

Q & A

text by COURTNEY REIGH

# ASK US ANYTHING

*Your wedding worries solved.*





**Q** I sent out my wedding invites; it's past the RSVP deadline, and several guests haven't responded. Is it rude to follow up with them? If I end up being short on numbers, is it a faux pas to extend invitations to a second round of people?

**A** While not receiving all of your RSVPs is frustrating, it's something every couple who plans a wedding struggles with—you're in good company. And yes, it's perfectly acceptable to reach out to your guests and follow up.

"Every couple I work with has at least 15 percent or more of their guests who don't respond by the deadline," says Rachelle Mazumdar, owner of Style-Architects Weddings + Events in Minneapolis. "So it's likely that a percentage of your guests won't reply by your requested deadline."

Although they haven't responded, Mazumdar cautions her clients to not assume that a non-response means guests aren't planning to attend. "People are busy and forgetful! I always insist that couples follow

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up with their guests to confirm." If you don't, you run the risk that guests will show up unexpectedly, and have neither a seat nor a meal ready for them.

When following up with your guests, Mazumdar suggests a well-crafted formal email or a carefully planned phone call. When sending an email, she suggests couples acknowledge that they know their guests are busy, and that they hope they are able to attend their big day. She also recommends asking couples to return their RSVP card in the mail at their earliest convenience, or respond directly to the email chain with who will attend, as well as with their meal preference.

For a phone call, Mazumdar recommends couples enlist the help of parents or their wedding party to reach out in their stead. "It can sometimes be hard or awkward for guests to tell a couple over the phone that they don't plan to attend," she says. "It's much easier for a friend or family member of the couple to make these calls instead."

The best news? Mazumdar says you can follow up almost immediately after the RSVP deadline.

"I suggest couples set their response date five weeks prior to their wedding. This gives them the week following the RSVP date to follow up with guests who haven't responded, and the week after to assign guests to tables," she says.

If you're low on numbers, this is the time to extend invitations to additional guests if many of the people on your original guest list are unable to attend. Still, Mazumdar cautions against it.

"People who don't receive their invite eight weeks in advance of a wedding will likely know they are a second-round guest," she says. She also notes that the process can be difficult for couples to execute. "You won't have the final count until after the RSVP date, and you'll likely have to print new invitations for these guests, which can get expensive. My suggestion is to make a decision on who you want to invite and stick to it."

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