

Factors to consider before *including Fido in your wedding*

By METRO CREATIVE

Pets are full-fledged members of many families and even, apparently, families-to-be.

In its 2016 American Wedding Study, Brides magazine found that 8 percent of wedding ceremonies included pets. While the couples of yesteryear might have left Fido at home, many of today's couples want their four-legged friends to be there on their big day. Though no studies to date have examined which animals are most likely to make an appearance at couples' nuptials, it's fair to assume that dogs, which tend to get out of the house more than most other types of pets, are the most common furry bridesmaids, groomsmen or ring bearers.

Before including dogs in their wedding plans, couples may want to consider a few factors to ensure asking Fido to be there come the big day is what's best for couples, their guests and, of course, their beloved pooches.

Eligibility

Some venues do not allow pets that are not documented assistance

animals on the premises. Confirm a venue's pet policy before purchasing any wedding day attire for your dog. Couples who are intent on including their pets in their wedding ceremonies should only consider pet-friendly facilities, which may be hard to find. Couples who plan to take a limousine to and from their wedding also should confirm that the cars allow pets before booking.

Personality

No two dogs are the same. Some dogs might love people and attention, while others might prefer one-on-one time with their owners. Dogs that are sociable and unaggressive may make perfect additions to wedding ceremonies, while animals that exhibit anxiety around strangers or seem uncomfortable in noisy settings should be kept out of the ceremony.

Health

Dog owners also must consider their pets' health when deciding whether or not to include them in the wedding ceremony. Couples who bonded over a love of their dog may



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really hope to include their furry friend in the festivities, but should not do so at the expense of the animal's health. Outdoor wedding ceremonies under sunny skies may produce potentially unhealthy conditions for certain breeds or older dogs. Dogs that have difficulty getting around may need a red wagon (and attendant) to make the rounds at the wedding.

Assistance

Couples will be busy on their wedding days, so they may need to arrange for a caretaker to look after their dog during and after the ceremony. Asking a guest or guests to play this role may be asking too much, as guests will no doubt want to celebrate without having to take care of a dog. A professional pet sitter might work, but that can be costly, as couples must pay for the sitter and will likely need to pay for the sitter to have a seat and a meal during the reception.

Dogs can make great additions to weddings, but couples must consider a host of factors before deciding to have Fido join them as they tie the knot.

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