



SVS Selecting Your Bridal Gown by Esther Bengio

Hello SVS Fans!

Today I decided to share some pointers about buying your wedding gown. This is your moment to shine and to be Cinderella for a day and I wanted it to be the most “fun and memorable” experience of your wedding planning.

So, let's get started...

1. Number 1 rule... AVOID PURCHASING YOUR GOWN FROM THE INTERNET! If you can't physically see it, feel it, and try it on, don't buy it! This will save you so much grief and money.
2. Make sure you go to a store that you feel COMFORTABLE! If you do not feel good about the place or staff, get out! And, go somewhere else.
3. If you know that the store you walked into is not the store you would purchase your gown, then don't try any dresses there. This is your time to feel like a QUEEN!
4. Don't even think of going shopping when you're not feeling well. Especially, if you are bloated, sunburned, or in any way feeling ugly or uncomfortable! ONLY go when you're feeling happy, pretty and comfortable!!!
5. Don't make the mistake I made... going alone. Take someone with you. Don't take an army either! And, specially, no children! Remember, children have a very short attention span. They will get hirable before you even try on your dress. They will touch everything!! And, trust me, the store manager and staff will not be happy. Remember, they are not a daycare.
6. Make-up or no Make-up? NO MAKE-UP! The make-up will get on all the gowns you try on. And, remove all the jewelry you would usually wear because most gowns are so delicate that they can get snag or damaged easily. Remember this advice when you go get your fittings too.
7. Ok, you're not fat or too skinny! Bridal gowns most of the time run small. So, don't think about the size but the fit and the design. And, always order the size you are today. Don't expect to lose a lot of weight. Anyways, if you do lose weight, you can always have the gown taken in.

8. Remember, most gowns will always need to get altered because your dress should fit PERFECTLY! And, don't go get altered without your shoes, slip (if applicable), and your bra.
9. Have fun! Try different styles. You don't need to purchase the first one you see. Visit a few shops. Make an appointment to assure you will have a staff member with you at all times. And, this will also allow the store to stock up to assure they have the perfect dress for you. Remember, they want to make the sale so; they will want to have many styles on hand. But don't look forever! I don't want you to get bored and confused by too many choices.
10. Remember, most shops will require a 50% deposit and the deposit are non-refundable! This is where they get you so you don't go anywhere else. So, before you sign, make sure you have visited a few shops.
11. Be realistic! Don't have unrealistic expectations. Sorry ladies, but this is so true. You might have dreamed of your gown since you were just a little princess and just because you're being realistic doesn't mean your dress will not be beautiful. It will! Find a gown that makes you feel beautiful, make you feel like a Princess, it's within your budget and most importantly, that you LOVE IT!!! No maybes or "I like it" on this day.
12. When should you start looking? Right away! Most gowns take several weeks to months to arrive. And, if alterations are required, you need to plan accordingly. And, just in case you get it dirty or damaged before the wedding, make sure you have room to get these last minute things done without compromising your wedding schedule. To help with time management, I always suggest getting a gown off-the-rack. Gowns that are usually off-the-rack are discounted and can be altered to fit. See, already saving you money with this advice!
13. Budget. If you are figuring your dress in your budget, don't forget to budget for the accessories, shoes, alterations, cleaning and preservation.
14. What goes first, your gown, veil or shoes? The Gown always goes first! I've seen brides go into a store and don't find the gown they wanted but saw the veil and accessories they love and consider to purchasing them. Thank G-d I've been there at times to STOP them from making a big mistake. Always purchase your gown first! Then, you purchase your accessories, veil, shoes, etc.
15. How to choose the dress that fits perfectly? Well, first, highlight your best features and most importantly camouflage all the bad ones. Purchase a dress you will be comfortable wearing it for about 17 hours!! Same goes for the shoes. Remember, your new husband will be too tired after the wedding to massage your feet! So, break in the shoes beforehand!!
16. This is your day so, DO NOT LOOK AT BRIDEMAIDS' AND FLOWERGIRL DRESSES! FIRST, select your gown. Once that adventure is done, cross it off your to-do list and move to the next task.
17. Remember, your gown will set the mood. So, whether it will be a formal, semi-formal, traditional, etc., make sure your gown reflects the style and formality you intend to have for your wedding.

And most importantly, have fun and enjoy this moment.