

Wedding Traditions & Symbolisms

- 1. Wedding Rings:** As far back as literature documents weddings, the rings were the first elements of wedding tradition. The circular shape symbolizes a never-ending love. Worn on the third finger of the left hand, it is believed that the vein in that finger runs directly to one's heart.
- 2. Bride's Wedding Veil:** Centuries ago, it was believed that a veil would protect the bride from "evil spirits". Today's white veil is a symbol of modesty and virginity.
- 3. Why a "white gown"?** In colonial times, a bride often wore her 'Sunday Best'. Not until the 1840's, when Queen Victoria was married in a white wedding gown is when the white wedding gown became all the rage. The color white symbolizes affluence, purity, joy and virginity. Today's brides get to choose many shades of white from bright whites to champagne.
- 4. Why the Bouquet?** Historically, flower and herbs have played a significant role in the attraction of 'good' and warding off 'evil.' The Greeks used ivy as a sign of lasting love and peace. Today's image of flowers convey a message of fertility and enduring love and romance.
- 5. Why something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue, place a penny in your shoe?**

To insure a happy and lasting marriage, a bride should carry something old from someone who's been married for a long time and something new to carry into her new life. Something borrowed, "borrow happiness" from someone close to you and something blue. The color blue has been associated with purity and modesty. A penny in the shoe assures you will never be "broke" and brings good fortune And protection against want.
- 6. The White Runner down the aisle:** Signifies a pure pathway into happiness. When covered in rose petals, it symbolizes a bride's path to a sweet and plentiful future.
- 7. Why is the Bride given away?** In days of old, the bride was literally given away in a prearranged marriage. In today's world, it is seen as being symbolic of her parent's support for her union with the groom.

8. **Why is the ceremony ended with a kiss?** The Kiss is a public announcement of a new union and married status.
9. **Why a Wedding cake?** It's a symbol of good luck and fertility to not just the Bride and Groom, but to all their family and friends in that they may never go hungry. The Groom's cake is often dark or in his favorite color is a way to share the couple's good fortune and the sweetness of married life.
10. **The Toast:** Represents the collective best wishes of family and friends and may be offered with any beverage. Raising of the glasses is a way for everyone to share in wishing wellness and happiness to the newlyweds.
11. **Wedding Favors:** The Bride and Groom are considered to be lucky, as is anything that they touch. They are a way for the Bride and Groom to thank their guests for sharing in their happiness.
12. **Why a Bouquet toss?** The old way of doing this was to tear off a piece of the Bride's wedding gown for good luck. You can only imagine the fate of the bride's gown at a large reception! Using a bouquet of flowers is the modern day alternative and the woman who catches the bouquet is thought to be the next in line to get married.
13. **Why the Garter Toss?** Like the Bouquet toss, this is a modern day alternative to a less than savory tradition. In days of yore, the guests would follow the newlyweds to their room, wait for them to undress, take their stockings and toss them at the Bride and Groom. The person who hit the bride or groom first would be the lucky One to next wed.
14. **Why attach shoes and tin cans to the car?** Carriages were used in old days and shoes are representative of power and signify the creation of a new family unit. Cans were added for noise to drive away evil spirits.
15. **Why is the Bride carried across the threshold?** It was believed that evil spirits hovered at the threshold of the home the newlyweds were about to enter. The bride was therefore lifted then carried through the entrance so the evil spirits would not enter through her feet.
16. **The throwing of rice** – Rice and wheat symbolize fertility, prosperity and bounty. They are "given" to the bride and groom in that they may never feel hunger. Today people use rose pedals, bubbles, potpourri and birdseed or release birds or butterflies instead.