

1

WeddingPath fact sheets: your bridesmaids



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2

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starting out

Choosing your bridesmaids

Getting your best friends and close relatives involved in your wedding is great fun! Traditionally, a bride had dozens of bridesmaids to protect her from 'evil spirits'. You can have just as many bridesmaids as you like, but you should choose carefully. Amongst your adult bridesmaids, the most senior is your 'matron' (if married) or 'maid' (if single) 'of honour' - or chief bridesmaid. She will be your personal wedding assistant at all times. So make sure you are both happy with this idea! Other bridesmaids can be assigned special duties but are primarily there to support you on the day. Little bridesmaids need do nothing but look cute. Most little girls dream of dressing up like a princess and being bridesmaid for the day. So no problem there. But do make sure one of the older bridesmaids looks after the smaller ones. They will need supervision and guidance throughout the day.

Golden rules

Avoid choosing bridesmaids because you feel they should be asked. Especially when it comes to children who might either be too shy or are likely to mis-behave. If you have decided to ask an old school friend to be your bridesmaid, get back in touch beforehand to check you still get on - people change!

GOT A QUESTION?



Visit the WP Forums

bridesmaids' role

Duty calls

Make sure your bridesmaids are clear about what you expect them to do. If they decline, don't be offended - if they cannot make the commitment, it is best to know early on. Test them out with some of these key duties:

- Help with table stationery, favours and addressing the wedding invitations
- Arrange your hen night
- Go shopping with you for your dress and accessories
- Run any last-minute errands
- Chat with guests at the reception
- Deal with any problems on the day itself

Your bridesmaids also need to know that you might succumb to the occasional bridezilla moment. They need to understand and support you, whatever your mood. You also need your bridesmaids to be fun (remember they'll be organising your hen night). But most of all, choose bridesmaids that are cool, calm and collected. On the day, they need to be at your side - and not flirting with the best man!

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Hens away...

When your chief bridesmaid starts planning your hen night, keep these tips to hand!

Do allow plenty of time to organise the event - remember everyone will have a busy diary.

Do consult the bride-to-be on who should be invited and the kind of things she'd like to do on the hen night.

Do tell everyone to bring a little gift for the bride whether it is a keepsake or simply a little treat.

Don't forget that everyone's on a budget so keep guests informed of costs.

3

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what to wear

- Dresses for bridesmaids have finally become a bit more fashion-conscious. In fact, you'll probably be overwhelmed with the choice. Especially as evening collections from high street stores fit perfectly with the trend for late afternoon weddings.
- Bridesmaids generally expect to pay for their outfits. However, the bride should offer to pay if she expects her bridesmaid to wear something a) she doesn't like b) is beyond her budget.
- If your bridesmaids are all shapes and sizes pick a colour, or a selection of colours, and choose different styles to suit different body shapes.
- If your bridesmaids are similar in shape or size, opt for the same style but have each maid in a different colour or tone to complement your own dress and the wedding day theme.

Little bridesmaids

Little girls look gorgeous in ivory dresses with big, puffy tulle skirts. To tie their outfits in with the rest of the bridesmaids, add a sash in one of the wedding theme colours. Or have the bodice made in fabric to match the older bridesmaids' dresses.

forum posts

- [Gifts for bridesmaids](#)
- [Large sized BM dresses?](#)
- [Bridesmaids nightmare...](#)
- [Flowergirl dress](#)



let us help

Gift ideas

You'll find masses of gorgeous gifts for your bridesmaids in the [WP shop](#). Traditional favourites include jewellery box, photo frame, compact or a charm bracelet.

Snap happy

After the hen night, get your bridesmaids to load their snaps onto WP's **PhotoShare**. Simply add a PhotoShare page on your WeddingPath website, then e-mail the password to the girls so that they can upload their photos.

Dress shopping

Our [vendor directory](#) is the perfect place to start your search for bridesmaids' dresses.

Read more...

- [Little Maids](#)
- [Bridesmaid Chic](#)

top tips

- **Little ones...** Buy outfits for younger bridesmaids as close to the wedding date as possible - children grow quickly!
- **How many?** Keep the number of bridesmaids in proportion to the size and scale of your wedding.
- **His & hers!** Remember to ask your husband's family to be involved too. Ideally, your bridesmaids should be a mix of both sides of the family.
- **Shopaholic** Choose a bridesmaid to go shopping with you who will give her honest opinion when you try on dresses.

4

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countdown

- 12 months to go Decide on who you would like as your bridesmaids.
- Ask your bridesmaids to keep the date free.
- Discuss wedding ideas with your bridesmaids to get them involved early on.
- Give bridesmaids the option to back out if they can't committ to the duties.
- 3-6 months to go Get measurements and sizes for bridesmaids' dresses.
- Choose and order or buy your bridesmaids' dresses.
- Get help preparing for the honeymoon - eg. checking visas, innoculations.
- Enlist a bridesmaid to help address invitations and follow-up RSVPs.
- Ask your bridesmaid about organising a hen night.
- Delegate duties such as making favours, place names and other details.
- 1-3 months to go Get your bridesmaid to liaise and check on all your suppliers.
- Buy gifts for your bridesmaids.
- Check that your bridesmaids have their outfits ready.
- Delegate on-the-day duties to your bridesmaids.
- Book hair/beauty appointments for your bridesmaids and have a trial run.
- Check the hen night plans - and celebrate.
- 1 week to go Wrap gifts for your bridesmaids.
- Ask your bridesmaids to a wedding rehearsal.
- Organise a girls' lunch and present your gifts - or at the rehearsal.
- Get your bridesmaid to arrange for your honeymoon luggage to join the groom's.
- Put your matron/maid of honour in charge of other bridesmaids.
- Arrange for your bridesmaid to have a 'going away' outfit ready if you are changing.

5

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bridesmaids' checklist

BEFORE THE CEREMONY

- Help bride get ready
- Assist little bridesmaids getting dressed
- Travel with bride's mother to venue

AT THE CEREMONY

- Help the bride on arrival
- Adjust dress, veil and train
- Walk behind bride for the processional
- Help bride lift back veil for vows
- Take bride's bouquet when exchanging rings
- Look after younger bridesmaids
- Witness signing of the register
- Return bouquet to bride for the recessional
- Leave the venue with the best man
- Hand out confetti

AT THE RECEPTION

- Join the end of the receiving line
- Work with the best man to welcome guests
- Check on younger bridesmaids

AFTERWARDS

- Check the bride has going away luggage
- Help clear up
- Return any hired/borrowed items
- Store wedding gifts

FINISHING TOUCHES

- Accessorise your bridesmaids' outfits with flowers, headdresses and hair trims.

Tiara - choose a mini-version of your own headdress. It gives a very modern look and suits just about any hair style.

Comb - perfect for bridesmaids with short or layered hair styles.

Circlet - great for little ones as it's easy to wear and good for short or long hair styles.

Crown - fairy-tale princess in an instant, but not easy to wear unless pinned into place with a hair up-do.

Alice band - ideal for mid-length or long hair styles worn down.

Posy - a smaller version of the bridal bouquet.

Bag - mini handbags with beading or embroidery are a great alternative to carrying a posy for the adults.

Pomander - a ball of flowers on a ribbon - much easier for little ones to carry.

Basket - great filled with petals.

Corsage - ask your florist about making a corsage as wrist decorations or for a teddy to carry up to aisle!

more

[WeddingTalk](#) forums are a great source of advice and support - WeddingPathers are fantastic at helping each other! And the WeddingPath team is here to help you too. If you have any feedback on this fact sheet or would like to make a suggestion, please send us an [e-mail](#) - we'd love to hear from you.

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