

# CHICAGO BRIDE

## **The Pet Parents' "To Do" Before the "I Do"**

*NAPPS offers tips for Pet Parents Planning to Tie the Knot this Wedding Season*

As wedding season quickly approaches, more brides and grooms are planning to include their furry friends as guests of honor for their special day.

"A pet plays an important role in a couple's life and for many pet parents, family festivities would not be complete without their pet's involvement," said John D'Ariano, President of NAPPS. "As a result, this trend will continue to gain traction. It's becoming more common for couples to customize their wedding parties to include family, friends, and furry companions."

If wedding bells are in your future and Fido, Mittens, or Tweety will be a part of your special day, consider these tips from NAPPS:

- Consider your pet's behavior. Is he obedient and well behaved? Will your pet feel comfortable around your guests?
- Confirm with your ceremony facility that pets are welcome.
- Don't jeopardize style for safety. If you plan to accessorize your pet with wedding day attire, be sure it fits properly and does not create discomfort for your pet.
- Inform guests that your pet will be participating in the ceremony. Doing so will prepare those with pet allergies.
- Notify your photographer to capture your pet in action. You'll want to remember the moment he walked down then aisle or she sat pretty with the wedding party.

When the ceremony concludes, brides and grooms can give their guest of honor an after party of his own by hiring a professional pet sitter for the duration of the wedding reception. This will allow the newlyweds the time and flexibility they need to socialize with their guests, without neglecting the needs and comfort of their pet. NAPPS reminds couples to include a link to [www.petsitters.org](http://www.petsitters.org) on their wedding website, in order to also help traveling guests make arrangements for their pets.

Brides and grooms should not feel limited to including just their cat or dog in the festivities. Couples can personalize their wedding day and incorporate a range of different pet species. For example, pet parents of white homing pigeons should consider releasing the birds as an alternative for doves. Horse lovers can make a grand entrance to the ceremony with their horse as their guide.

Extensive planning and preparation for a wedding ceremony, reception and honeymoon can occupy a couple's time for several months leading up to the big day. As a result, it's no wonder that society has dedicated an entire season surrounding the institution of marriage.

Destination weddings are no longer a luxury exclusive for the wealthy. They have instead become a popular alternative to traditional church ceremonies, extending the wedding celebration for multiple days and sometimes weeks. Many brides and grooms are choosing to celebrate their nuptials and honeymoon in a remote location, inviting family and close friends to accompany them to a tropical island or exotic country. By hiring a professional pet sitter for the extent of your wedding getaway, you and your guests will be able to enjoy the celebrations and know that Fido, Mittens and Tweety are receiving the specialized care they need.

The additional planning associated with destination wedding can easily consume a couple's time and monopolize their routine. Professional pet sitters are able to help maintain a daily schedule for your pet, allowing you flexibility to focus on travel plans, ceremony details, and creating a perfect wedding that you will always remember.

**About NAPPS:** NAPPS is the only national nonprofit trade association dedicated to serving the needs of professional pet sitters. The Association aims to help the pet owning public, those interested in pet sitting, and professionals engaged in the in-home pet care industry by fulfilling its vision statement, serving as "the most respected authority in professional pet sitting." It does so by providing the tools and support to foster the success of its members. Additionally, pet parents can benefit from NAPPS' free resources including a disaster preparedness guide, tips on how to select a pet sitter, and a nationwide referral service,. To find a pet sitter in your area, check out NAPPS' nationwide "Pet Sitter Locator" at [www.petsitters.org](http://www.petsitters.org). For more information on NAPPS, please follow [@TheNAPPS](https://twitter.com/TheNAPPS) on Twitter or join us on Facebook at [facebook.com/TheNAPPS](https://facebook.com/TheNAPPS).

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