



# BRIDESMAIDS

HOW TO CHOOSE? BY LISA HANSLIP

**Q** I'm having a very hard time choosing a maid of honour. I have a few girlfriends that I'm fairly close to, but my very best friend is a guy. We've known each other since junior high - and he's seen me through everything. Would it be weird to choose him instead of a maid of honour? Should he just dress like the groomsmen? Will I give my grandmother a heart attack?

**A** Unconventional, yes! Unexpected, you bet! Acceptable, absolutely! You want your honour attendant - whether it is a maid of honour, matron of honour or man of honour - to be the person to whom you feel closest. You should choose your best friend, the person you want standing beside you on your big day - not the friend that would look best in the bridesmaid dress.

If you choose a man to be your honour attendant - you may opt to eliminate some of the "typical" duties like hosting your bridal shower, or helping you get into your wedding gown. But the most important part of the job description is being supportive and serving as the legal witness to your marriage.

Choosing your attendants can often be a difficult process - for the bride and the groom. There may be family politics involved. Or, like some, you may have served as a bridesmaid for a dozen of your friends and family members and feel obligated to ask them to stand up for you in return. Well...don't.

This is your day - and although it is impossible to accommodate everyone's wishes - you can't make your choices based on not wanting to offend someone. You can't make everyone happy - nor can you make everyone your bridesmaid - so just choose those you are currently closest to. You can always

assign tasks - like doing a reading or taking care of the guest book - to those you want to feel special and included in your wedding but aren't in the bridal party. When you decide on the attire for your attendants, he can wear a suit or tuxedo and coordinate his tie to the other bridesmaids. This scenario also holds true for the groom. It is also perfectly acceptable to have a woman be the best "man." A best "woman" looks great in a black strapless gown to coordinate with the other groomsmen.

I feel very strongly that you have the person or persons that mean most to you standing next to you while you get married - regardless of gender. You don't need to have four attendants because your soon-to-be spouse is having four attendants. You don't have to have them all in the same outfit (in fact, please don't!!) - it's great to infuse some character into your bridal party. And, you definitely don't have to have female attendants because you're the bride, nor male attendants because you're the groom. We have had lots of "men of honour"s and "best women" over the years and it's always perfectly appropriate - regardless if you're having a religious or secular ceremony. So, feel free to choose your best guy friend or brother to stand up for you at your wedding. Just keep your "man of honour" away from the lavender chiffon and size 11 purple pumps and your grandmother's heart should be just fine!

**CHOOSING THE DRESS** If you really want to make your girls happy, give them the opportunity to choose their own style of dress that is most flattering for their figure. This is a great option if one of your bridesmaids is pregnant, an out-of-town bridesmaid or if you have a variety of body shapes and sizes. When visiting bridal salons, department stores or dress boutiques, look for dresses in a similar color palette. The result will be a modern fresh style with a flattering fit for all of your bridesmaids.