

right on time

ORCHESTRATING A WEDDING DAY THAT RUNS SEAMLESSLY AND SMOOTHLY IS EVERY BRIDE'S DREAM. IF A WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR OR EXPERT IS ON HAND THIS WILL BE A GIVEN. IF A BRIDE HAS NEVER HAD TO PLAN A BIG EVENT BEFORE IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHERE TO START.

While certain etiquette rules have been set in stone, these are often not practical, or outdated for a less formal, modern wedding. Something to consider—don't sacrifice the flow of the day to accommodate every speech and toast that old-fashioned custom demands, unless of course it is a pet priority.

According to *VOGUE'S BOOK OF ETIQUETTE* (Fenwick, 1948) there are procedures to follow when planning a running sheet; the cutting of the cake is traditionally performed at the end of the main meal, and is followed by dancing. The first toast is always to the bride and is proposed by the best man. There are other customs to consider including a toast to the bride's mother, proposed by the groom, & toasts to the bridesmaids, proposed by the best man.

As everyone knows, the bride and groom always share the first dance of the night. Their whirl on the floor is followed firstly by the bridal party, then the parents of the couple, and finally the guests.

Less formal traditions include the throwing of the bouquet (or throw posy) and if the mood is right the removal of the bride's garter.

So, consider the etiquette, then size up the practicalities that will play a significant part in the smooth running of the wedding.

Consult caterers and service staff to determine the time they will need between each course, usually an hour. Tally up speeches and toasts and approximate how long they will take.

Give speakers a timeframe to avoid the boring, long-winded stories that everyone dreads.

Finally, think about the flow of the event. A wedding that starts with a formal framework will ensure good momentum with no dull holes. But once that cake is cut, it's time to forget the formalities and enjoy the rest of the night!



EXAMPLE RUNNING SHEET

6.00PM}	PRE-DINNER DRINKS AND CANAPÉS
7.00PM}	GUESTS ENTER THE RECEPTION
7.15PM}	MC WELCOMES GUESTS AND ATTENDS TO HOUSEKEEPING, LOCATION OF TOILETS, END OF NIGHT TRANSPORT, SMOKING REGULATIONS AND EVENING'S PROCEEDINGS
7.30PM}	FATHER OF THE BRIDE GIVES HIS SPEECH (FOLLOWING ON FROM MC AND WELCOMES GUESTS ON BEHALF OF BOTH FAMILIES)
7.35PM}	ENTRÉE IS SERVED
8.10PM}	BEST MAN GIVES HIS SPEECH INCLUDING A TOAST TO BRIDE AND BRIDESMAIDS & READS ANY TELEGRAMS
8.15PM}	THE BRIDE GIVES HER SPEECH IF SHE WANTS TO TALK
8.25PM}	THE GROOM GIVES HIS SPEECH INCLUDING A TOAST TO BOTH PARENTS
8.30PM}	MAIN COURSE IS SERVED
9.30PM}	THE CUTTING OF THE CAKE
9.35PM}	THE BRIDAL WALTZ
9.40PM}	GUESTS JOIN THE DANCING
10.00PM}	DESSERT IS SERVED
10.30PM}	TEA AND COFFEE IS SERVED
11.30PM}	THE THROWING OF THE POSY AND THE REMOVAL OF THE GARTER
11.45PM}	THE BRIDE AND GROOM DEPART
12.00PM}	THE GUESTS DEPART