

# Weird and Wonderful Wedding Traditions in Your Family Tree

Have you ever gone to a wedding? Some traditions seem odd, like throwing bouquets or smashing cake faces. But they come from important old customs. Let's look at wild wedding traditions in your family!

Many old wedding customs used magic. Egyptian brides wore special jewelry for health and wealth. Chinese brides had coins on dresses to get money. Greek brides tossed wheat for big harvests. Carrying the bride kept evil spirits away. Cultures had traditions to bless the new marriage.

Other funny weddings had noise. In Germany, ringing bells scared bad spirits away. Guests banged pots outside the window! Guns firing were popular in early America. Even cannons boomed after royal weddings. The noise was supposed to guard the couple and share the happy news.

Fun favorites like cake and bouquets also symbolized hopes. Cutting the first slice together showed commitment. The single lady who caught the bouquet was thought to marry next. Old Roman brides wore flower crowns, so tossing flowers carried on tradition.

Have you heard this about weddings? “Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue, and a silver sixpence in her shoe.” This is from England. Each item had meaning, like “old” for staying the same and “blue” for loyalty. The coin wished wealth. The bride collected these special things for good luck.

In India, bright henna tattoos are painted on the bride's hands. This temporary body art is a mehndi. Fancy designs mean joy and beauty. The darker the henna, the more the groom loved his bride. Doing henna took hours, but the dazzling results were worth it.

Some cultures had odd rules to get married. In Scotland's Shetland Islands, couples had to knit socks before the wedding. This proved they could handle chores. In the past, men in the Philippines had to fight rivals with sticks to win a bride! Thankfully more peaceful traditions like sharing coins replaced violence.

Your ancestors probably did fascinating rituals. Maybe the couple drank honey wine at old Norse weddings. Or ate sugared almonds like Italians for sweetness. Jewish grooms broke glass to close the ceremony. Next wedding you attend, look for ties to long ago. Families and customs keep changing over time. But we always wish the couple good luck!

## Glossary

- ritual: an established ceremony
- fermented: foods like wine or cheese get their flavor changed by bacteria
- canopy: a tent-like covering over the couple

## Questions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Old wedding traditions sometimes used:  
a) Expensive gowns   b) Magic rituals   c) Royal guests   d) Fireworks
2. Loud noises like bells at weddings were to:  
a) Celebrate   b) Scare evil away   c) Make the couple kiss   d) Be annoying
3. Why did English brides carry special items?  
a) As gifts for guests   b) For good luck   c) To show off wealth  
d) To follow royal rules
4. What does mehndi show about Indian weddings?  
a) They last a very long time.   b) Beauty is important.  
c) Guests get henna tattoos.   d) It is a sad event.
5. How does the article say wedding customs change?  
a) Traditions evolve but still wish couples well.  
b) People today follow the exact old traditions.  
c) Families pass down the same traditions.  
d) Modern weddings have no meaningful rituals.
6. What is the main idea of the article?  
a) To explain different world weddings  
b) To show how traditions connect us to the past  
c) To complain about strange old customs  
d) To compare clothes in India and Greece

## Answer Key

1. b
2. b
3. b
4. b
5. a
6. b