

Your Wedding Dress is one of the most special purchases you will ever make, and some will have dreamt about it since you were a little girl. There is certainly something magical about trying on a wedding dress for the very first time, for it feels like nothing else you will ever wear. The feeling you get when you first catch your reflection in the mirror is pure romance.

With so many beautiful gowns to choose from it is hard to keep your feet on the ground, but it would be a shame not to try as many as you can. Stay grounded though, look past that initial impact and focus carefully on the detail.

Brides often have a style in mind before embarking on their search, often found as a picture in a bridal magazine or something they have always imagined. But it is important to remember that no matter how beautiful a dress is, it may look fabulous on one person and not on another. Whether it be romantic with ruffles, delicate and floaty, or simple and elegant, you will feel more comfortable and confident if your style reflects your personality and body shape. Don't forget to consider time of year and location. You won't look very alluring all hunched up, flowers against chest and shivering. The type of dress you choose should also be appropriate to your age; a bride in her 20's may be much more suited to an elaborate style than say one in her forties who may prefer something more chic and demure.

To help you think about what might suit you, examine your body shape and proportions. You want to accentuate your assets and hide the bits you don't like. Do you have a short waist or legs which you would like to make appear longer and leaner, or have you very broad or narrow shoulders you would like to balance up with your hips? Look at the cut and lines of the dresses to see what illusions they give.

Colour is also all important with so many versions of white, ivories, creams, oysters and champagnes. Ensure the dress is flattering to your skin tone and complimenting your own colouring. You should be wearing the dress not allow the dress to wear you.

Good fit is also essential; make sure that your dress is fitting, or will fit, well in all the right places.

A good bridal boutique will allow you space, time and honest helpful assistance without pressure. Do not feel pressured to buy from only one shop. This can lead to you making the best choice from their range, not necessarily the best choice for you. You will know if you have found your perfect dress, when you get that WOW factor. The one that gives you butterflies, makes your heart jump and puts a huge smile on your face. And you won't want to take it off. If you don't get that feeling – keep looking.

A helpful tip is to have a digital camera to hand so that you can get some shots from different angles and see yourself more how others will. It will also give you close ups of details, and help you to remember and compare. When you think you have found your dream dress, make another appointment to go back and try it again - just to make sure, and then you will know.

Take your time and enjoy...

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