

710

A True Gift Of Love: The Wedding Gift

Giving plenty of gifts to a newly betrothed couple has been tradition for many centuries and is the main reason why the wedding gift business has remained profitable despite changing business conditions. A wedding gift is a tangible representation of support and love for the couple to help them start their new life on a positive note.

Wedding etiquette dictates that guests officially invited to the wedding ceremony and reception are required to send a gift, regardless they attend or not. However, those invited but live very far and have not been in close contact with the couple for several years have the option not to follow the tradition.

A guest requested to attend a shower should present a gift but does not have to if he/she cannot attend the event. A close family member or friend will likely send something despite not attending.

Engagement gifts are never compulsory but have started to become a requirement in some parts of the world. A guest who is not sure whether or not to present a gift to an engagement party may consult the hosts for guidance.

Ideal wedding gifts can range from expensive china, gift certificates, camping equipment, gardening tools and household appliances. Choosing a gift should be an enjoyable activity except for those "shopping-challenged". The gift registry is very helpful in determining what to give the couple. Starting to become popular is the move of couples registering gifts with two or more retail stores, online shops or even brokerage houses and travel agents. Registry information is informally spread to guests and should not be inserted in a wedding invitation.

Putting a gift registry in an invitation is major turnoff for guests, as it will give more focus on the gift and less on the thought of inviting to the wedding. The guest's should have the choice whether to give a gift. Sometimes the most memorable and sentimental gifts are those carefully picked surprises.

Normally, should be delivered to the bride's home before the wedding addressed to her. Gifts sent after the wedding should be addressed to the couple's new home or the house of the bride's parents. Some cultures require the gift to be brought to the wedding home instead of sending it ahead of the ceremony.

Guests may send the gifts immediately after they receive the invitation. Doing this gift giving practice will spare the couple from worrying about how to

transport huge packages coming from the reception site.

Proper etiquette dictates that the couple should immediately write a thank-you note to the sender upon receiving the wedding gift and before the fourth month after the wedding at the most.

FAQ's on proper wedding etiquette on gift giving

When does the gift should be sent?

The gift for the bride should be given before the wedding or shortly after the couple. If the gift cannot be sent anytime soon, it must be sent before three months after the ceremony. This goes against hearsay that it can be sent even shortly before the first year anniversary of the newlyweds.

Are the gift options limited to those listed in the registry?

No, a registry only serves as a guide for the gift giver. Any wedding gift will as long as it comes from the heart.

Is there an ideal budget for a wedding gift?

The budget is entirely up to the gift giver. One's love for the bride and groom should serve as the basis on how much a gift should cost.

Is money an appropriate gift?

Money is the traditional gift in some cultures. Giving a gift certificate to their favourite store is a nice option if you are comfortable giving cash.

What if I did not receive a thank you note from the bride and groom?

While it is an awkward thing to do, the best move is by calling the bride and groom and asking if they have received your wedding gift. If the gift came from a store, call your contact salesperson and verify if your purchase was delivered on time and to the right recipients. Become concerned only if the thank you note does not arrive within three months after the wedding.