

Please Follow Me: Wedding Seating Etiquette 101

Take the guesswork out of seating at your wedding by making a plan. Guests will feel comfortable knowing where to sit once they arrive to share your special day. Creating an advanced seating plan will also help prevent sensitive seating encounters.

For Christian weddings, the bride's family sits on the left when facing the altar, the groom's family on the right. For Jewish ceremonies, the opposite is true.

The first four or five rows can be reserved for immediate and extended family, parents of any children in the wedding and special guests.

- Just before the ceremony starts the immediate family of the bride and groom are seated, beginning with the groom's family.
- The bride and groom's parents sit in the first row and grandparents and great-grandparents in the second.
- The bride's mother is the last person seated immediately after the groom's mother; an usher usually escorts both.

The ceremony officially begins when the bride's mother is seated.

- Siblings, not in the wedding are seated before the grandparents and great-grandparents in the first or second row.

Additional rows can be reserved for step-relatives who are seated before all birth relatives and directly behind the immediate family.

- Divorced parents of the bride or groom sit in the first and third row. The parent, who was the primary caregiver for the bride or groom sits in the first row accompanied by his or her spouse and the other parent and spouse will sit in the third row.
- Divorced parents can also sit together in the first row if they prefer.

Discuss this seating arrangement in advance.

Seat guests in wheelchairs or on crutches at the end of pews and elderly guests near the front.

