Adding Personal Touches

Even if you are planning a traditional ceremony, there are still ways to personalize the event:

- Switch places with the officiant. Have the officiant stand with his or her back toward the guests while you and your fiancé face the guests.
- Consider a small ceremony with only family and friends. The smaller the ceremony guest list, the more options you have, such as asking guests to join hands in a circle around the bride and groom.
- Ask both sets of parents to participate in the processional. Instead of looking at it as your father giving you away, think of it as two families joining together.
- Walk down the aisle with the groom. This is often done by older brides, but many young women also choose this option.
- When the officiant asks “Who blesses this marriage?” have both sets of parents respond.

After the Ceremony

The Receiving Line

The receiving line is a special chance for guests to officially meet the bride’s and groom’s families, as well as an opportunity to personally congratulate the newlyweds. This line is usually formed directly after the ceremony, with guests offering their congratulations as they move on to the reception. It can also be formed so that guests arriving at the reception must first pass through the line. It’s perfectly fine to keep conversation brief (yet still somewhat personal).

Setting Up the Receiving Line

Any or all of the following persons may be included in a receiving line:

- Bride
- Groom
- Bride’s mother
- Bride’s father
- Groom’s mother
- Groom’s father
- Maid/Matron of honor
- Best man
- Bridesmaids
- Groomsmen
- Ushers
- Flower girl
- Ring bearer