





The Dream Team

Wedding expert and author of the *Malaysian Wedding Handbook*, Leticia Hsu speaks to Fang Sue Yin on the unspoken rules of bridesmaid and groomsman duties

ONE OF THE FIRST decisions soon-to-be wed couples make is regarding who will be in their wedding party. In many cases, both the bride and groom already have solid ideas of who they'd like standing beside them—some even way before the proposal. They may be relatives, childhood friends or roommates during college, but there's more than just the relationship involved when choosing members of the bridal party. The terms 'bridesmaid' and 'groomsman' isn't just for great friends or siblings, it's an important role that these men and women will take on throughout the planning of the wedding.

They are the right-hand men and women. So, if you have been chosen to stand beside the couple on their wedding day, feel honoured and be the best support you can be—emotionally or physically. Whether you're the maid of honour, a bridesmaid or a groomsman, there is some amount of responsibility placed on you to ensure everything goes smooth. Though it can be difficult to know what exactly needs to (or not) be done—old-fashioned etiquette books and common sense do not always line up, and it can be hard to find an accurate guide to go about your bridesmaid or groomsman duties. Thus we enlisted Leticia Hsu to enlighten us on some dos and don'ts.

FOR THE MAID OF HONOUR/ BRIDESMAIDS

DO: Have a bridal emergency kit ready even if the bride says she has one—she may be too frazzled to find her safety pins or wet wipes. Be like Dora the Explorer and her crazy backpack, even some ridiculous fancy chocolate treats can be fun to have. Chocolate always helps in a stressful situation. Just don't eat it anywhere near the wedding gown.

DO: Get yourselves dressed and ready on schedule so that the bride isn't delayed by you. Remember, the bride already has a lot on her plate and you definitely don't want to add to that. Be organised and don't forget to pack your own accessories, shoes, etc. Your job is to be social, look beautiful and not cause the bride any stress.

DO: Put the bride's needs before yours. The world literally revolves around the bride. You will be expected to drop everything if a crisis that she needs you to handle for her arises; you might be shelling out some major bucks; and your patience will be put to the test. Whatever hardships you go through during this time, remember, it is not about you. Help out unconditionally and do it without asking questions or complaining.



*Always remember to serve
as a source of strength and comfort
throughout the process*



DON'T: Say yes if you are not completely invested. We know it can be exciting when your friend asks you to be her bridesmaid, however, know what you are getting yourself into before accepting the invitation. If you can't live up to the time commitment and expenses required, just be honest about it. One of the biggest faux pas is for you to say 'yes' and then pull out at the last minute.

DON'T: Get piking drunk. Drink and have fun but know your limits. It is a special day for the bride and you don't want to make a mess of it, literally.

DON'T: Point out things you think are a problem if the bride hasn't said anything. If you think the calla lilies are white instead of ivory, don't say a word unless she says something first. If she does notice, reassure her it's beautiful because whatever's going on at that point, it's going to be too late to do anything about changing her bridal bouquet. Your job is to reassure her. Focus on the bride.

DON'T: Complain to the bride about anything. Not your accommodations, not the bridesmaid dress or anything at all. Whatever that may be bothering you, it is a day to keep those negative thoughts to yourself.

**BE ON YOUR BEST BEHAVIOUR**

Once you have been chosen to be a bridesmaid or a groomsman, forget about being in the limelight and opt to be the best companion on your friend's special day

**FOR THE BEST MAN/ GROOMSMEN**

DO: Stay sober on the day of the wedding so that you can keep the groom on schedule and make sure he doesn't forget anything. Make an actual written list of things you need to remember (rings, socks, etc) and be the guy-behind-the-guy that day so the groom has it easy. Try to keep the groom sober too, as much as you can.

DO: Plan an unforgettable party. Be it a day of snowboarding on the alps or a night out for drinks with the boys. It is vital for you to establish the groom's comfort levels and learn of options from there. All in all, the main goal is to ensure the party is a memorable and joyous one.

DO: Make a point to dance with the single ladies (especially the older ones) at the wedding reception. The bride and groom will appreciate your efforts to make everyone feel included.

No matter what your bridesmaid or groomsman duties entail, it is important to remember one essential rule: Have fun! You have been chosen to help a friend navigate one of the most special times of their lives, and it's an experience that will bring you closer than ever before. Embrace it and enjoy it, because your friend will be a Mr or Mrs faster than you realise it.

DON'T: Get uncontrollably wasted at the reception just because you can. We know it's easy to get carried away to free-flowing champagne and liquor. Indulge and enjoy yourself but don't have too much to drink. You have to be the last man standing at the end of the night to make sure the last guest gets in a cab and reach home.

DON'T: Turn the toast into a roast. Of all the responsibilities that come with a wedding, it is the best man's toast that most closely resembles a minefield. Never mention any of his exes in anything you say or do near a microphone. Also, skip the talk about his relationship history with the bride's friends and family.

DON'T: Resort to pranks and frat boy antics during the wedding weekend—this isn't school days and you're not a kid anymore. 🚫

