

Unit 5

The Etiquette

at Wedding Ceremony

Part 1 Lead-in Exercises

Vocabulary building: Match the Chinese words on the left column with their appropriate English expression on the right.

- | | |
|---------|------------------------|
| 1. 婚誓 | A. Wedding ceremony |
| 2. 蜜月 | B. bride |
| 3. 伴郎 | C. Bridegroom or groom |
| 4. 牧师 | D. officiator |
| 5. 新娘 | E. pastor |
| 6. 结婚典礼 | F. groomsman |
| 7. 婚宴 | G. bridesmaid |
| 8. 伴娘 | H. honeymoon |
| 9. 主婚人 | I. Wedding reception |
| 10. 新郎 | J. vows |
-

Part 2 Wedding Etiquette

The wedding day is the bride and groom's special day. If each guest displays courtesy and thoughtfulness, the day will be a smooth and enjoyable experience for everyone in attendance. This unit will be about some basics of wedding guest etiquette that will help you to ensure that you don't inadvertently commit a faux pas or do anything mistaken at a loved one's wedding. Wedding processional and wedding customs will also be involved in the discussion.

Wedding Guest Etiquette

1. Responding Promptly

When a wedding guest receives the invitation, he or she should respond promptly. Because the couple will be making many decisions based on the number of people who will be there.

On the other hand, if you must cancel after you have accepted, inform the couple as soon as possible.

While it's considered very bad manners to respond after RSVP date, it's even worse to show up at the wedding after having not replied at all.

2. Be Punctual

Don't be late! You'd better arrive **15 minutes early so as to give yourself time to find a seat and get settled.**

If you are late and the processional or ceremony has already started, take your cue from the wedding coordinator or church coordinator. They will allow you to **enter when there is opportunity to do so. If the processional is in progress, don't interrupt. Instead, wait until the wedding party has entered, then **quietly slip in a side door and choose a seat in the back**. Do not enter down the center aisle unless there is no other option.**

3. Dress Appropriately

Women—find out what color the bridesmaids will be wearing, and choose something else. Don't compete with the wedding party for attention.

Never, ever wear a long white dress to someone else's wedding! It competes with the bride. Even if the bride will be wearing something other than white, it is still considered a bad taste for a guest to choose this color.

Men—Black Tie can be safe all the time.

4. Sending Gifts

The purpose of inviting guests is to have them witness a couple's marriage ceremony and vows. However, most guests attempt to give at least a token gift of their best wishes.

Whether it's a monetary gift or something else, you have up to a year from the wedding date to see that the bride and groom receive it.

Many guests choose to give monetary gifts to the Happy Couple on the day of the wedding; others choose to send gifts ahead of time or very soon after the wedding.

5. Being Polite at the Wedding Ceremony

- **Being considerate: Don't carry on a conversation with the person next to you while you are seated in church or crack jokes with the person across the pew.**

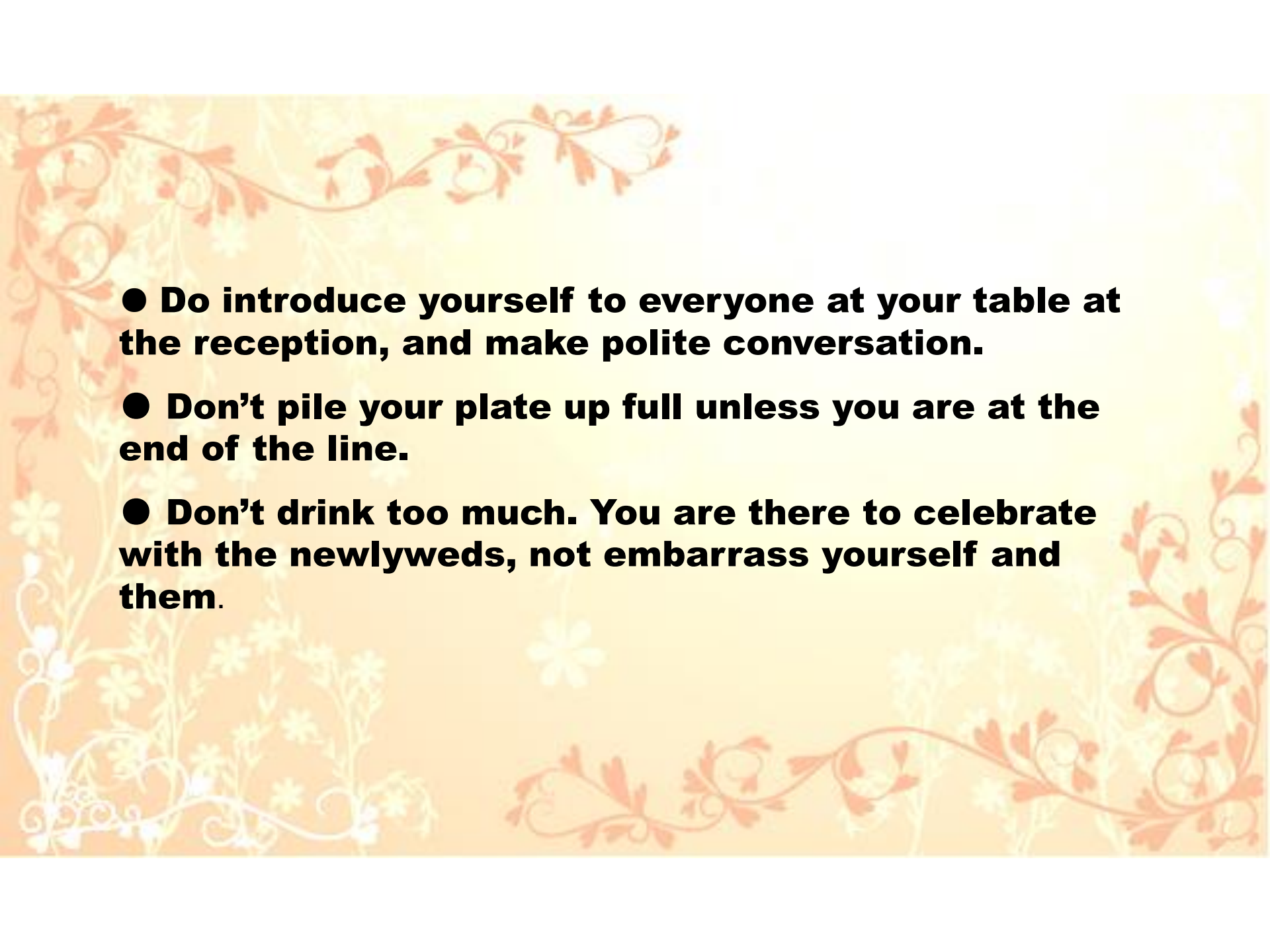
- **Taking pictures: Do not rise up frequently to take pictures during the ceremony. Many churches do not allow flash pictures and you may disturb the ceremony.**

- **Getting to know when to stand and sit: At most ceremonies, the guests stand when the bride enters. Remain standing until the officiator asks you to be seated. When the ceremony ends, remain in your seat until the mothers of the bride and groom have been escorted out. Allow family members of the bride and groom, who will be seated near the front, to exit first.**

● **It's considered poor wedding guest etiquette to call the bride or groom to ask if you can bring a guest. Don't bring anyone who is not included in the invitation letter.**

If, when you receive your invitation, the words “and guest” appear written next to your name on the envelope, you can feel free to invite a **date to escort you to the wedding. If the words “and guest” don't appear on your envelope, expect to attend this event alone.**

The only time it is assumed a significant other is invited is if one is married, or engaged.

- 
- **Do introduce yourself to everyone at your table at the reception, and make polite conversation.**
 - **Don't pile your plate up full unless you are at the end of the line.**
 - **Don't drink too much. You are there to celebrate with the newlyweds, not embarrass yourself and them.**



Wedding Processional

● The Mothers & Grandmothers

The **grandmothers of the groom** are seated—escorted by an usher and followed by their husbands.

The **grandmothers of the bride** are seated—escorted by an usher and followed by their husbands.

The **mother of the groom** is seated—escorted by an usher and followed by her husband.

The **mother of the bride** is seated—escorted by an usher and followed by her husband.

Who are ushers?

Ushers are usually the members of the wedding family if possible—sons, grandsons, etc. Sometimes the mother of the bride is escorted by the best man.

Attention: the seating of the bride's mother signals that the ceremony is starting. At this point, the ushers may roll out an aisle runner(红地毯).



● **The Officiator & Groom**

The officiator and groom enter after the bride's mother is seated, walking in from the side and stand at the front facing the guests. Traditionally, the groom stands on the right side of the aisle.

● The Attendants

The **ushers/groomsmen** walk down the aisle first in pairs or alone. And the best man stands to the bridegroom's left.

The **bridesmaids** follow either walking in pairs or alone.

Finally the **maid or matron of honor** enter. If there are both, the matron of honor goes first and then the maid of honor—so that the maid of honor stands closest to the bride.





At the front of the church, the attendants should line up with the **men on the right and the **women on the left** and the tallest to shortest with the shortest being farthest from the bride and groom.**

● The Flower Girl & Ring Bearer



If there are one flower girl and one ring bearer, they could always walk together. Another nice alternative is to have two flower girls and one ring bearer. The flower girl typically takes her place on the left side of the church next to the maid of honor. The ring bearer typically takes his place on the right side of the church next to the best man.

● The Bride



Finally, the time has come...cue the music—"Here Comes the Bride" ! At this point **everyone present should stand and turn to watch the bride and father walk down the aisle.**



In Christian ceremonies the bride should walk on her father's left, when she reaches the groom's side, her father lets go of her arm and gives her hand to the groom. The congregation remains standing until the father sits down.



Wedding Customs and Traditions

Everything in the wedding from veil, flowers, and old shoes, to the bridesmaids and processional, at one time, bore a very specific and vitally significant meaning. Today, although the original substance is often lost, the old world customs are incorporated into the weddings because they are traditional and ritualistic.

Why Does the Bride Wear a Veil?



The bride's **veil** and **bouquet** are of greater antiquity than her **white wedding dress**.

The Color of Veil

The bride's veil is usually white. But it was **yellow** in ancient Greece and **red** in ancient Rome. The veil usually shrouded the bride from head to toe.



The Denotation of Veil

The veil denoted the subordination of a woman to a man since the earliest of times. The thicker the veil, the more traditional the implication of wearing it.

The lifting of the veil at the end of the ceremony symbolizes male dominance. If the bride takes the initiative in lifting it, thereby presenting herself to him, she is showing more independence.



The Origin of Veil

Story 1

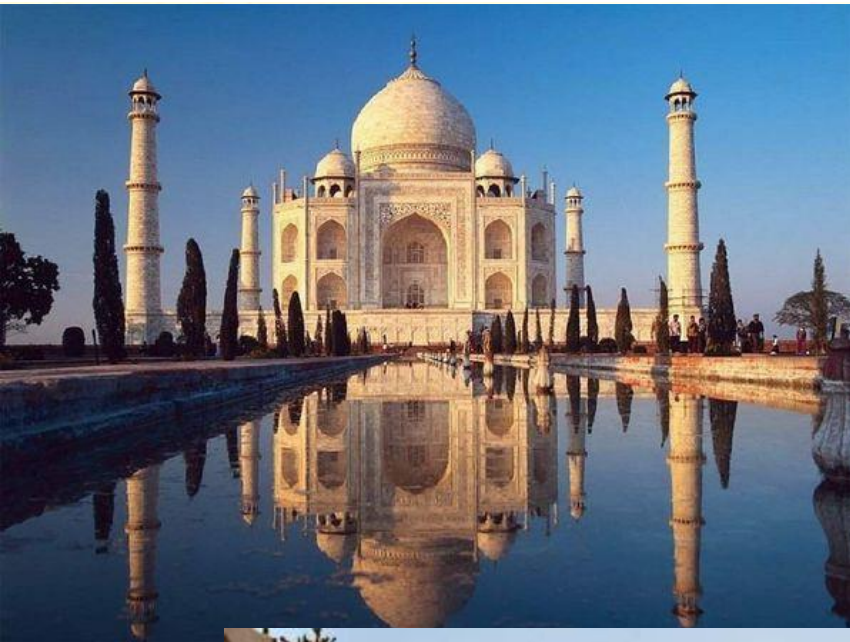
In the old days of marriage by purchase, the couple rarely saw each other at all. There was no time for the bridegroom to refuse to marry the bride after he lifted the veil, even if he found he didn't like the bride at that moment.

Story 2

According to tradition, it is considered bad luck for the bride to be seen by the groom before the ceremony.

Story 3

The veil was to protect the bride from being hurt by the wicked ghosts wandering in the sky.



Why the Honeymoon?



Story 1

In ancient times, many of the first marriages were by capture, not choice. When early man felt it was time to take a bride, he would often carry off an unwilling woman to a secret place where her relatives wouldn't find them. While the moon went through all its phases, they hid from the searchers and drank a brew made from honey. Hence, we get the word, honeymoon.

Story 2

According to the custom of ancient Teutons in Northern Europe, the newlyweds should drink brew or wine made from honey for the first month after their wedding and travel in some scenic places to represent the beginning of their happy marriage life.

Why Does the Bride Wear White?



The color white has been a symbol of joyous celebration since early Roman times. At the beginning to the twenties century, white stood for purity as well. Today, it holds its original meaning of happiness and joy.

Why Does the Bride Carry Flowers?

For centuries, flowers have stood for a variety of emotions and values. The bouquet not only brings beauty and elegance but also the old customs to the special day.



Roses for love



Lilies for virtue



**Ivy for never-ending love—
Greek brides**



Orange blossoms were chosen by Spaniards to represent happiness and fulfillment, because the orange tree flowers and bears fruit at the same time.



Why the Third Finger, Left-hand?

In ancient time, it was believed there was a vein in the third finger of the left hand that ran directly to the heart. Thus, the ring being placed on that finger denoted the strong connection of a heartfelt love and commitment to one another. Although during times of modern autopsy (人体解剖), this long held belief was found not be so, the tradition continued to this day.



Why a Wedding Ring?

The circular shape of the wedding ring has symbolized undying, unending love since the days of the early Egyptians. A primitive bride wore a ring of hemp (纤维) or rushes (灯芯草).



Something old, Something new, Something borrowed, Something blue.

The original saying dates back to the Victoria times and states, “Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue and a silver sixpence in your shoe.”

Something old

The bride usually wears the veil or the wedding dress worn by her mother to show her memories of her parents and her gratitude for their upbringings.

Something new

Since wedding day is usually taken as a turning point in one's life, a new thing worn by the bride symbolizes the beginning of brand new life.

Something borrowed

In the past, the bride often borrowed the handkerchief from one of her friends or relatives, who had to be a married happy wife. The borrowed object acts as a kind of wish for the happy marriage life.

Something blue

“Blue” means unpleasant and sorrow in English. The blue thing brought by the bride is to represent that there will be some ups and downs in one’s marriage.

Sixpence in the bride’s left shoe symbolized the fortune in the past.



Thank you!