

Most grooms will choose a best man (or woman) from their family or ask a close friend to support them in the run up to their wedding day and on the day itself.

With a little advance planning, a "best man" can help the day run like clockwork.

Groomsmen and a best man laughing with the groom outside the church

You might feel a great sense of honour and pride if you have been chosen for this role. Sometimes a best man can be a young child, such as the groom's son or a younger brother, with an adult supporting them with the duties, or, the groom may choose to have a "best woman". There are no set rules!

Traditionally, a best man/woman may have the duties of:

- Attending the wedding rehearsal at the church so you know where to stand and what to do during the service.
- Supporting the groom on the wedding day, helping to ensure he gets to church on time – arriving 15 minutes early is a good rule of thumb.
- Liaising with the ushers to help the day run as smoothly as possible and help sort out any practical problems.
- Looking after the rings for the wedding ceremony.
- Signing the paperwork if you are also being a witness.
- Making a speech at the wedding reception.
- Making the speech at the reception can often be the most nerve-wracking prospect of the wedding, but there's lots of advice and examples of good speeches on the internet. Rehearsal is key, so prepare well in advance to give you confidence.

For the ceremony, the biggest responsibility is looking after the rings. In a church service there will be a moment when you will be asked to step forward and hand them to the vicar, usually placing them on a book. Make sure you know how the rings are being presented, especially if a younger child is involved.

Plan in advance how you'll care for the rings and how you'll remind yourself to take them with you to the church.

Check ahead on the day whether there are any roadworks or other possible obstacles that could delay your journey to the church.

If you have a mobile phone, fully-charge it and keep it handy in case of problems, but make sure it's switched off when the ceremony starts.

You might even have additional things to do during the service, like reading from the Bible, or being involved in the prayers. The wedding rehearsal is a great time to make sure you're clear on what happens during the service and ask questions if you need to.

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The groom greets the ushers outside church

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The bride and groom standing in front of the altar holding hands

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