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HOW TO MANAGE YOUR Groom

By Rachel Anderson • Photography by Sam Lim Studio

Napkins, flowers, seating arrangements, photographer, color scheme...with all these endless details of the wedding, who has time to worry about the groom?!

When planning your wedding, the last thing you want to think about is how to get your man to change his behavior. "Grooms exhibit a wide variety of attitudes toward the wedding planning stages, ranging from overpowering to total disinterest" said event planner Ngoc Nguyen, of Skybox Event Productions. "Apathy is the number one groom attitude type that brides have to deal with. And this is because tradition tells the couple that the groom shouldn't do anything, and the bride needs to get all the work done" Nguyen said.

But nowadays, grooms are becoming a much larger part of the wedding planning process. And with these new groom responsibilities, new groom attitudes have also begun to surface. These new attitudes are often much more unmanageable than they are helpful. Here are several ways your groom might react to the planning, and some tips on how you can manage them:

THE "ALWAYS ON THE GO" GROOM

Yes, he has other plans...again. It doesn't seem like you can get him to sit down and talk to you about the wedding. His schedule is really busy, but yours is too!

What to do?

Sit down with your groom, open up both your schedules, and plan out meetings together. He may not need to go with you to all of them, so choose ones where he'll feel his opinions really matter and would make a difference. Most grooms are happy to attend meetings and give input when it comes to the DJ, photographer, bakery and the meal tasting.

THE "WAKE ME WHEN YOU'RE DONE" GROOM

If it were up to him, he'd hit the snooze button every time you started talking about the wedding. It's not that he doesn't care, but he just doesn't feel the need to be involved. You, on the other hand, would definitely like to hear his opinions.

What to do?

Talk to your groom about why he isn't involved in the planning process. Does he feel that you are taking over and he doesn't want to step on any toes? Is there something else going on in his life that is stressing him out more than the wedding?

Start communicating with him to find out where he stands on the issue. Then let him know that his opinions are important to you, and that you'd like to plan your wedding as a team. You can start off easy by giving him a task he would be excited about, such as choosing hors d'oeuvres or beverages for the reception.

THE "ONE, NOT-SO-BRIGHT, IDEA" GROOM

He's giving you input! That's normally great. But this time, his one "big" idea, is a flop.

What to do?

A former bride, Erin, experienced this exact thing with her groom, Kyle, when he suggested they enter their wedding reception riding on a tractor. "I love that he's thinking outside the box, but riding in on a roaring tractor isn't exactly how I pictured the first time we're announced as husband and wife," Erin said. "I didn't want to shut him down either,



Preparing for the big day is just as important for your groom, so be sure to keep the lines of communication open.

but he has to be realistic. We started talking about it, and though the issue is not resolved yet, the channels of communication are open, and we're listening to each other and trying to come up with something we both want."

THE "THE FAMILY FROM HELL" GROOM

It's like the movie *Monster-in-Law*, except now, instead of Jennifer Lopez, it's you. And instead of just Jane Fonda, it could be any, or all, of his family. You feel completely overwhelmed and overpowered by their demands, and may develop the occasional urge to take out your anger with a baseball bat.

What to do?

In this sticky situation, delicate handling is the key to avoiding awkwardness and unnecessary drama. Have the groom talk to his family and address the issue without getting the bride involved. Or let his family know how much you appreciate their opinions and assistance, but give them a friendly reminder that it is your wedding day.

If you have a wedding coordinator, you may want to ask her to help make sure you get the wedding of YOUR dreams. You can also let his family know that the coordinator advised doing things a certain way to ensure a better outcome on the wedding day. This may help to alleviate any hurt feelings since the advice is coming from a neutral party.

THE "PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE" GROOM

He says he doesn't care, so you make decisions. It's only later, after you've pondered and debated each choice, that he tells you he has something else in mind. And that doesn't happen just once...or twice...

What to do?

By using non-threatening statements like "I feel," your groom will be more susceptible to hearing you out. Talk to your fiancé about how you are feeling. It might just be that he doesn't understand how important his opinion or feedback is to you. Also, you may want to talk about the pros and cons of each task while writing it down on paper. That way, you can come up with decisions that will make both of you happy.

THE "GROOMZILLA"

It's his way, or the highway. The male counterpart of a Bridezilla, this is a groom who is out of control. He is a perfectionist, and throws tantrums when he doesn't get his way. No one (not even you!) can get a word in because this is his one-man show, and he's the acrobat, lion tamer, and ring-master.

What to do?

"Be honest with him about how you feel and that you're grateful he wants to be involved," Nguyen said. "Then set boundaries for how much work each of you will do for the wedding planning."

The planning process could get really stressful and sometimes it takes on a life of its own. So by dividing tasks and checking in with one another, you can help keep each other grounded.

THE "PERFECT" GROOM

Occasionally, a bride may be blessed with The "Perfect" Groom. He listens to your never-ending ramblings about all things wedding, is never overbearing with his own demands, and holds your hand through all the meltdowns over venues, linen colors, and invitation designs. What do you do now? Find your fiancé, give him a huge hug and kiss, say thank you, and tell him how wonderful he is.

No matter what type of groom you have, heed these little bits of advice, take a deep breath, and finish planning the best day of your life alongside the man who will be there with you for your

"happily ever after."

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