

WEDDING ATTIRE

BRIDAL GOWN

Bridal gowns come in a wide variety of styles, materials, colors, lengths and prices. You should order your gown at least four to six months before your wedding if your gown has to be ordered and then fitted.

Options: Different gown styles can help create a shorter, taller, heavier, or thinner look. Here are some tips:

- A short, heavy figure: To look taller and slimmer, avoid knit fabrics. Use the princess or A-line style. Chiffon is the best fabric choice because it produces a floating effect and camouflages weight.
- A short, thin figure: A shirtwaist or natural waist style with bouffant skirt will produce a taller, more rounded figure. Chiffon, velvet, lace and Schiffler net are probably the best fabric choices.
- A tall, heavy figure: Princess or A-line are the best styles for slimming the figure; satin, chiffon and lace fabrics are recommended.
- A tall, thin figure: Tiers or flounces will help reduce the impression of height. A shirtwaist or natural waist style with a full skirt are ideal choices. Satin and lace are the best fabrics.

The guidelines below will help you select the most appropriate gown for your wedding:

Informal wedding:	Street-length gown or suit Corsage or small bouquet No veil or train
Semi-formal wedding:	Floor-length gown Chapel train Finger-tip veil Small bouquet
Formal daytime wedding:	Floor-length gown Chapel or sweep train Fingertip veil or hat Gloves Medium-sized bouquet
Formal evening wedding:	Same as formal daytime except longer veil
Very formal wedding:	Floor-length gown Cathedral train Full-length veil Elaborate headpiece Long sleeves or long arm-covering gloves Cascading bouquet

Things To Consider: In selecting your bridal gown, keep in mind the time of year and formality of your wedding. It is a good idea to look at bridal magazines to compare the various styles and colors. If you see a gown you like, call boutiques in your area to see if they carry that line. Always try on the gown before ordering it.

When ordering a gown, make sure you order the correct size. If you are between sizes, order the larger one. You can always have your gown tailored down to fit, but it is not always possible to have it enlarged or to lose enough weight to fit into it! Don't forget to ask when your gown will arrive, and be sure to get this in writing. The gown should arrive at least six weeks before the wedding so you can have it tailored and select the appropriate accessories to complement it.

Beware: Some bridal boutiques have the practice of ordering gowns a size larger than needed. This requires more alterations which may mean extra charges. Ask for all alteration pricing in advance. Tailoring is a great source of income for boutiques. Also, gowns often fail to arrive on time, creating unnecessary stress for you. Have the store manager state, in writing, when the gown will arrive. And be sure to check the reputation of the boutique before buying.

Tips To Save Money: Consider renting a gown or buying one secondhand. Renting a gown usually costs about forty to sixty percent of its retail price. Consider this practical option if you are not planning to preserve the gown. The disadvantage of renting, however, is that your options are more limited. Also, a rented gown usually does not fit as well as a custom tailored gown.

Ask about discontinued styles and gowns. Watch for clearances and sales, or buy your gown "off the rack."

Restore or refurbish a family heirloom gown. If you have a friend, sister, or other family member who is planning a wedding, consider purchasing a gown that you could both wear. Change the veil and headpiece to personalize it.

Price Range: \$300 - \$3,000

ALTERATIONS

Alterations may be necessary in order to make your gown fit perfectly and conform smoothly to your body.

Things To Consider: Alterations usually require several fittings. Allow four to six weeks for alterations to be completed. However, do not alter your gown months before the wedding. Your weight may fluctuate during the final weeks of planning and the gown might not fit properly. Alterations are usually not included in the cost of the gown.

You may also want to consider making some modifications to your gown such as shortening or lengthening the train, customizing the sleeves, beading and so forth. Ask your bridal boutique what they charge for the modifications you are considering. **Tips To Save Money:** Consider hiring an independent tailor. Their fees are usually lower than bridal boutiques.

Price Range: \$50 - \$150

HEADPIECE & VEIL

The headpiece is the part of the bride's outfit to which the veil is attached.

Options for Headpieces: Banana Clip, Bow, Garden Hat, Headband, Juliet Cap, Mantilla, Pillbox, Pouf, Snood, Tiara.

Options for Veils: Ballet, Bird Cage, Blusher, Cathedral Length, Chapel Length, Fingertip, Flyaway.

Things To Consider: The headpiece should complement but not overshadow your gown. In addition to the headpiece, you might want a veil. Veils come in different styles and lengths.

Select a length which complements the length of your train. Consider the total look you're trying to achieve with your gown, headpiece, veil, and hairstyle.

Tips To Save Money: Some boutiques offer a free headpiece or veil with the purchase of a gown. Make sure you ask for this before purchasing your gown.

Price Range: \$60 - \$250

GLOVES

Gloves add a nice touch with either short-sleeved, three-quarter length, or sleeveless gowns.

Options: Gloves come in various styles and lengths. Depending on the length of your sleeves, select gloves that reach above your elbow, just below your elbow, halfway between your wrist and elbow, or only to your wrist. Fingerless mitts are another option that you may want to consider.

Things To Consider: You may want to consider fingerless mitts which allow the groom to place the wedding ring on your ring finger without having to remove your glove. You should not wear gloves if your gown has long sleeves, or if you're planning a small, at-home wedding.

Price Range: \$5 - \$30

JEWELRY

You will need to decide what jewelry to wear on your wedding day.

Options: Select pieces of jewelry that can be classified as "something old, something new, something borrowed, or something blue" (see page 0).

Things To Consider: Brides look best with just a few pieces of jewelry -- perhaps a string of pearls and earrings with a simple bracelet. Purchase complementary jewelry for your bridesmaids, to match the colors of their dresses. This will give your bridal party a coordinated look.

Price Range: \$60 - \$1,000

STOCKINGS

Stockings should be selected with care, especially if the groom will be removing a garter from your leg at the reception.

Things To Consider: Consider having your maid of honor carry an extra pair, just in case you get a run.

Price Range: \$5 - \$15

GARTER

It is customary for the bride to wear a garter just above or below the knee on her wedding day. After the bouquet tossing ceremony, the groom takes the garter off the bride's leg. All the single men gather on the dance floor. The groom then tosses the garter to them over his back. According to age-old tradition, whoever catches the garter is the next to be married!

Things To Consider: You will need to choose the proper music for this event. A popular and fun song to play during the garter removal ceremony is *The Stripper*, by David Rose.

Price Range: \$5 - \$15

SHOES

Things To Consider: Make sure you select comfortable shoes that complement your gown; and don't forget to break them in well before your wedding day. Tight shoes can make you miserable and ruin your wedding day!

Price Range: \$25 - \$100

HAIIRDRESSER

Many brides prefer to have their hair professionally arranged with their headpiece the day of the wedding rather than trying to do it themselves.

Things To Consider: Consider having your professional hairdresser experiment with your hair and headpiece before your wedding day so that there are no surprises. On your wedding day, you can go to the salon or have the stylist meet you at your home or dressing site. Consider having him/her arrange your mother's and your bridesmaids' hair for a consistent look.

Tips To Save Money: Negotiate having your hair arranged free of charge or at a discount in exchange for bringing your mother, your fiancé's mother and your wedding party to the salon.

Price Range: \$20 - \$75 per person

MAKEUP ARTIST

Many brides prefer to have their makeup professionally applied on their wedding day rather than trying to do it themselves.

Things To Consider: It's smart to go for a trial run before the day of the wedding so that there are no surprises. You can either go to the salon or have the makeup artist meet you at your home or dressing site. Consider having him/her apply makeup for your mother, your fiancé's mother and your bridesmaids for a consistent look. In selecting a makeup artist, make sure s/he has been trained in makeup for photography. It is very important to wear the proper amount of makeup for photographs.

Tips To Save Money: Try to negotiate having your makeup applied free of charge or at a discount in exchange for bringing your mother, your fiancé's mother and your wedding party to the salon.

Price Range: \$15 - \$75 per person

MANICURE / PEDICURE

As a final touch, it's nice to have a professional manicure and/or pedicure the day of your wedding.

Things To Consider: Don't forget to bring the appropriate color nail polish with you for your appointment. You can either go to the salon or have the manicurist meet you at your home or dressing site. Consider having him/her give your mother, your fiancé's mother and your bridesmaids a manicure in the same color for a consistent look.

Tips To Save Money: Try to negotiate getting a manicure or pedicure free of charge or at a discount in exchange for bringing your mother, your fiancé's mother and your wedding party to the salon.

Price Range: \$10 - \$30 per person

GROOM'S FORMAL WEAR

The groom should select his formal wear based on the formality of the wedding. For a semi-formal or formal wedding, the groom will need a tuxedo. A tuxedo is the formal jacket worn by men on special or formal occasions. The most popular colors are black, white, and gray.

Options: Use the following guidelines to select customary attire for the groom:

Informal wedding:	Business suit White dress shirt and tie
Semi-formal daytime:	Formal suit White dress shirt Cummerbund or vest Four-in-hand or bow tie
Semi-formal evening:	Formal suit or dinner jacket Matching trousers White shirt Cummerbund or vest Black bow tie Cufflinks and studs
Formal daytime:	Cutaway or stroller jacket Waistcoat Striped trousers White wing-collared shirt Striped tie Studs and cufflinks
Formal evening:	Black dinner jacket Matching trousers Waistcoat White tuxedo shirt Bow tie Cummerbund or vest Cufflinks
Very formal daytime:	Cutaway coat Wing-collared shirt Ascot Striped trousers Cufflinks Gloves
Very formal evening:	Black tailcoat Matching striped trousers White wing-collared shirt Waistcoat Patent leather shoes Studs and cufflinks Gloves

Things To Consider: In selecting your formal wear, keep in mind the formality of your wedding, the time of day, and the bride's gown. Consider darker colors for a fall or winter wedding and lighter colors for a spring or summer wedding. When selecting a place to rent your tuxedo, check the reputation of the shop. Make sure they have a wide variety of makes and styles to choose from.

Reserve tuxedos for yourself and your ushers several weeks before the wedding to insure a wide selection and to allow enough time for alterations. Plan to pick up the tuxedos a few days before the wedding to allow time for last minute alterations in case they don't fit properly. Out-of-town men in your wedding party can be sized at any tuxedo shop. They can send their measurements to you or directly to the shop where you are going to rent your tuxedos.

Ask about the store's return policy and be sure you delegate to the appropriate person (usually your best man) the responsibility of returning all tuxedos within the time allotted. Ushers customarily pay for their own tuxedos.

Tips To Save Money: Try to negotiate getting your tuxedo for free or at a discount in exchange for having your father, your fiancé's father and ushers rent their tuxedos at that shop.

Price Range: \$60 - \$120

Note: Price Ranges do vary, and are estimates only.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BRIDAL BOUTIQUE

- What is the name of the bridal boutique?
- What is the address of the bridal boutique?
- What is the name & phone number of my contact person?
- What are your hours of operation? Are appointments needed?
- Do you offer any discounts or give-aways?
- What major bridal gown lines do you carry?
- Do you carry outfits for the mother of the bride?
- Do you carry bridesmaids gowns and/or tuxedos?
- Do you carry outfits for the flower girl and ring bearer?
- What is the cost of the desired bridal gown?
- What is the cost of the desired headpiece?
- Do you offer in-house alterations? If so, what are your fees?
- Do you carry bridal shoes? What is their price range?
- Do you dye shoes to match outfits?
- Do you rent bridal slips? If so, what is the rental fee?
- What is the estimated delivery date of my gown?
- What is your payment policy/cancellation policy?