

GB United Kingdom

- The traditional rhyme “*Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue, and a sixpence in her shoe*” is still common today.
 - Many couples get married in historical venues — castles, gardens, or countryside manors.
 - At the end of the ceremony, **confetti** made of petals or paper is thrown over the couple.
 - The **best man** gives a humorous speech, and there’s often a lively party afterward with lots of dancing.
 - The bride sometimes tosses her bouquet to single women — whoever catches it is said to be the next to marry.
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us United States

- Traditions vary by region and culture, but there’s almost always a **wedding rehearsal** and **rehearsal dinner** the night before.
 - The first dance between the bride and groom is symbolic, often followed by a dance between the bride and her father.
 - **Bridesmaids and groomsmen** often wear coordinated outfits.
 - “Destination weddings” — ceremonies in beautiful places abroad — are very popular.
 - Guests often decorate the getaway car with ribbons, cans, and signs saying “*Just Married.*”
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FR France

- Instead of cake, the French traditionally serve a **croquembouche**, a tower of cream-filled pastry puffs drizzled with caramel.
 - The couple is often showered with **rice, rose petals, or lavender** as they leave the church.
 - The celebration continues late into the night, sometimes until dawn.
 - In rural areas, guests sometimes “**kidnap the bride**” as part of a playful custom — the groom must “ransom” her back.
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IT Italy

- The bride traditionally wears **something green** for luck and fertility.
- Guests receive **bomboniere** – small favors with sugared almonds symbolizing life’s sweet and bitter moments.
- It’s bad luck for the groom to see the bride before the ceremony.
- During the reception, the bride’s garter is often cut into pieces and sold for luck.

- Italians throw **rice** or confetti at the newlyweds — symbolizing prosperity and fertility.
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ES Spain

- The groom gives the bride **13 gold coins (“arras”)**, symbolizing trust and the couple’s shared wealth.
 - Weddings are full of flamenco music, clapping, and vibrant colors.
 - Spanish brides often wear a **mantilla** — a lace veil held by a comb called *peineta*.
 - It’s common to have celebrations that last until morning, with traditional food and dancing.
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DE Germany

- The night before the wedding, friends and family gather for a **Polterabend**, breaking old dishes for good luck.
 - The couple must **clean the shards together**, symbolizing cooperation in their future life.
 - During the reception, guests may **“steal the bride”** and hide her in a nearby bar, and the groom must find her and buy everyone a round of drinks.
 - A **log-sawing ceremony** also tests how well the couple works together.
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SE Sweden

- The bride wears a **gold coin from her father** in one shoe and a **silver coin from her mother** in the other — for prosperity.
 - Guests are encouraged to **kiss the bride or groom** whenever the other leaves the room.
 - During the ceremony, both the bride and groom wear **crowns**, symbolizing equality.
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NO Norway

- The bride often wears a **traditional silver crown** decorated with small charms. When she moves, they jingle to drive away evil spirits.
 - A traditional Norwegian cake called **kranssekake** — a tower of almond rings — is served.
 - After the ceremony, people sometimes follow the couple with **torch processions** through the village.
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PL Poland

- Before the ceremony, the parents bless the couple with **bread, salt, and wine** — symbolizing prosperity, hardship, and joy.

- At the reception, guests shout “**Gorzko! Gorzko!**” (“**Bitter! Bitter!**”) until the couple kisses to “sweeten” it.
 - Polish weddings are famous for **multi-day celebrations** with music, food, and vodka.
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CZ Czech Republic

- Before the wedding, the bride’s friends **decorate the wedding tree** or a small tree placed in front of her house.
 - Guests traditionally **throw peas, rice, or lentils** over the newlyweds for fertility and prosperity.
 - A **baby or child** is sometimes placed on the couple’s bed before the ceremony to bring luck and fertility.
 - The newlyweds share a **bowl of soup with one spoon**, symbolizing their new life together.
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SK Slovakia

- The “**čepčenie**” ceremony is a touching folk tradition: after midnight, the bride’s veil is replaced with a bonnet, marking her transition to married life.
 - The groom’s friends often stage playful “tests” to prove his worthiness before he can see the bride.
 - Guests sing folk songs, and the celebration can last until dawn with traditional food, music, and dance.
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HU Hungary

- A **mock auction of the bride’s shoe** is common: guests put money in it as wedding gifts.
 - At midnight, the bride changes into a **red dress**, symbolizing womanhood and fertility.
 - Dancing, goulash, and palinka (fruit brandy) are must-haves.
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RS Serbia

- The **kum and kuma** (godfather and godmother) play lifelong ceremonial roles.
 - A playful ritual called “**Buying the Bride**” involves bargaining for the bride’s hand.
 - In rural areas, the groom must **shoot an apple** hanging above the door to “win” his bride.
 - Celebrations often begin at the homes of both families before joining together.
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AL Albania

- Before the wedding, the bride's relatives perform **Kolaanja**, braiding and combing her hair one last time as a single woman.
 - The groom's family arrives in a festive procession called **krushqeria**.
 - Burning the **bachelor's scarf (shamia e beqarise)** marks the symbolic end of single life.
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BA Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Weddings may last **several days**, with continuous music, dancing, and food.
 - In some regions, the bride is **painted or decorated** as part of pre-wedding traditions.
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MK North Macedonia

- The **Galičnik Wedding Festival** reenacts ancient local marriage customs with national costumes, songs, and dances.
 - In Orthodox ceremonies, the couple is **crowned and drinks from a shared cup**, symbolizing unity.
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UA / RU / BY (Ukraine, Russia, Belarus)

- The **Korovai / Karavai** — a richly decorated wedding bread — is a major symbol of prosperity and unity.
 - The couple each takes a bite: **whoever bites the larger piece is said to lead the household**.
 - Traditional pre-wedding customs include **songs, symbolic weeping, and exchanges of gifts** between families.
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Common Eastern European Motifs

- In some areas, **the oldest daughter had to marry first**, before her younger sisters.
- **Wedding rings were sometimes rented** and returned afterward.
- Guests clap, throw flowers, or rice as the couple departs — wishing fertility and happiness.
- **Bread and salt** are offered as symbols of hospitality and blessing.