

bridesmaid etiquette

LISA HANSLIP- ASK A WEDDING PLANNER

The long road from happy engagement to wedded bliss is paved with potential etiquette faux pas. Here are a few tips to help you resist your inner Bridezilla along the way.

Q: I'm having trouble choosing a dress for my 10 bridesmaids. I want them all in the same dress but how do I choose one that will look good on all of them? Do I have to pay for all of them? Do they need to match my wedding gown?

A: Just like most things in life - one size usually doesn't fit all - and one dress won't suit all unless your bridesmaids have similar body types. When it comes to your attendants' attire - uniformity is nice, it's expected, but absolutely not necessary. In fact, mixing up the styles a bit is practically the norm these days. At the very least, it is nice to set your maid of honour apart by choosing a different dress in the same colour or the same dress in a different colour.

Choosing a bridesmaid dress shouldn't be looked at as an opportunity for retribution for that frilly sea-foam green number taunting you from the back of your closet. Be nice. These are your friends. Most women are initially thrilled when asked to be a bridesmaid, but if they've ever been a bridesmaid before, inside their head they're groaning (What is she going to make me wear?). Consider choosing a colour and style grouping from one designer and letting your bridesmaids choose which one they feel best suits them. That way, as it will be the same fabric and the same general style, they will match, but your best friend won't be hiding in the corner all evening for fear of falling out of the strapless dress you've chosen for her.

The bridesmaid dress should match the formality of your dress - so don't put them in a sundress if you're wearing a formal gown with a train - but it is no longer necessary to have your attendant's dresses emulate your gown. Bridesmaid's dresses not only used to match the wedding gown - but were identical. The original purpose for a bridesmaid was to confuse the evil spirits. These days, they're there for moral support and to look pretty walking down the aisle.

It is expected that the bridesmaids will cover the cost of their own attire; however some brides opt to pay, depending on the cost of the dress they've chosen, or the financial circumstances of their friends. So, unless you are planning to foot the bill yourself - be kind with both style and price. And, by the way, feel free just to have three or four bridesmaids, not ten - you don't need all of your guests standing at the front with you!



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