

Making Everything Easier!™

Wedding Etiquette

FOR
DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Properly announce your engagement to parents, children, friends, and more
- Tastefully incorporate trendy and new traditions into the ceremony and reception
- Respectfully deal with opinionated in-laws
- Create a wedding Web site

Sue Fox

*Author, Etiquette For Dummies®,
2nd Edition, and Business Etiquette
For Dummies®, 2nd Edition*



Wedding Etiquette For Dummies®

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by Sue Fox



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About the Author

Since 1994, **Sue Fox** has provided etiquette products, educational material, group training, and private consultations to business professionals, celebrities, corporations, K-12 schools, and higher education, through her company, The Etiquette Survival Group, which has offices in Central and Southern California. Previously, she was employed in the high-tech industry, with 10 years of experience in event planning and sales and marketing at Apple, Inc.

The Etiquette Survival Group offers etiquette products and mentoring programs for individuals interested in starting their own etiquette consulting businesses. Sue has set up many Etiquette Survival consultants throughout the United States and internationally. She has traveled extensively and is well acquainted with various international cultures. Her travels have taken her to East Africa, Mexico, Central America, and Europe. Sue and her company have provided western etiquette programs throughout the United States, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and India. She also is executive producer of The Etiquette Survival Kit, a series of educational DVDs

featuring dining and social etiquette and proper table settings for adults and teens.

Sue is a professional member of the International Association of Protocol Consultants (IAPC) and has an additional background in image consulting, makeup artistry, and wedding planning. She is the author of *Etiquette For Dummies*, 2nd Edition, and *Business Etiquette For Dummies*, 2nd Edition (Wiley).

The Etiquette Survival Group and MCE International have partnered to jointly develop etiquette and diversity products and programs. Sue and her business partner, Linda Cain, are working together to create a better understanding of people in diverse business and social environments by emphasizing the importance of respect, diplomacy, and civility in every aspect of life.

Sue and The Etiquette Survival Group have been featured in many national and international publications, including *Woman's Day*, *Vogue*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Real Simple*, *American Baby*, *Newsweek*, *Fortune*, *New York Magazine*, *US Weekly*, *People*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Washington Times*, *San Francisco Examiner*, *The Boston Globe*, *USA Today*, *Sunday London Times*, *Australian Financial News*, *Folha de S. Paulo*, *Brazilian Daily News*, *Nikkei Business Journal*, *Times of India*, and *The Hindu Businessline*.

Sue's media credits include radio interviews and feature stories on CNBC, KRON-TV (San Francisco), Knowledge TV, San Francisco Mornings on 2, KOVR-TV (Sacramento), ABC World News, ABC News with Sam Donaldson, KQED-TV (San Francisco), CNET.com, and KABC-TV (Los Angeles).

Sue is the mother of two grown sons, Stephen and Nathan, and she has two grandsons, Joseph and Michael Fox.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my two charming grandsons, Joseph and Michael Fox, who continually make me smile!

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Finally, I would like to thank all the faithful readers of the *For Dummies* series, and to every couple planning to marry — may your wedding planning be absolutely seamless and your wedding day faux pas free!

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We're proud of this book; please send us your comments through our online registration form located at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

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Introduction

People constantly ask me whether *wedding etiquette* still exists today or is merely something from the past. Well, the answer to this question is really two sided. Yes, today's engaged couples toss out traditional etiquette faster than they throw the wedding bouquet. And, yes, the rules have relaxed a bit since the Victorian era; however, a certain level of common sense and basic etiquette is still necessary in every facet and phase of wedding planning, not to mention the protocol needed for the big day itself. Familiarizing yourself with what to do before, during, and after the wedding will help you ensure that everyone, from the ring bearer to the caterer, enjoys the ceremony and all the wedding festivities. *Wedding Etiquette For Dummies* is here to help you do just that.

About This Book

You've announced your engagement, your phone is ringing off the hook, and your mother, future mother-in-law, sister, aunt, and cousin are all calling to ask questions and give opinions. Plus, you're looking into possible ceremony and reception locations and talking to caterers, florists, photographers, and wedding planners — just to name a few folks. Are you feeling overwhelmed, yet? Well, buckle your seat belt because the ride is about to begin! *Wedding Etiquette For Dummies* guides brides, grooms, and friends and family of happily engaged couples through the basics of appropriate wedding behavior, from the engagement announcement throughout the planning process to the big day itself and beyond.

Use this book as a reference guide, reading any section that interests you. You can start at the back, in the middle, or at the beginning — it's your choice.

Conventions Used in This Book

To help you make your way through this book, I use the following conventions:

Italics highlight definitions and emphasize certain words.

Boldface text indicates key words in bulleted lists and actions to take in numbered lists.

Monofont highlights Web addresses.

When this book was printed, some Web addresses may have needed to break across two lines of text. If that happened, rest assured that I didn't put in any extra characters (such as hyphens) to indicate the break. When you're entering one of these Web addresses, just type exactly what you see in this book, pretending the line break doesn't exist.

What You're Not to Read

Throughout this book, I share information that may be interesting to you but isn't essential to your understanding of a given wedding etiquette topic. So feel free to skip the sidebars (shaded gray boxes) within the

chapters. They don't provide vital information you need to know to incorporate etiquette into your wedding.

Foolish Assumptions

In short, I assume that those of you who pick up this book are planning to marry or perhaps that you're a family member or friend of someone who's engaged. You may want to clear up some confusion about the complexity of planning a wedding, or maybe you're seeking some guidance on the finer points of wedding etiquette. Whatever your reason is for reading this book, I hope you find it helpful and have fun as you incorporate some wedding etiquette that often gets overlooked!

How This Book Is Organized

I organized this book into 5 parts and 18 chapters, separated according to specific topics and situations. You don't need to read any previous chapters to understand a later one that's of interest to you. Just jump around to find what you need or check out the table of contents to locate the specific subject matter you're curious about. I provide cross-referencing between the chapters to help you find more information on certain topics.

Part I: Engaging in Proper Wedding Etiquette from the

Start

In this part, I walk you through all the etiquette involved at the beginning of the wedding planning process. Many questions come up when it comes to how to properly share the news of your engagement, whether to throw an engagement party, and how to gracefully handle friends and family who may not be excited about the announcement. I address all these issues in Chapter 2. If you're interested in technology, turn to Chapter 3, where I talk about the etiquette behind creating a wedding Web site and using e-mail during wedding planning. If you need to figure out who pays for what, check out Chapter 4, where I explain everything from the traditional expenses for the couple and their families to how to stay on a budget while keeping your cool.

Part II: The Main Event: Planning Your Ceremony and Reception

In this part, you find details for creating a memorable and tasteful wedding celebration. In Chapter 5, I describe different types of ceremony styles (such as religious, civil, military, and others). In Chapter 6, I offer advice on choosing an appropriate ceremony site and officiant and personalizing your wedding with readings, music, and more. I explain all the details for selecting a proper reception venue along with tips for planning different aspects of your reception in Chapter 7.

Part III: Working on Wedding Details with Your Manners Intact

This part addresses all the etiquette you need to know as you plan your big day. Chapter 8 helps you through the highly personal and subjective task of choosing a wedding party. I offer etiquette advice specifically to help you through the selection process, along with tips on determining the number of attendants and advice for breaking away from the norm. You find advice on choosing your wedding attire in relation to the various levels of formality in Chapter 9. And, if you're struggling with the guest list, check out Chapter 10, which lays out the etiquette ground rules.

That's not all! In Chapter 11, you find the details for composing your wedding invitations and the all-important etiquette involved with assembling, addressing, and mailing them. Chapter 12 offers you advice on registering for gifts and the proper way to present gifts to family members and the bridal party. Finally, Chapter 13 addresses the major etiquette involved in the prewedding festivities, from the bridal shower to the rehearsal dinner.

Part IV: Behaving on the Big Day and Beyond

This part covers everything that occurs on your wedding day. Chapter 14 helps you specifically with the ceremony, from how to properly greet and seat guests to what steps to follow for a proper processional, recessional, and other