

From Matchmakers to Dating Services

Traditions, customs, modern life, and the ways people meet

Marriage traditions and customs are very different around the world. In many cultures, young people meet at school, at work, or in other places; they decide to go out together; they fall in love; and they get married. In other cultures, parents or other family members arrange a match between two young people.

In India, for example, a father traditionally finds his daughter a husband. The father might ask friends or relatives to recommend a possible husband, and he might put an ad in the newspaper. The father looks for someone with a good education, occupation, and salary. When he finds a possible match, he sends his daughter's horoscope to the boy's family. An astrologer reads the horoscope and decides if there is a good astrological match between the young man and woman. If the astrologer approves, the families then discuss the marriage arrangements.

In many cultures around the world, families use a matchmaker to bring young people together and arrange marriages. This is especially common in rural areas of many countries. Families pay the matchmaker to find a partner for their child. Sometimes, the matchmaker also helps families with the "business" part of a marriage agreement. For example, a family may give or receive animals, products, or other valuable things as part of the marriage arrangement. In some cultures, parents even arrange marriages between children before they are born.



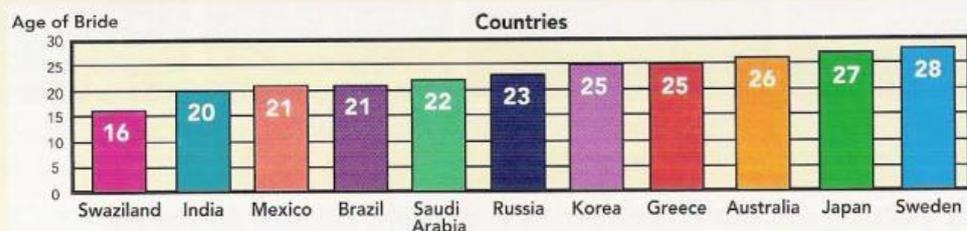
An astrologer approved the marriage of these newlyweds from India. The astrologer examined their horoscopes to decide if the date and time of their births were a good match.

These traditions and customs are changing in many places, especially in the modern cities of the world. Young people want the freedom to choose their own partners. Many, however, actually use modern-day versions of the traditional matchmaking services! For example, some people put personal ads in newspapers or magazines. In these ads, people describe themselves and tell what kind of person they're looking for. Others use dating services—companies that bring people together. Most dating services ask people to submit a photograph and fill out a long questionnaire about their background and interests. Some dating services even make videos of their customers. People who use a dating service can usually browse through the company's information to find a possible partner.

FACT FILE

When People Get Married

People around the world get married at different ages. At what age do men and women usually get married in different countries you know?



AROUND THE WORLD

Wedding Customs and Traditions



a wedding ceremony in the United States



a Hindu ceremony



a wedding in the Slovak Republic



a ceremony in a Korean village

Wedding customs and traditions are very different around the world. In many cultures, weddings happen in churches or other places of worship. In other cultures, people get married outdoors, in their homes, in special reception halls for family celebrations, or in other places. The bride and the groom usually wear clothing that is traditional for weddings in their culture. The type of clothing and the colors are very different around the world. Brides often wear a veil or a crown on their heads. Some weddings are private—just for family members and friends. Other weddings are public. Everybody in the neighborhood or the entire town might attend the celebration. Some weddings are short, and other weddings can last for hours, days, or even a week!



a traditional Romanian dance



musicians leading a wedding procession



confetti



flower petals

Music and dancing are an important part of wedding celebrations in different cultures. There are often special dances for the bride and groom, their parents, and other family members. Musicians might play special wedding music during the ceremony, at the celebration after the ceremony, or even in the street!



rice

In some cultures, people like to throw things at weddings! Before or after the ceremony, it is often traditional for guests to shower the bride and groom with something to wish them good luck.



Guests have pinned money on this bride and groom in Cyprus.



a wedding couple in Colombia lighting candles during the ceremony



cutting the cake at a U.S. wedding celebration



a Japanese bride arriving at her wedding by boat



a bride in the U.S. throwing a bouquet of flowers (According to tradition, the person who catches it will get married next.)

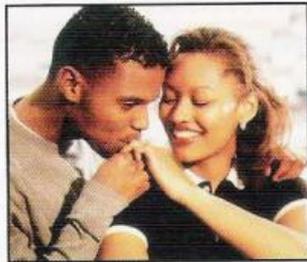
Many cultures around the world have special wedding customs. These traditions often involve candles, flowers, special foods, money, and the ways that couples get to their wedding ceremonies.

What wedding customs and traditions in different cultures do you know?

Interview

A Side by Side Gazette reporter spoke with several young couples.

Q: "How did you meet?"



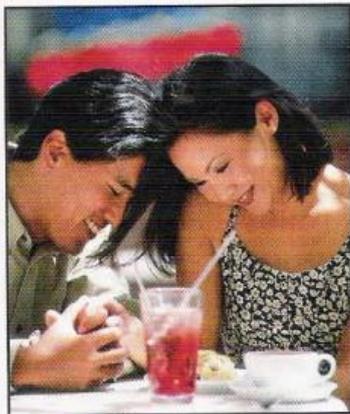
A: We met in college.



A: We met at work.



A: We met at a bookstore.



A: We were high school "sweethearts."



A: We met on a "blind date" that our friends arranged.



A: We met through a dating service.



A: Our parents arranged our marriage through a matchmaker.

FUN with IDIOMS



Do You Know These Expressions?

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| ___ 1. He's nuts about me. | a. I liked him right away. |
| ___ 2. She gave me the cold shoulder. | b. He likes me a lot. |
| ___ 3. I fell for him the moment I met him. | c. She didn't meet me. |
| ___ 4. We had planned to go on a date, but she stood me up. | d. She didn't pay attention to me. |

We've Got Mail!

Dear Side by Side,

I'm trying to figure out two-word verbs. Is there a rule that will tell me which two-word verbs are separable and which are inseparable? I hope to hear you from soon.

Sincerely,
"Looking for an Answer"

Dear "Looking for an Answer,"

We're sorry to tell you that there isn't a rule for this. You need to learn about each verb separately. Here's a suggestion. On a piece of paper, make two lists. Write down separable two-word verbs in one list and inseparable two-word verbs in the other. Then look up the words on your lists when you can't remember them.

By the way, we've circled some words in the last sentence of your letter because "hear from" is an inseparable two-word verb. The correct way to say this is "I hope to hear from you soon." Thanks for writing, and good luck with two-word verbs!



Sincerely,
Side by Side

Dear Side by Side,

I think two-word verbs are very difficult. The verb in a two-word verb has one meaning, but the whole two-word verb often has a different meaning. For example, "I turned on the light," but "I turned down the invitation"; "I take out the garbage," but "I take after my father." In my language, we have different words for all these expressions. Why does English use the same words over and over again?

Sincerely,
"Turned Off by Two-Word Verbs"

Dear "Turned Off,"

We're sorry to hear you're unhappy. Two-word verbs are very common in everyday English. We actually have special words for many of these meanings, but these words are more formal. For example, you can say, "I declined the invitation" and "I resemble my father." Most English speakers, however, prefer to use informal language, so they use lots of two-word verbs. With time, we're sure you'll get over this problem with two-word verbs. Thanks for your question.



Sincerely,
Side by Side

Global Exchange

Pedro: Let me tell you about my best friend. His name is Marco. People think we're brothers because we look alike. He's short and thin, and so am I. I have curly brown hair, and he does, too. We also have similar backgrounds. He's originally from Peru, and I am, too. He moved to this country when he was a little boy, and so did I. His parents work in factories, and so do mine. Marco and I have very different interests. He enjoys playing sports, but I don't. I play a musical instrument, but he doesn't. I've been in several plays in school, but he hasn't. How about you? Tell me about your best friend.

Tell a keypal about your best friend.

LISTENING

"Telephone Tag" True or False?

True!



- ___ 1 Mary likes jazz, and Jim does, too.
- ___ 2 Mary likes to play tennis, and so does Jim.
- ___ 3 Jim wants to go to the ballet, but Mary doesn't.
- ___ 4 Jim hasn't seen the movie, and neither has Mary.
- ___ 5 Jim doesn't like Italian food, but Mary does.

What Are They Saying?

