

Best Man's Duties Checklist



Planning the bachelor party is just the beginning. The best man should do all he can to take weight off of the groom's shoulders, such as handling any (or all) of these tasks.

During the Wedding Planning

Help the groom choose tuxes.

Organize groomsmen's fittings. Keep everything on schedule.

Plan and give the bachelor party. Keep track of who's invited, who's coming, where everyone will stay, and what activities will take place. Stay on top of the costs, making sure each attendee pays his share.

Help arrange wedding accommodations for out-of-town groomsmen.

Organize a groomsmen's gift for the groom. This can be presented at the bachelor party.

Keep groomsmen apprised of any changes in scheduling.

Shortly Before the Wedding Day

Organize the couple's departure from the reception. If they or you will drive, consider decorating the getaway car (tastefully); otherwise, arrange and confirm a limo or other transportation.

Confirm honeymoon travel reservations, if the groom wishes.

At the Rehearsal and Rehearsal Dinner

Attend the rehearsal. And pay attention—you may need to help others remember their places and schedules later.

Organize who will be giving toasts at dinner. Set the order.

Give the second toast, after the father of the groom (if the groom's parents have paid for the dinner). Or, if he is not speaking, give the first toast.

At Home, on the Wedding Day

Help the groom get dressed.

Get any payments for the wedding officiant, musicians, or other participants from the groom. Have him put the payments in individual sealed envelopes with each recipient's name on one.

Take charge of the wedding ring(s). Stow them somewhere safe (like your vest pocket).

Make sure the groom has the marriage license with him. And get him to the wedding venue on time.

At the Ceremony

Take a head count. Make sure all groomsmen are there on time, dressed appropriately, and ready to seat guests, if they are ushering.

Make sure all groomsmen have boutonnières, if using, attached properly to their lapels. Get help from the florist or wedding coordinator, if necessary.

If there is a ring bearer, check in to make sure the child knows what he needs to do. Attach the rings to the pillow.

Stand by the groom's side while waiting for the ceremony to start.

Hand the groom the ring(s) if there is no ring bearer.

Escort the maid of honor down the aisle when the ceremony concludes. Then return to escort the mother of the bride.

After the Ceremony

Deliver the fee envelope(s) in private to the officiant and any others.

Sign the marriage license as an official witness.

Drive the couple to the reception if there is no limo.

At the Reception

Act as a host. Welcome guests, mingle, and make introductions.

Organize groomsmen for formal photographs.

Organize who'll be giving toasts. Determine the order—and give the first toast.

Dance with the bride and the maid of honor. You might expect to dance with the mothers of the bride and the groom also.

Help the groom change into honeymoon clothes, if the couple is leaving directly from the reception. Take charge of the groom's tux and return it or have it cleaned.

Take charge of gift envelopes to hold until the couple's return.

Have either the decorated car (with the couple's luggage stowed inside) or a limo waiting to take the newlyweds from the reception. When they're ready to leave, help them make their escape.

Best Man Duties in Detail

You've been there for him through thick and thin (like that time in college -- yeah, *that* time). This wedding won't be any different. Here's what to know when you're a best man.

As best man, you may think you're just a glorified groomsman, but guess what? You actually have special responsibilities -- you'll be a combination valet and hand-holder as you help the groom come through this nerve-racking experience with flying colors. As leader of the groom's posse, you'll:

- Serve as the groom's personal aide and adviser before and during the wedding. This can include helping him pack for the honeymoon (the valet part).
- Help the groom choose and rent (or buy) wedding formalwear, and coordinate the other groomsmen's rentals. You guys are supposed to match, after all! You may be expected to arrange accommodations for out-of-town groomsmen.
- Organize the bachelor party. Don't be shy about enlisting other groomsmen to help you out -- most guys don't mind *this* duty! Put financial worries out of your mind -- the cost should be split among everyone who attends the bash.
- Attend the rehearsal and rehearsal dinner with the bride and groom and all the other attendants. This is your chance to figure out how you're supposed to walk down that aisle.
- Stand beside the groom at the altar and keep the bride's ring until vows are exchanged. Find a safe place for the ring (and triple check that your pockets don't have holes) -- you don't want to fumble around when it's time to whip it out.
- Corral the other guys and make sure they're performing their groomsman duties.
- Sign the marriage license as a witness after the ceremony, along with the maid of honor.
- Give the officiant a sealed envelope with his or her fee (the groom's responsibility) just after the ceremony.
- You may be announced with the maid of honor when the reception begins.
- Dance with both the honor attendant and the bride during the wedding party dances.
- Give the first toast to the bride and groom at the reception. This is your biggest -- and probably most frightening -- duty. Read our article about how to give a toast, and remember the cardinal rule: Mum's the word on the bachelor bacchanalia.
- Collect any gift envelopes guests bring to the reception. You may be asked to deposit them in the couple's bank account or at least to keep them until the couple returns from their honeymoon.
- Decorate the getaway mobile. Grab the other groomsmen and the bridesmaids for this one.
- Drive the couple to the wedding-night hotel or airport after the reception. If you perform this service, you'll need to stay sober throughout the reception. If you have a feeling this may not be possible, hire a limo to drive the couple into the sunset.

The wedding will be over in the blink of an eye, so remember to *enjoy* yourself at the reception. After all, you're there to celebrate the happiest day of your best friend's life.