

## Advice to Attendants

Remember when you were little and played "dress-up"? My wedding gown was a halter style made by wrapping a white sheet around my chest and letting the rest drag behind me as my train. My veil was a pillowcase, held in place with a plastic headband. How about when you were a teen and thought that every boyfriend was the one that you were going to marry. Well, you're a woman now and thoughts of what you'd like at your own wedding must have crossed your mind. Maybe you've had dreams about walking down the aisle, more than once. The practicing as a kid, the thoughts and dreams, are now reality for your friend...The Bride.

You may feel that she is asking too much of you, she may get upset more than usual, you might get tired of hearing about the wedding, etc...If you haven't been a bride before, you can't understand the pressure that your friend is under. If you are married, you'll be able to remember how hard it was.

The bride has many people to please (groom, family, wedding party, guests). She has to deal with a lot of vendors and remember a hundred little details. People are coming out of the woodwork to give their advice, suggestions and opinions...24/7. Let's not forget about the financial strain, where's the money coming from, is there enough. Imagine all these things, plus a job and home life going on for 12 months. The stress and pressure is enough to drive any bride nuts. This is where you come in.

As a VIP in the bride's life there are so many ways that you can help her out. FB polled the Babblers of our famed Babbling Brides Bulletin Board and the following is what they felt were the most important things for every bridal attendant to remember.

### **Babbler Poll: Top 10 things brides want their bridal party to know:**

#### **Smile**

Smile for the pictures. Whether it's hot or cold outside, these photos will be cherished for years to come. Look happy for your friend. You've been asked to be a part of a very special day. Behave like it.

#### **Don't wait for the bride to ask for help, offer it**

Some people have a hard time asking for help because they don't want to put anyone out. If the bride says that she's getting ready to send out her invitations, ask her if she needs any help.

If the bride asks for help, help

#### **Be a good friend**

To be a part of any wedding - on any level is very stressful. True friendships are made, and others are broken. I myself tried to back down from a wedding two weeks prior - but the bride would not let me, as it would make her BP look un-even. In the end, it killed our friendship of over 20 years. I remember standing up in front of everyone crying as I read my MOH speech. They were not tears of Joy for the Bride and Groom, but tears of sadness for the end of a friendship.

#### **Be honest about what you can and cannot do, how the bride really looks, what you like and don't like (before the wedding day)**

#### **Don't complain about the cost.**

You've been asked to spend some of your hard earned cash ... don't complain about it when the time comes to part with it. Be completely honest and upfront with the bride, especially about what you are willing to spend \$\$\$\$. I had a bridesmaid that said that money was no problem and SHE picked a \$250 BM dress and then continued to complain about how much it was costing and the cost for alterations, etc. It really ended up bumming me out. Keep in mind that you have other costs besides the dress - shoes, hair, makeup, alterations.

### **Don't complain on the wedding day, to anyone about anything.**

The only advice I can add would be for the BMs or MOH NOT to complain about decisions that the bride/groom have made that does not affect them, eg. don't complain about the photographer's style, the flowers, or the bride's gown. These are not decisions that need the blessing of the BM or the MOH so please think before you criticize something that does not affect you. Unless someone is being extremely difficult, disrespectful or rude PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE NO complaining on the wedding day!

You've offered to go with the bride to look for her gown, at least look excited

Help the bride in selecting your gown and accessories

Please let the bride know if you have any real needs (not preferences) when it comes to the dress and shoes, eg. I can't wear heels, I need a gown that I can wear a proper bra with. If at all possible, accommodate the bride's wishes.

Before you accept the role of maid of honour or bridesmaid ask the bride what she expects of you and let her know what you can and can't do

Don't talk about your up and coming wedding plans during meetings with your bride and/or her other bridesmaids

If a bride has her heart set on a bridesmaid dress for you, give your opinion and if she still wants it...buy it and wear it with a smile

### **Keep in contact with the bride**

When the bride requests dress fittings, rehearsals, sizes, general info, get back to her in a timely manner. Regular contact - just to check up - is very much appreciated and valued. It is nice to not have to be the one to do the calling too

### **It's the bride's day!**

Opinions during the planning stages are great but don't push your ideas on the bride, she has the final say. The bride is the star of the show, so focus on her instead of worrying what you look like.

### **Be understanding**

Take the high road (don't take it personally) and know that getting married is like being on some crazy emotional roller coaster for the bride. She may be having to juggle 10 other people (family, FI, etc.) as well as planning the BIG event, working, looking after a family, going to school, whatever. Cut her some slack. When the wedding is over, she will revert back to the friend you know and love.

### **If you don't know, ask**

If you aren't sure of what to do, where to be, what's going on...please ask the bride.

### **Don't take advantage**

"I am paying for the dress, makeup, manicure, pedicure, putting her up for the week, picking her up/returning her to the airport 2 hours away. For that I get "I don't want to send invites for your shower. Can't you just put them in with the wedding invites?" "I don't want to go to your mom's house to get measured for a dress, I don't like her" "Can't you take care of the shower details?" "FI can't stay at the house the night before - you can't see each other" ... hello?!?"