

MIND YOUR MANNERS

NERVOUS ABOUT YOUR IMPENDING WALK
DOWN THE AISLE? BRIDAL ETIQUETTE
TRAINING COULD JUST BE WHAT YOU NEED
TO BANISH PRE-WEDDING JITTERS

Regardless of how organised you are on your big day, stresses like wardrobe malfunctions, late guests and cold food can ruffle the feathers of the most calm of brides. In addition to this, the build-up to the big day is sometimes years in the making so it's only natural to feel nervous about your hundreds of guests having a good time, looking your best and keeping your (many) emotions at bay on the day.

Bridal wedding etiquette expert, CEO and founding principal, Institute of Modern Etiquette (IME) Siana Qadar, advises brides-to-be on every aspect of wedding etiquette and is the go-to confidant for brides based across the Middle East and England. Diving in to find out the do's and don'ts when it comes to the modern-day wedding and bride, *EB* discovers the rules remain the same whatever your culture.

WHEN SHOULD A BRIDE COME AND SEE YOU? THREE MONTHS OR THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE WEDDING?

An initial assessment of the bride should be performed. The sooner the bride has this assessment, the sooner we can determine how much guidance she needs.

YOU ADVISE BOTH ARAB AND ASIAN BRIDES, HOW DOES THE ETIQUETTE DIFFER?

There are differences in traditional cultural rituals between the Arab and Asian weddings. Arab weddings tend to start off with ladies only with the groom and other male guests

arriving later with different processions. For example, Egyptian brides prefer to walk down a grand stair case outside the main ballroom with family and friends gathered around at the bottom of the staircase to welcome her. An Emirati bride enters with her family; however the family stay behind whilst the bride walks graciously on to the centre stage that has been created purely for the 'stage walk'. The 'stage walk' is usually performed where the bride skillfully parades to beautiful instrumental music for approximately 25 minutes. Asian brides on the other hand tend to walk down the aisle and then sit on the stage. This can be less than a 10-minute process.

WHAT IS A BRIDE'S BIGGEST CONCERN WHEN SHE COMES TO YOU?

The biggest concern is how to walk gracefully with a beautiful heavy gown on and not trip. There is an art for bridal walking and this needs to be skillfully mastered for the bride to have poise and confidence on her big day.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND FOR THE GROOM TO HAVE ETIQUETTE TRAINING AS WELL AS THE BRIDE?

It's essential for the groom to also consider etiquette training since they both have the spot light on them. The groom needs to know how to take the hand of the bride for instance, when the father delivers the brides hand to him. He also needs to have good table manners - there is nothing worse than seeing a polished bride but her husband is rough in his approach.

IMAGES: GETTY





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WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA AT WEDDINGS?

Your wedding day should be classic and sophisticated, with only positive well wishes. Social media can be a real nuisance, especially if the bride and groom just keep taking selfies the whole time. Having a smart phone on the head table is an absolute no-no. The bride and groom should enjoy their big day and leave social media to their guests. I have also attended weddings when the bride and groom state on their wedding card (as a polite requirement) not to post any photos on social media.

HOW CAN WEDDING GUESTS PRACTICE THE BEST ETIQUETTE WHEN ATTENDING A WEDDING?

- Always RSVP. If you are unable to attend, you still need to inform them.
- Dress up. Wear a beautiful outfit, make an effort in your appearance. Avoid over-exposed clothing and please never wear white or red, these colours are reserved for the bride.
- Arrive on time. There is nothing worse than arriving when the vows are being said or when the wedding has just finished.
- Wedding gift etiquette. Choose from the wedding registry or ask the parents of the couple about the wedding gift. Guests should by no circumstance bring large gifts to the wedding reception, it's just one added item for stress for the bride and groom to look after and transport home. If you are gifting a large item, you should get it transported to the couple's desired address within three months post wedding day. It's also polite to send a message to the couple informing them their gift will be delivered at a later date.

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP 5 TIPS FOR BRIDES-TO-BE

- It's important to plan well in advance, 12 months is a good time frame. Start to write notes and brainstorm your ideas on how you would like your wedding day to be, your guest list, your vendors, your wedding dress designer, call and discuss with wedding planners for budget information.
- Have a detailed planner with all the when's and how's and what will be when. It's important to stick to the schedule with milestones and rewards for completion of activities.
- Be kind to yourself, relax and focus. If you have a lapse in organising or in any other area, re assess and go directly back to your planner.
- Get support and delegate tasks to family and friends, do not try and do it all yourself. Many grooms like to take an active interest, involve them actively and do not make a decision without them.
- Start your JOME bridal etiquette program, so the sub conscious mind can absorb all the good habits learned in the classes. You will definitely see a cultivated transformation which will be felt and seen in your character and the way you conduct yourself. This will truly be one of your life's best investments.

For more information on the bridal etiquette courses, visit jome-me.com

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