

# 'Plus one' weddings etiquette

Couples tying the knot typically want to share their excitement with as many friends and family members as possible. Preliminary wedding guest lists can be quite extensive, but many couples ultimately shorten such lists in adherence to their budgets.

One fuzzy area in regard to guest lists is whether or not to include a "plus one" on the invitation for single friends or family members. A "plus one" refers to single guests' dates. Party planners may extend the courtesy of giving single guests the choice of whether they would like to bring someone along to the event or attend solo. The rules concerning plus ones are flexible, and ultimately, it may be up to the couple to create their own plus-one rules. The following tips can help couples determine which way to go.

## Length of relationship

One way to set limits on plus ones is to look at invitees on a case-by-case basis. Think about unmarried guests and the type of relationship status they currently claim. For example, a cousin who has been dating someone for several months can be encouraged to invite this serious boyfriend/girlfriend.

Recently divorced or widowed guests may not feel comfortable bringing a date along, but because this person was in a committed relationship so long, it may be well worth the courtesy to allow these types of guests to bring someone along so they can feel more comfortable.

Etiquette experts at The Knot say that, whenever possible, all guests should be addressed by name on the invitation. Couples can ask single friends whether they plan to bring a date to the wedding and who their dates might be.

## Number of single friends

Another consideration is how many single people will be invited to the wedding. If it's a small number, a blanket plus-one rule can be established. However, if many guests are single, which tends to happen when young couples are getting married, the cost can be prohibitive. Single friends and family can be seated together so that they can converse and have fun.

## For the guests ...

It's important for people on the receiving end of a wedding invitation to understand



some key plus-one rules as well.

- If the invitation does not say "plus one" or "and guest," that means you have been invited alone. It is rude to bring a guest unexpectedly.
- Avoid asking to bring someone to the wedding if you were not originally given the option.
- If you were given plus-one status, be

sure to respond with your guest's name. If you can't confirm who you will be bringing or don't know if you will have a date for the evening, it is better to come alone.

- Don't use the plus one as a chance to bring a friend only for the free food and drinks.

Weddings can be complicated to plan, and negotiating plus ones for single guests is part of that planning.

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