitation

*Material from
your dress*

*Scatterings from
the confetti
throwing*

*The number of
that guy at the
Reception*

*The dessert section
of the menu from
the Reception*

*A flower
from your
bouquet*

The scent you wore that day



Confetti

Confetti is Italian for sweets which are thrown over the couple as they emerge to bestow prosperity and fertility on them. Often the bridesmaid is charged with arranging this tradition with the groomsman. Here are some options from traditional to modern:

Rice

Check with the venue if using rice. Often birds eat the rice and because they can't digest it they keep eating until they die. Not a good look for the next happy couple!

Office Chads

Butterflies

Sparkles

Rose petals

Tissue paper flowers

Dried flowers



Your planner

Use these pages to plan out your duties

For the wedding of:

..... &

Wedding date:

Bachelorette Party

Theme of party

Theme change 1 (after Mother-of-Bride decides to attend)

Theme change 2 (after MoB decides not to attend).....

Location 1

Location change and date change

Name of person arranging party after you've had enough.....

Pre-Wedding Checklist

Dresses

Shoes

Accessories

Underwear

Date dress ordered

Time allowed to get over dress chosen by so-called friend (i.e. the bride).....

Date dress picked up

The big day!

Safety pins

Hipflask

Hairclips

Vaseline to keep smiling

Tissues*

Condoms

(*for stuffing and for when the thought you may never be married crosses your mind - refer section: "Always the Bridesmaid?")



Always the bridesmaid?

Take this advice from Rachel Greenwald, a leading internationally respected dating expert. "One woman quit her job to spend a year finding someone special," she says. "But if it means you find the person you will spend the rest of your life with, it is worth it." Follow her advice to the letter and Rachel promises you'll find a husband in 18 months!

It's in the packaging!

Men like the feminine look. That means longer hair, flowing skirts, soft fabrics, a slightly revealing neckline, small-scale jewellery and manicured nails. And they prefer women who project a feminine image with their behaviour

- Ⓜ Don't wear black or brown as you will fade into the background and no one will ever notice you
- Ⓜ If you're over 5ft 8ins you should always wear flats - heels make you too tall for a lot of men and you want to appeal to as many as possible
- Ⓜ If your roots need doing - get them done! You should get advice on the best hairstyle to suit your face
- Ⓜ Wear more lipstick
- Ⓜ Never wear any rings as men are too stupid to work out which ones mean you're married

Create the right opportunities for yourself

- Ⓜ Go to the gym when it is busy rather than quiet and to use the weights because that's where all the guys will be
- Ⓜ If you sign up for an evening class go for car maintenance, not basket weaving - and don't go to the toilet during the break as it's the prime time to socialise and find love over the fan belt
- Ⓜ Even jury duty should be seen as an opportunity to meet a potential husband.
- Ⓜ Funerals of elderly relatives should also be considered as an option. After all, there'll be a pool of older, available men and black is so slimming

Creating your personal brand

- Ⓜ You need to stand out in the crowded arena of single women to get noticed and by creating your brand it will help you target your ideal customers. For example a woman whose brand includes "intellectual" is likely to attract a smart man. If you don't create one for yourself someone else will do it for you and you may not like it
- Ⓜ Make a list of your attributes under the following three headings - "physical", "personality" and "other"
- Ⓜ Take time to choose one attribute from each column. Look for a unique set of positive attributes that when they are combined create an intriguing and alluring brand



All-American Series

Other titles in the series

Wedding

- ★ Bride
- ★ Groom
- ★ Maid of honor
- ★ Bridesmaid
- ★ Mother of the bride
- ★ Groomsman

Sorority

- ★ Head Sister
- ★ Legacy
- ★ Rush
- ★ Pledge

Cheerleader

- ★ Coach/Manager
- ★ Co-Captain
- ★ Squad member
- ★ Pep Rally Co-ordinator
- ★ Tryout candidate
- ★ Glee club organiser

Fraternity

- ★ Head Brother
- ★ Brother
- ★ Keg-meister
- ★ Legacy
- ★ Rush
- ★ Pledge
- ★ Keg Pledge

★ WE PRAY ★
GOD
BLESS
★ AMERICA ★

