



5 Tips for Snappy Attire

Every bride has probably imagined their wedding, sometimes down to the last detail of what their friends and family will be wearing. Since, the bridge between imagination and reality is communication, here are some tips to communicate expectations about attire (without stepping on your loved ones toes'.)

1. **Set Expectations.** Communicate expectations by noting the dress code on the invitation. A few words at the bottom corner of the invitation will do: "Black Tie Requested" or "Garden Party Chic" are examples.
2. **Be Clear.** When noting the dress code on an invite, understand that some wording may mean different things to various people. For example, while "Semi-Formal" may mean dark suit to your business acquaintances, college buddies may take it to mean "nice shirt, tie optional". You may intend "Dress Casual" to mean khakis and polo shirts, while others may mistake it for anything but ripped jeans. Be specific. If you want everyone to come in a dark suit, then say so: "Formal suit required, Black-tie optional." This lets guests know that while they do not have to wear a tuxedo, they are still expected to dress formally.
3. **Use multiple communication channels.** If you have a wedding website, give a more detailed description as to what is expected. Providing links to photos, as well as letting them know that the ceremony and reception is on grass and outdoors allows for guests to dress accordingly.
4. **Explain the unexpected.** For some planners, going less formal with their wedding scene is key. If this applies to you, set the tone on the invite and website such as: "Guests are encouraged to dress creatively and comfortably. Please keep in mind that we are planning a fun filled outdoor ceremony. High heels and uncomfortable formal wear are not recommended."
5. **Remember Pareto's Law.** Eighty percent of your challenges with guest attire will come from twenty percent of your guests. While it might be a long lost cousin (or her date), most likely it will be the usual suspects. Employ some gentle guidance through a call from you or an emissary, asking what they plan to wear. This works best as part of a larger conversation and "I plan to wear..." will be better read than "you should wear..." Often offenders are unsure what to wear and appreciate guidance.

Imagining your own wedding scene is the first step to determining how you want your guests to dress, but effective communication brings your vision to life.

Aisle Dish is written by Meredith Thomas, Stoneleigh's in-house Event Consultant. If you would like assistance planning your special day, Meredith offers a complimentary one-hour consultation to all brides hosting their wedding at the Club and is available for further planning services at an additional fee. Contact Meredith at mthomas@stoneleighgolf.com or 540.338.4653 ext. 303.