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History of Wedding Anniversary Gift by Julia Roger

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With the arrival of an anniversary, it calls for certain sentimental gifts. The names of some anniversaries provide guidance for appropriate or traditional gifts for the spouses to give each other. These wedding anniversary presents vary in different countries, but some years have well-established connections now common to most nations: 5th Wooden, 10th Tin, 15th Crystal, 20th China, 25th Silver, 30th Pearl, 40th Ruby, 50th Golden, 60th Diamond.

The tradition may have originated in medieval Germany, where if a married couple celebrates the 25th anniversary of their wedding, their friends and neighbors present a silver garland to congratulate both the good luck that had prolonged the lives of the couple for so many years. On celebration of the 50th, the wife received a wreath of gold. Over time the number of symbols expanded, and the German tradition came to assign gifts that had direct connections with each stage of married life. The symbols have changed over time.

The traditional and modern U.S. versions were compiled by librarians at the Chicago Public Library. The origins of what is listed here as the "modern" US gift conventions date to 1937. In 1937, the American National Retail Jeweler Association introduced an expanded list of gifts. The revamped list gave a gift for each year up to the 20th, and then for every fifth anniversary after that.

Wedding anniversaries are a chance to mark an important milestone in your relationship. There are lists of wedding anniversary gifts by year and updated lists of suggestions. It is fun to look at the suggested gift and to be creative. We may scoff at the idea, but traditional presents and their modern counterparts can be an excellent way to commemorate milestones in a relationship. If you don't want to be limited to a rigid list, consider getting a small sentimental token gift representing the traditional list in addition to your preferred gift.

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