

DO'S

>> DO RSVP ON TIME. There's nothing more stressful than having 75 guests who disappear off the face of the Earth when their RSVPs are due. A wedding consists of many moving parts and pieces, most of which depend on a head-count. Don't make the bride or groom hunt you down. Pay attention to the deadline on the invitation. In fact, if you know your reply, pop it in the mail as soon as possible.

>> BRING A FUN PLUS ONE. If you've been invited to bring a guest, then bring somebody who is going to add to the atmosphere and enjoy themselves. Also bring someone who will be able to control themselves around the bar.

>> MAKE DIET RESTRICTIONS KNOWN EARLY. Most caterers are happy to accommodate restrictions. It's up to you to contact the couple and let them know if you have a severe allergy to nuts or shellfish. Sometimes an RSVP card, in addition to listing meal options, will include a space for you to write in any allergies or restrictions you might have.

>> BUY A WEDDING GIFT EARLY. And stick to the registry. Most couples spend time choosing the items because they're something they plan on actually using, said Carley Roney of The Knot. To make your gift seem more personal, buy it early, when there's more to choose from. Otherwise, you might end up having to spring for the salad spinner, dish towel and mixing bowl combo.

>> SEND A POLITE GIFT IF YOU'RE INVITED. If you can't attend, you should still send a gift, and stick to the registry. Etiquette dictates that if you were invited, you owe the couple a gift, even if you can't make it to the wedding. "People lose friends over this," said Anna Post, who hails from the etiquette empire that bears her great-great-grandmother's name, the Emily Post Institute. "I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't remind people to take care of this: One invitation to a wedding ceremony equals a wedding gift."

>> BE ON TIME. Weddings tend to run late, but that doesn't mean you should. Plan to be 20 to 30 minutes early, said Azure Nelson of OneWed.com. Ideally, you should arrive at the ceremony site 30 minutes before the time printed on the invite.

{HOW TO BE THE} ULTIMATE WEDDING GUEST



Within the last week, we attended our second wedding and received an invitation to the third of four possible weddings for 2015.

I would have thought I had aged out of weddings by now, but the reality is many of us are getting married a bit older than the previous norm, and I'm getting close to the age where second weddings are imminent, as well.

When I was younger, I loved weddings — getting dressed up, free drinks all night and 100 percent chance of dancing.

Then, once I was engaged, I loved sharing in the sappiness of the day and began identifying details I'd either steal or be sure to avoid for my own wedding.

Sidebar: Weddings are a different world now. I planned mine with the aid of wedding-centric blogs, but before Pinterest. The two weddings I attended within the last month were two of the most beautiful I've witnessed.

After you go to enough, however, sometimes we groan about weddings. The effort, the time, the shoes.

But weddings still can be a blast, so long as you do them right.



SARA BOZICH
OUT WITH SARA

First things first: The invitation

Mail your response back as soon as you can, and be realistic. I was shocked how many relatives quickly said "no" to my wedding, but travel is tough, and if it's not in your budget, it's OK to reply "regrets." Better now than a week before the wedding when your meal is already paid for, and your seat has already been carefully selected.

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DONT'S

>> DON'T ASSUME YOU CAN BRING A DATE. Unless it says "and guest" on the invitation, only you should be attending. And don't ask the bride if you can bring a date. "It is just beyond not OK," said Anna Post, who hails from the etiquette empire that bears her great-great-grandmother's name, the Emily Post Institute. She added that it's one of the top 10 complaints she gets from couples. The only exceptions, Post said, are if you're married, engaged or cohabitating. In that case, modern day etiquette says the bride should have included your other in the first place, and you can very diplomatically and politely broach the conversation with her.

>> DON'T ASSUME KIDS ARE WELCOME. Because it's considered bad etiquette, a couple usually won't write "adults only" but it's up to you to interpret the wording on the envelope. If it's addressed to "The Doe Family" on the outside, or if the names of you and your children are listed on the inner envelope, you are free to bring them. If not, hire a babysitter. "People think, 'Oh this wedding would be a great chance for everyone to meet my new baby! Or to see my kids! No, just don't bring an uninvited child,'" Sharon Naylor, who has written more than 35 books about weddings, told Huffington Post.

>> DON'T BRING A LARGE GIFT TO THE WEDDING. The bride and groom — and their families — will have plenty to worry about without having a security detail on the presents. They also will have enough to pack up at the end of the night without having to figure out how to fit a giant clothes hamper or large set of dishes into the car. Save them the trouble by shipping yours directly to their home.

>> DON'T FORGET TO TURN OFF YOUR PHONE. And don't play with your phone. Don't make calls or text. If you really must make an important call, then excuse yourself and go and do it discreetly.

>> DON'T JUST SHOW UP FOR THE RECEPTION IF YOU WERE INVITED TO THE CEREMONY. "The ceremony is the most important part," Naylor said, adding that guests should make all efforts to attend. The couple invited you because they want to share the experience with you. Even when the invitation bears those three little words, "full Catholic Mass," it's in poor taste to show up to the open bar without first attending the main event.

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Train's lead singer offers look into life on the road

BY JEWEL WICKER
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Pat Monahan has no idea what "freeze-dried romance" means, a lyric from his band, Train's, most popular song, "Drops of Jupiter."

He also has no idea what the Foo Fighters are up to these days.

The Erie native will perform with his band, Train, tonight at Hersheypark Stadium. The Fray and Matt Nathanson will join the band as supporting acts for the show, which is part of their summer tour to showcase their 2014 album, "Bullet-proof Picasso." Monahan dishes on

SEE THEM TONIGHT

» Details: 7 tonight at Hersheypark Stadium, 100 W. Hersheypark Drive, Hershey. Cost: \$29.50, \$49.50, \$59.50, \$79.50. hersheyentertainment.com; 717-534-3911.

past Hershey performances, as well as what it's like on tour.

On performing in Hershey

"The [second] time we played the outdoor venue there in Hershey, we all went over and got our Hershey on. We did all of the chocolate runs, and we got on all of the rides and really had an awesome time," he said. "The first time we went

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Your family vacation road trip: 1979 vs. 2015

My family is taking a long road trip this summer.

We're driving from Pennsylvania to Florida — three kids, one minivan and 1,000 miles of (practically) straight-through travel. We'll make a few pit stops for grub and bathroom breaks, but otherwise, it's pedal to the metal until we see palm trees and giant mouse ears.

The last time I made this vacation trek was 1979. On that trip, my sister and I were the kids, my dad was at the helm of the station wagon, and my mother was chief sandwich packer and radio DJ.

This time around, I'm the mom, and, yes, I'll pack a few snack bags. But that's where the similarities end.

Tell me whether your 1970s family road trip memories are the same as mine.



JOSETTE PLANK

In 1979, your family car was a station wagon. Your dad strapped bags to the roof rack so you and your siblings could fold down the back seats and sleep fully-reclined in the car. Maybe you even brought your pillows and sleeping bags. Seat belts? What seat belts?

In 2015, your family car is a minivan or SUV. The seats go back a bit, but not much. One hundred miles into the trip, your kids start crying because they've lost

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PAT MONAHAN OF TRAIN
NICK WASS, Invision