

**Between throwing down for wedding gifts and chipping in on expenses for showers and other parties, people near and dear to the bride and groom can end up spending quite a bit in the name of the couple's lifelong happiness.**

That's why I love showers that focus on gifts that don't require a huge bank account. In fact, these types of showers often inspire greater thought - and more interesting results - than simply picking something out of a registry. Here are some terrific ideas for low-cost shower themes.

### **Stock the bar:**



Best served as a cocktail party. Gifts might be bottles of wines, liquors or liqueurs, wine or cocktail glasses, tumblers, mixers, swizzle sticks, coasters, bar equipment, bar towels, or cocktail napkins.

### **Recipes:**

Send note cards or matching paper with the invitations, asking everyone to write down their favorite recipe for the couple. These can be put into a recipe box or a photo album for the couple to use. A nice touch is to have everyone explain why the recipe is their favorite (their grandmother's apple pie; the easiest dinner ever; the pancake batter recipe they made up themselves).

### **Labor of love:**

Guests are asked to pledge a service to the couple. Promises might be for an afternoon of gardening, baking them cookies, or washing their car.

### **Handmade:**

This shower has a very personal touch, while also helping to keep gift budgets low. Gifts can be anything, so long as they are handmade - by you, not a master wood carver.

### Sage advice:

Guests are asked to write out a piece of marriage advice. My advice: As with the recipes, send out standard-sized note cards or paper that can be collected to make a book or mounted in a photo album. Words of wisdom might range from sage to sassy, including maxims like "Never go to bed angry" or "Remember: she's always right."

### Memories:

Write a favorite memory you have of the bride. At the end, the bride will have a beautiful collection of favorite memories from her friends and family. Examples might include the first time you met her, the moment you knew you'd be friends for life, or the day she told you she got engaged.

From [\*Emily Post's Wedding Parties: Smart Ideas for Stylish Parties, from Engagement to Reception and Everything in Between\*](#) by Anna Post