

A GUIDE FOR USHERS

Congratulations, you have been selected to represent the bridegroom and bride as an Usher; an invaluable attendant which should be considered an honor. Here are a few guidelines to follow and some traditional instructions which may be helpful to you in fulfilling your new role. No two weddings are identical. The information provided is to guide you concerning accepted Usher procedures, and in no way should interfere with the wedding plans which have been described by the bride or wedding consultant.

One of the most important things to remember is that your manner which should be friendly, polite and cheerful, will have a contagious effect on the entire atmosphere of the wedding. It goes without saying that you must be well-groomed, on time, and well acquainted with the responsibilities you have for this important occasion. In many cases, Ushers set the mood with their efficient ability and exemplary dispositions.

Obligations

- ❑ An Usher attends the bachelor party and contributes to a joint gift which is presented to the bridegroom at the party. This gift is separate from the individual wedding present given to the couple by each Usher and Best Man.
- ❑ Each Usher has the responsibility to dress according to attire and instruction of the bride and bridegroom. Attire must be fitted properly, picked up and paid for then finally returned when necessary.
- ❑ An Usher helps the best man especially during the week of the wedding when he has so much responsibility, and the bridegroom who may need his services.
- ❑ An Usher is required to attend the rehearsal for instructions and exercise of the processional, ceremony and recessional.
- ❑ The Usher attends the rehearsal dinner and is sometimes asked to give a toast in honor of the bride and bridegroom.

Usher Responsibilities at the Wedding

- ❑ The Usher is required to arrive one hour in advance unless perviously notified. He must be properly dressed with his boutonniere on his left lapel. If gloves are part of the attire, they must be worn at all times especially for the photographs. (Note: This does not include wearing them for the reception.)
- ❑ The Usher is required to carry out all the instructions that were previously appointed to him at the rehearsal.
- ❑ The Usher seats all wedding guests. Seating arrangements should be discussed prior to the wedding to decide how the Usher should seat guests. It has been the custom in the past to seat friends of the bride on your left behind the bride's parents, and the bridegroom's friends on the right side. However, this custom is not followed as strictly as it once was. It is recommended to politely ask a guest if they are friends of the bride or groom, if the Usher is unaware of their association.
- ❑ The Usher is usually aware of the names of relatives and special friends whom the bride and groom have reserved space for close to the altar where parents will be seated. Selected Ushers may be asked to take care of pew ribbons and carpet and to stand at pews to indicate the order of departure.

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Usher Responsibilities after the Wedding

- ❑ The Usher is available for wedding photographs.
- ❑ The Usher does not stand in the receiving line but mingles with the guests at the reception.
- ❑ The Usher sees to it that bridesmaids are not left unattended.

Usher Etiquette

- ❑ The Usher greets people with a pleasant - "Good Afternoon" or "Good Evening," whichever the case may be.
- ❑ To Usher a couple: The Usher extends his right arm to escort the woman down the aisle. Her husband will either follow or the Usher can choose to say, "Please follow me," and the husband will follow behind the Usher.
- ❑ To Usher a group of women: Escort the older woman and the younger women will follow behind the Usher.
- ❑ To Usher Men: The Usher does not extend his arm, instead he walks beside them to their designated seat.
- ❑ Ushering the Mother of the Groom: The Head Usher escorts the Mother of the Groom to the first row on row right, as her husband follows.
- ❑ Ushering the Mother of the Bride: The Mother of the Bride is the last person to enter the sanctuary before the wedding party. She is escorted by the Head Usher to the first pew on the left side. This is usually a signal for the wedding processional to begin.
- ❑ The Usher does not seat anyone after the Mother of the Bride has been seated. He politely informs any late comers to wait in the entry, or to go to the balcony, or rear side pew away from the aisle.
- ❑ The Usher keeps a dignified manner throughout the reception, while enjoying the celebration.
- ❑ The Usher politely thanks those responsible for the wedding and reception.

Order of Entry

- ❑ Groom's Grandparents (seated at the right facing the altar).
- ❑ Bride's Grandparents (seated at the left facing the altar).
- ❑ Head Usher escorts the Groom's Mother to the first pew on the right, followed by her husband.
- ❑ Head Usher then escorts the Mother of the Bride to the first pew on the left side.

Order of Departure

- ❑ Bride's Mother (followed by her husband).
- ❑ Groom's Mother (followed by her husband).
- ❑ Bride's Grandmother (followed by her husband).
- ❑ Groom's Grandmother (followed by her husband).