

It had long been considered a breach of etiquette for the bride's family members to host showers.

Why? Because the main point of a shower is to give gifts to the bride and it could seem as if her family were *asking* for gifts. Today, while it's still a faux pas for an engaged couple to throw their own shower, pretty much anyone else can host one. Family members frequently step in to host showers, especially when common sense dictates such a solution. For example, the bride may be visiting her future in-laws and the groom's mother or sister wants to invite hometown friends and family to meet her. Or, the bridal party is spread around the country and it's difficult to pinpoint a common geographic location to gather and celebrate. Sometimes several of the bride's friends or relatives may host the shower together—sharing the expenses and the organizing. Let individual circumstances be your guide when determining who should serve as host.

When is a shower held?



The ideal timing is two months to two weeks before the wedding—after the couple has firm wedding plans.

Must the bridesmaids host a shower?

Contrary to popular belief, the maid/matron of honor and the bridesmaids are *not* required to host a shower as part of their official responsibilities, though they certainly can if they want to.

Are shower guests wedding guests?

Yes, normally anyone invited to a shower would be invited to the wedding. One exception: when coworkers wish to throw an office shower for the bride even though they are not being invited to the wedding.

How many showers can be given?

Who Can Host a Shower?

Multiple showers are okay, but be sure to invite different guests to each party. Generally, only close family and members of the wedding party may be invited to more than one shower.

As an attendant, I've been invited to more than one shower. Do I have to bring a gift to each one?

As a guest, if you're invited to more than one shower, you only need to bring a gift to the first one—and that goes for members of the wedding party, too. If you don't want to come to the second party empty-handed, you can always bring something inexpensive, such as a small bouquet, chocolates, or even some homemade goodies. Brides: if you have a guest in this position, it's nice to make a mention of their previous gift.

How many people can be invited?

It's up to the host to decide the number of guests. A shower should be an intimate party—not a gathering that rivals the wedding—so the guest list is usually made up of the couple's close friends, family, and attendants. The host usually consults the bride to be sure that shower guests are wedding guests.

What about couples' showers?

Showers for both the bride and the groom—called "Jack and Jill" showers—are popular these days, and showers for the groom only are a recent phenomenon. Couples' showers can be themed: examples include room of the house, hour of the day, gourmet cook, and great outdoors showers.

Can the host include registry information in the shower invitation?

Yes, it is fine for the hostess to include gift registry information *with* (but not *on*) the invitation. A registry list is just a suggestion; it's important to remember that the choice of a gift is always up to the giver.

Can an encore bride have a wedding shower?

Yes. If the bride has been married before, she may be given a shower. Other than close friends and relatives, the guest list generally does not include people who came to a shower for her first wedding. If friends plan to invite people who have already "showered" the honoree, then a luncheon, tea, or cocktail party—without gifts—is a better way to go.

Showers for same-sex couples.

The choice of whether to have a shower is up to the couple. The guidelines are the same, regardless of the sex of the couple.

