

Pre Wedding Reception Activities

There are so many little details to worry about when planning a wedding some might get forgotten. One tiny detail that often gets overlooked is how to keep guests entertained before the wedding reception "officially" begins.

There is no requirement that brides entertain their guests at all. After all, they have already attended your wedding ceremony (which was surely engaging and entertaining, right?) and they will soon get music, food and drink. What more could they want? It turns out, a lot. While the bride and groom are off having pictures taken, the guests are left to their own devices, chatting with other guests and wondering when the buffet will open.

In that light, it's worth at least considering some pre-reception options for keeping wedding guests entertained until the reception begins. Here are a few options, some tradition, some not so, but still fun.

First, you can do the traditional thing and provide guests with drinks and perhaps some light snacks. If the wedding is in the summertime, how about providing lemonade and iced tea? Or if it's the winter, coffee and hot tea or even hot cocoa depending on the style of your wedding. Providing a light snack isn't a bad idea, either, and that can be some appetizer-type food or just nuts, especially if the meal will be heavy.

Now, if you want to stray from tradition, there are many options. Some brides opt for entertaining the guests in the truest sense of the word. Clowns, anyone? How about live music?

If you want to venture into the fun and funky, consult the party planning pages of a local children's or parent's magazine. Here, you can find people who will entertain your children at their birthday parties, but many of them will happily take on wedding jobs. You can hire a clown to make balloon animals for the kids (and adults) in attendance, or to juggle a few things. Some clowns are true entertainers and will happily get the crowd involved by fetching items out of women's purses and juggling them.

Other non-traditional options for entertaining your guests include hiring a band to play music beforehand. If you plan to have classical music at your wedding, you can have a band come and play covers of current pop songs, or you can simply have your hired band arrive a bit early to entertain guests waiting for the full reception to begin.

If there are many children at the wedding, it's not too expensive to hire a

children's band to sing and entertain the children for a bit. Then if the kids are a bit bored at the reception, they'll still have the memory of the earlier entertainment with them. In addition, while the children are being entertained, the adults can have a chance to chat and they will surely thank the bride for thinking of them in that way.

Some other options for entertaining your restless crowd before the festivities begin are to include them in the reception before it begins. This is a great time to ask people to sign the guest book and write something meaningful, since they will have more time than they would usually have as they file into the reception hall.

If the reception and the wedding ceremony take place in the same location, but the bride and groom are off having pictures taken, it may not seem as if there's this dilemma of how to keep the guests entertained, but there in fact, is.

In this case, you can have servers circulate with appetizer trays or you can do something more elaborate, such as some of the suggestions above. One popular option doesn't involve entertaining the guests at all. Say the wedding is being held at a historic house or mansion. During the lull before the reception, guests can be given a tour of the property. If the wedding and reception are both being held at the couple's new home, a tour of the property might be in order (assuming the guest list is fairly small).

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