

Roles of the best man and maid of honor

Being chosen as a best man or a maid of honor is a significant and meaningful honor. Those roles have evolved over the years, but these special participants must still perform some of the traditional duties of the past, including serving as the official witnesses to the ceremony. The following is a rundown of the various duties maids of honor and best men are now expected to handle once they're chosen for these distinguished honors.

Prior to the wedding

Before the wedding takes place, the maid of honor will closely assist the bride-to-be with many of the important decisions related to the look and the feel of the wedding. She typically accompanies the bride to dress shops to select gowns for the bride and bridesmaids. Much in the same manner, the best man will assist the groom-to-be with choosing tuxedos or suits and also with coordinating with the ushers to ensure they know when to go for fittings.

Although the best man will serve as a sounding board for the groom, traditionally the bride and her bridesmaids have taken on the majority of the wedding planning, so the maid of honor can expect to play a larger role than the best man. The maid of honor may be asked to delegate certain assignments, such as helping to find wedding vendors or addressing invitations. She may go with the bride for makeup and hairstyle trials. Together with the bridesmaids, she will plan a bridal shower party and a bachelorette excursion. She may select a wedding gift for the couple and present it on behalf of all the wedding attendants.

The best man will coordinate the bachelor party and may be asked to assist the groom with selecting a honeymoon site or to come along to book the trip.

Wedding day

On the day of the wedding, the maid of honor and the best man will act as a support system for the bride and groom. The maid of honor will help the bride get dressed and help iron out any mini-emergencies that should crop up. The best man will help ensure all of the ushers are dressed and get the groom to the wedding on time.



During the ceremony, the maid of honor will hold the bride's bouquet while she participates in the wedding. The best man will keep the rings safe until they are needed. The maid of honor also will help adjust the bride's train and veil as she sits and stands during the ceremony. Both will sign the marriage certificate as witnesses.

At the reception, the best man is expected to give a toast and the maid of honor may share some words as well. She also may accompany the bride to the restroom and assist her with managing the gown.

After the wedding

The best man will be in charge of returning the tuxedos to the rental shop, if necessary. He also may drive the newly married couple to the airport so they can depart on their honeymoon.

The maid of honor will assist the bride in changing out of her gown and into her travel clothes. Oftentimes the maid of honor takes the gown to the cleaners in the days following the ceremony so the dress can be preserved.