

If you're invited to a same-sex wedding or civil union ceremony and have not previously attended one, it's natural to wonder what is expected of guests.□

The answer is simple: Guest etiquette is the same as for a traditional wedding celebration. □

The following points address some concerns, but common sense is always the best guide:



Reply to the invitation as soon as possible. If you must regret, there's no need for excuses.

- Whether you can attend or not, the invitation obliges you to send a wedding gift.
- When choosing attire, be guided by the time of the ceremony and the nature of the invitation (formal, informal, or casual).
- Follow the order of the service in the ceremony program if one is provided. Otherwise, the ceremony and reception will be similar to other weddings you've attended.
- Go through the receiving line if there is one. All the traditional expressions of congratulations are appropriate. If there isn't a receiving line, be sure to extend best wishes to the couple and their families at some point during the party.
- The biggest rule at any wedding is to keep the focus on the happy couple. Refrain from asking too many questions that could be perceived as negative and keep any critical thoughts to yourself. This isn't hard if guests bear in mind that the ceremony, while it may not be legally sanctioned everywhere, honors the lifetime commitment of two people in love.
- Have a great time!