

## WHAT ABOUT: DISPLAY SHOWERS? BLACK DRESSES?

**DEAR DIANA:**

**Can you explain the etiquette of a display shower? I understand this is a really popular thing these days.**

Display showers have indeed become popular. As for the etiquette, usually the invitation will instruct each guest to bring an unwrapped gift to the event. While the attendees are enjoying something to eat or playing a bridal bingo game, these gifts are set up in another room, marked with cards showing A, or to give the future bride more time to socialize with those attending her shower.

Whether one likes the display idea is strictly a matter of taste. Some guests miss seeing the bride ooh and aah over every little tea towel, while others are pleased to skip all of that and just stroll around the tables and look at the gifts at their leisure.

**I am a second-time bride who is having a fairly large wedding. What do I do about registering for gifts? I don't want to look like we are asking for gifts, but some people have already asked me where we are registered.**

No bridal couple should be “asking for gifts,” which are strictly optional. (I know that comes as a surprise, since many brides and grooms feel entitled to something from their guests. But, strictly speaking, gifts are not required.) That said, most guests attending a wedding do not arrive empty-handed. A second time bride who is entering a brand new marriage will still receive gifts, though perhaps not as elaborate as those which people gave the first time around.

If someone is giving you a shower, you should certainly register for gifts. If there is no shower, etiquette does prohibit you from announcing your registries on wedding invitations. Instead, you can spread the word among a few close friends and family members, who can, in turn, spread the word further, if asked about gifts. Or, a couple can set up a wedding website (try [The Knot](#)), and list their registries there.

If you do not need another toaster or a second set of china, you can think outside the box and suggest donations toward your honeymoon, or toward a favorite cause or charity. Whether your guests follow these suggestions is up to them.

**NOTE:** Some etiquette sticklers object to registries at all, but I see it as a useful guide for guests who do not know a couple's taste or needs. After all, how can you know if your cousin's daughter prefers traditional or contemporary design or if she already has every small kitchen appliance in her bachelorette apartment? Regardless, no guest is required to stick to the registry items when purchasing a shower or wedding gift.

**My daughter is getting married next July and she is insisting on black bridesmaid dresses. I am trying to tell her that black is not a summer color and will look too dark. Is there a rule about colors and seasons?**

Well, there used to be rules about these things, which included an edict that neither bridesmaids nor wedding guests should wear black, which was considered a color of mourning. That rule is long gone in both cases. In fact, black is one of the most popular colors for bridal attendants and wedding guests today. Although black is not thought of as a summer color, the fabric and style of the dress can make all the difference. A perky cocktail length dress with spaghetti straps is perfectly summery, as is a flowing dress in a light chiffon fabric. Your daughter may want to think about a print with a black background—small flowers or polka dots would be nice. Think about it—don't people wear black dresses to summer dances and dinner parties all the time? Perhaps your daughter could accent the black dress with a crisp white or pale pink sash. Certainly, her choice of flowers should include summery blooms.

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*(If you have a question pertaining to your wedding, write DEAR DIANA at nepaweddingday@gmail.com for an answer.)*