



Seating Tips + Guidelines

Seating Q&A

Should I have assigned seating?

Let me be clear, we believe in assigning tables, not seats. It is EXTREMELY important to have assigned tables at your reception. Here is an excerpt from TheKnot.com:

“Even though you may have a buffet-style, you're still serving a meal -- as opposed to cocktails and hors d'oeuvres or punch and cake -- so formal seating arrangements make sense. Guests do appreciate the time and effort you put into seating them at specific tables, and seating arrangements lend a sense of organization to your wedding reception. If a wedding meal is involved, guests like to have some direction. The only exception? If your reception is very casual. If you're doing a down-home, informal country barbecue -- and if there are 50 or fewer guests -- feel free to let everyone sit where they want.”

Benefits of assigned seating:

- 1. Ensure that your guests feel comfortable.** If you make a seating chart, one of the most important aspects (and maybe the hardest) is sitting the right guests with each other. This will help dinnertime conversation flow and keep your guests entertained. You should make sure people who know each other are seated near one another. If one of your guests doesn't know anyone at the wedding, find them a seat near people with similar interests.
- 2. No empty tables!** A seating chart guarantees that all your guests have places to sit and you don't have gaping holes (ie one table with three people and one with 12).
- 3. Smooth sailing.** It will be a comfort to your guests to know exactly where they are sitting, especially if they came by themselves or don't know very many people. A seating chart gives them a sense of place and some new insta-friends!
- 4. Set the right vibe.** Having assigned seats will automatically set a more organized and wonderful tone for your wedding. You've spent months (or years!) planning this event, a seating chart is a sure way to show your guests how much thought you've put into every detail, including their comfort.
- 5. Keep your wedding drama free!** You know your Uncle Burt hasn't spoken to Aunt Maggie in 10 years and that your step-mom can't be anywhere near your mother, a seating chart allows you to keep these feuds from erupting on your special day by sitting the possible troublemakers FAR apart from each other.

Should I have seating for all my guests?

The answer is, a resounding YES! Here are the reasons why:

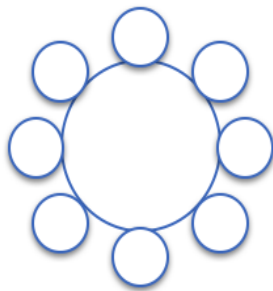
1. Most people like to sit down to eat especially if they are also holding a beverage. If you add into the mix trying to shake hands it can become particularly complex
2. Some guests may think that not having seating for everyone is an oversight by the wedding planner, the venue or the couple rather than planned. They may also wonder if there aren't enough seats, will there be enough food provided.

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3. Standing guests talk very loudly and do not pay attention through the dances to the point that the DJ politely asked for everyone's attention before the cake cutting because the couple was so upset that the guests were not focused on the wedding activities.
 4. While you might think that the young people would be less likely to sit and the older people more likely to sit, this isn't always the case and its very hard to control who gets a seat and who doesn't. It is extremely awkward to have to ask guests to give up their seat if you think someone else needs it more.
 5. Guests complain and leave when there aren't enough seats.

Seating Guidelines

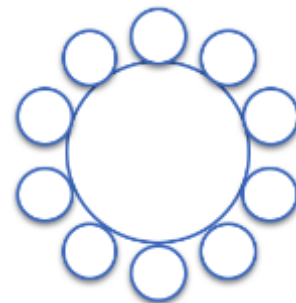
60" Round fits 8 people comfortably

Fewest people that can fit - 6
Most people that can fit - 8



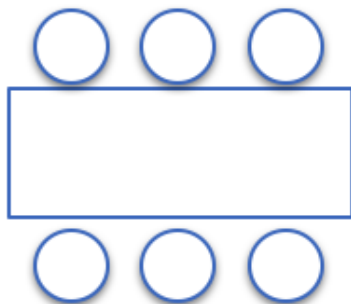
66" or 72" Round fits 10 people comfortably

Fewest people that can fit - 8
Most people that can fit - 10



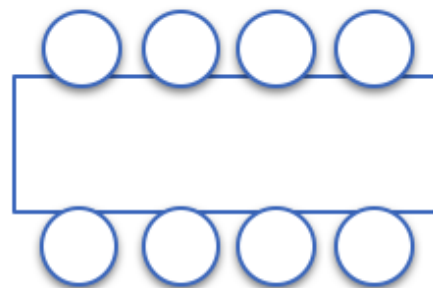
6 Foot Banquet can fit 6 people comfortably

Fewest people that can fit - 6
Most people that can fit - 6 (unless you are able to cap the ends, in which case you can fit 8)



8 Foot Banquet can fit 8 people comfortably

Fewest people that can fit - 8
Most people that can fit - 8 (unless you are able to cap the ends, in which case you can fit 10)



Escort Cards vs. Place Cards

Escort Cards assign the guests a table and should be placed near the entrance of the reception location and put them in alphabetical order according to the last name of the guest. On the front of the card, it will have the guests name and the table number they have been assigned to. If you are having a buffet, you can have an escort card per couple or family. However, if you are planning on having a plated meal, you will need 1 card per person and each card will have a symbol/code letting the banquet staff know what that guest selected as their entree. Place Cards assign the guests a specific seat. You will never want to ONLY have place cards because it will be hard for your guests to figure out where they are supposed to sit. It isn't necessary to have place cards, it is only necessary to have escort cards.

Assigning Seats vs. Assigning Tables

For most weddings, assigning your guests to tables, but not to specific seats at those tables is ideal. In that case, you will only need escort cards and are to be placed at the entrance of the reception location. If you want to assign seats, you're going to need both escort cards and place cards. If you are planning on having a buffet, another option other than escort cards is to have a printer create a large board with the guest list in alphabetical order according to the last name of the guest with their assigned table number next to their name. The key is to make sure not to separate the guests by table. If you are having a plated meal, it is imperative that each person have an escort card and not use the list idea.

Seating Tips

Here are tips on creating a seating chart:

- ~This can be tricky business, be sure to tread carefully!
- ~Think about personalities. The most important thing about making a seating chart is to consider each guests interests and seat them accordingly.
- ~Seat close family near the head table. Parents, grandparents and siblings should all be seated the closest to the head table.
- ~Don't have a singles table! This is an easy mistake to make, but it's best to avoid sitting all the singles at one table. Varying the tables with couples and singles will make the experience richer (but be sure not to seat one single with a table of couples!).
- ~Create table groups. It's ok if friends aren't seated right next to each other or at the same table, sit them at tables close to each other and you will encourage mingling before and after dinner.
- ~Every guest should know someone. Each person at the table should know at least one other person at the table.
- ~Assign tables instead of seats. If you want to save yourself some time and effort, you could always assign tables to your guests and let them choose their own seats.

Tackling your wedding seating chart is no small task – but this tutorial will make it easier!

SUPPLIES YOU WILL NEED:

- Your guest list
- Your reception table layout
- Poster board (or two or three... depending on how large your wedding is)
- Re-positionable page markers from Post-It
- A few markers

Step 1. Draw your tables on the poster board

Step 2. Label your tables either by table number or by table name

Step 3. Write each of the guests name on a Post-It note. You may want to have different color Post-It notes for different groups/categories. Once you have that, you can start placing the guests at the appropriate table. If you want to move people around, it will be easy to do so using this method.
