



# National Candle Association

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## CANDLES SET A ROMANTIC MOOD FOR WEDDINGS AND WEDDING RECEPTIONS

Candles are taking center stage at more wedding ceremonies and receptions than ever before, according to a 2006 survey conducted by Harris Interactive for the National Candle Association (NCA).

Nearly three-fourths of women surveyed (72 percent) said candles were present at the most recent wedding they attended -- not simply as part of the background, but as a key element of the ceremony with the bride and/or groom or members of the wedding party lighting candles.

In addition to evoking a sense of occasion at wedding ceremonies, candles are increasingly becoming a central element of wedding receptions, rehearsal dinners and wedding-related cocktail parties. For many couples, candles are a perfect way to set a romantic elegance and shimmer to their wedding celebrations without breaking the budget.

Pillars, tapers, votives, sconces, tealights or floating candles can all be used to add both sophistication and sparkle to either the wedding ceremony, reception, or both. If using candles in both settings, consider using the same color palette for both the reception and ceremony, but different types of candles and candle holders to make each phase unique and memorable.

When selecting candle styles for the reception, start by pairing candles to the size of the table in the room. Arrangements of pillars or tapers in elevated candleholders are often perfect for buffet tables, head tables, or tables that seat at least eight. For smaller tables, where space is at a premium, groupings of colored votives in clear glass holder or small bowls with floating candles will add shimmer, elegance and color without overwhelming or crowding the table space.

### **Additional Ideas**

For an evening wedding, consider using only candlelight for the ceremony, lining the aisle with large diameter pillars on sturdy, heavy metal floor stands. Make sure the stands are high enough to avoid obstructing any guest's view of the bride walking down the aisle, and placed out of the way of foot traffic so they won't be knocked over.

Consider creating a unity flame that involves your guests. Each adult guest is given a taper candle fitted at the base with a drip shield. One flame is used to begin lighting the guests' candles, with each guest in turn lighting the candle of individual standing next to him. The flame is finally passed to the bride and groom's families, and then to the wedding couple who use the taper to light a unity pillar candle.

Candles don't have to be lighted to become part of the festivities. Try wrapping small pillars in a bit of gauzy material gathered with a satin ribbon as a sophisticated anchor for guest placecards at a luncheon or dinner reception. The wrapping material and ribbon can both be white or in colors from your wedding palette. At the end of the celebration, each guest will have a lovely favor to take home. Even though these candles will not be lit, use unscented candles to avoid adding any fragrance that could compete with the aroma of the food being served.

### **Survey Findings**

Here are key NCA survey findings on ways candles are being used at weddings:

- Seventy-two percent of women surveyed said candles played a role at the most recent wedding celebration they attended.
- Forty-three percent of women indicated that candles were lit by the bride and/or groom during the ceremony, and 26 percent said candles were lit by family members or bridal party.
- Thirty-seven percent said candles were lit on the altar during the ceremony, six percent indicated candles were placed down the aisle for décor, and 27 percent said the candles had religious or symbolic significance.
- At the most recent wedding attended, 29 percent of women said candelabras or votives were used as part of the reception centerpiece. Thirteen percent said that candles were used instead of flowers.
- Almost one quarter (23 percent) of women surveyed said candles were lit throughout the room during the wedding cocktail hour and/or reception.
- Five percent of women surveyed said they had recently received candles as wedding favors.

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