

Choosing Your Wedding Party: The Best Men For The Job

Contributed by Kimberly Bean

Choosing your best man and groomsmen can be a difficult task, one that takes careful consideration before you make a final decision. Your wedding day is a chance for everyone to share your happiness, and of course you want your closest friends and family members to be a part of that.

The best man is the groom's closest friend, whether it's a brother, high school friend or other family member. His role is the largest: he usually helps with many of the groom's wedding requirements, plans a bachelor party, and helps the groom get ready on the day of the actual wedding. He might also give a wedding speech or toast during the reception. This is where it gets tricky. A long-ago promise to a best friend you rarely see or a sense of obligation to a brother or cousin can complicate things. However, you must remember that this is your choice, and family members and friends should respect that. In the end, choose the person you want to and don't make a decision based on family pressure. An important consideration is the personality and location of the best man. First, is he reliable? If your best friend is always an hour late, or is a definite risk in the vicinity of an open bar, you might want to rethink giving him the title of best man. Think back: has he been there for you and supported you through tough times in the past? You want a trustworthy friend you can count on. Keep his current situation in mind too: if your first choice for a best man lives thousands of miles away, he won't be able to help you with a lot of the planning and party preparations for the wedding and stag party. Also, reconsider if he is dealing with a complicated emotional situation such as a messy divorce, new baby on the way, or a health problem. When deciding on your groomsmen, it's a good idea to include family members. Even if you don't feel overly close to your older brother, it's a nice gesture to ask him to join your wedding party. The same goes for your bride's family. If she has a brother, ask him to be one of your groomsmen. Hopefully you'll be able to have all your closest friends as groomsmen. If someone has to be left out, choose the friend you've known the longest to be in your wedding party. Offer an alternative role to anyone you have to exclude. Ask your friend if he would like to be an usher for the ceremony, or give the champagne toast after dinner. Weddings are a joyful time, but they can also be a source of headache when choosing your wedding party. Fear of leaving out someone important, or hurting someone's feelings often cloud decision making. Pick the best man and groomsmen you want to stand up with you on your wedding day, not the guy your mother said you had to ask, or the childhood buddy you called out of guilt.