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Malay wedding in a neighbourhood void deck

After the "bersanding" ceremony, the bride and groom sit at the main table and have their first meal together as husband and wife.

Just like with other communities, most Malays have added some Western customs to their wedding celebrations. The Western-style wedding cake is one example.

The Malay wedding is also known as "bersanding", which means the sitting together of the bride and bridegroom. They sit on a "pelamin", a beautifully decorated platform. The guests come up to the pelamin to have photos taken with the couple.

The "Mak Andam" or beautician attends to the bride's every need during the wedding. Her main task is to ensure the bride looks radiant throughout, assisting with dress changes and make-up. She can also guide the bride through the various wedding customs.

Friends and relatives come to greet the couple and enjoy a meal. The bersanding usually lasts several hours, so guests are free to come and go any time. Guests are given a small gift. The traditional gift is a "bunga telur", a boiled egg with a decorative flower. Nowadays, the gift may be a pretty package of sweets.

This series by **WHAT'S UP** – Singapore's newspaper for students – takes a closer look at our country's many colourful cultures. Also online at <http://www.whatsup.sg> **'ONE PEOPLE'**.

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