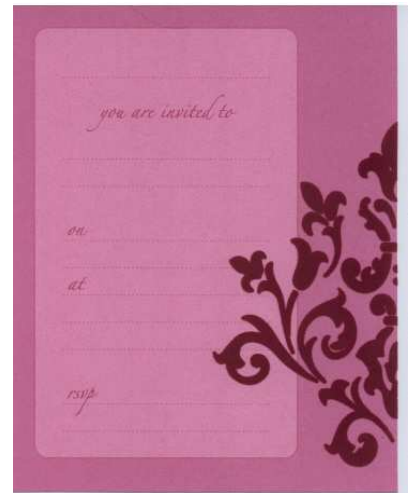


WHY YOU SHOULDN'T ASK TOO MANY PEOPLE

The disadvantages of having a large bridal entourage

Some brides dream of a huge wedding party. They think that with so many friends to help, wedding planning will be a breeze, the bridal shower and bachelor/bachelorette parties a blast and they won't offend that cousin or colleague who made them a bridesmaid.

But before you get on the telephone to ask everyone in your address book to play a part on your wedding day, think about the ramifications of having a small army at the altar with you.



- **More expensive** While most bridesmaids and groomsmen pay for their own attire, accommodation and airfare, the bride and groom's expenses for each attendant do add up.

As an appreciative couple, it is well-mannered to give thanks to friends with a token of ang pow and/or gift.

REMEMBER!

Ang pows should never be used as a crude form of paying for your friends' "services". But given to them with the best intention to return the blessing and support they gave you.

There may also be other expenses such as: wedding weekend activities, special accessories, and the cost of renting additional limousines and tuxedos.

- **Less personal** While some brides may really have 10 "Pal-ly Pal-ly" best-friends, the odds are most of you don't.

Thus, a big wedding party will invariably include people that you don't know as well or aren't as close to you. Some of the most amazing parts of planning a wedding are daydreaming with your closest friends, and that intimate conversation that can only happen in small groups of people who've known each other for a long time. Also, think about how you'd feel being asked to be one of three bridesmaids versus being asked to be one of ten. The first is far more meaningful.

- **Herding cats** Although everyone will try to render you help, at significant points, you'll be telling them where to stand, how to dress, and when to show up. With a large group of people, this can be a little like herding cats – unruly and frustrating.

The relaxed bride knows three magic words: Simplify, simplify, and simplify.

And **YES**, girls can be **CATTY**.

- **Expense to them** Keep in mind that you're asking these people to spend a considerable amount of money on that dress or tuxedo. Even if they don't feel very close to you, they may feel obliged to say yes. The gracious bride and groom will have to be mindful.

For those planning a themed wedding, alleviate your friend's expenses by offering to pay or find a shop which can offer huge discounts if you introduce all your helpers to buy from.

Although it was truly fun and beautiful, frankly my georgette and silk sarong kebaya and my husband's batik shirt hasn't seen day light since it made its debut at my friend's Peranakan themed wedding 6 years ago.

- **Logistical Co-ordination** How do you ensure helpers are fetched punctually between sites? Not all of them have their own transport and should you wed in the unearthly hours of the morning such as for traditional Teochew Brides, be considerate to those who live further away.

So, what's the minimum number of attendants you should have?

There is really no minimum number of bridesmaids and groomsmen you need, other than the nicety of having someone around to help you and give you moral support. You can have as few as you want.

Many brides these days have only one attendant, partially because they want to avoid being stranded in an awkward position of turning down other friends who earnestly volunteer themselves.

IT IS YOUR PREROGATIVE!

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