

Popular And Lasting Wedding Traditions

Weddings are steeped in tradition. Some of those traditions may be exclusive to particular families, but many others are embraced by families of various backgrounds.

Couples needn't feel beholden to popular wedding traditions, but some may feel that these customs make their weddings more fun and serve as a great way to connect their ceremonies with those of their parents, grandparents and possibly even their ancestors.

Old, new, borrowed, blue

The rhyme "something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue" is likely familiar to people about to get married. This traditional rhyme has existed for centuries and refers to items a bride should wear and keep with her on her wedding day. The old alludes to a bride's past, the new refers to her future, the borrowed is intended to be something borrowed from a married couple or bride, and the blue is a symbol of purity, love and fidelity. These items are traditionally given to the bride-to-be by family members or female friends who are already married.

Bridal veil

It's now up to brides if they want to wear a veil on their wedding day, but it was once a tradition all brides adhered to. Some trace the tradition back to ancient Greece, while others suggest the tradition began in the days of the Roman Empire. Veils were believed to shield brides from evil spirits on her wedding day, thus paving the way for a healthy and happy future. Many brides still wear veils today, though likely due more to their aesthetic appeal than out of a belief that the veil will ward off evil spirits. Some brides still use veils to cover their face as they walk up the aisle, while others flip the veil over their heads.



Gifting knives

Perhaps one of the lesser known superstitions surrounding weddings, giving knives as a wedding gift is a no-no for some people. The origins of this superstition are uncertain, but people who abide by this tradition feel that knives are symbolic of a broken relationship. That would likely come as a surprise to the many engaged couples who have a set of knives on their wedding registries.

Carrying the bride over the threshold

Historians trace this tradition, which Hollywood has undoubtedly helped to keep alive, all the way back to medieval Europe. Also inspired by a bride's perceived vulnerability to evil spirits, the tradition of a groom carrying his bride over the threshold into their new home was believed to keep the spirits from entering the home through the soles of the bride's feet.

Breaking glass

Couples break glass for different reasons on their wedding days. Within the Jewish faith, one member of the couple will stomp on a carefully wrapped glass to serve as a reminder of the destruction of the Jewish temples and to inspire reflection among those in attendance. Italian newlyweds also may smash glass, but they'll do it with a little more gusto. Local tradition in Italy dictated that, at the end of the wedding, the newly married couple would smash a wine glass. Folklore suggests that the number of pieces the glass breaks into indicates how many years the couple will stay together.

Tradition is part and parcel of many weddings. Some traditions are more solemn than others, but all can add something meaningful, dramatic and even a little fun to the ceremony.

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