



A R K A N S A S  
BRIDE

## Wedding Gown Buying Guide

### A Timeline & Tip Sheet for Arkansas Brides

#### 9-12 MONTHS

- Research wedding gown styles.
- Book appointments with bridal boutiques.
  - Schedule *at least* 1 hour per store to try on plenty of styles.
  - Bring appropriate shoes, bras, underwear, Spanx or slips.
  - Don't bring more than 2-3 people with you to avoid competing opinions.
  - Try gowns in different silhouettes, and in styles you didn't anticipate liking.
- Ask boutiques about upcoming sample sales and trunk shows. *Big discounts are often available during these events.*

#### 6-9 MONTHS

- Buy your wedding dress.
  - Made-to-order gowns require three to six months to make. *Be sure to order with enough time left for alterations. Build in time for unexpected or seasonal shipping delays.*
  - Consider an off-the-rack gown as a way to save money.
  - Ask about fabric choices. *Often, gowns come in multiple fabrics, each with a different price.*

- Factor alteration costs into your gown budget. Alterations can exceed \$400 depending on the intricacies of your dress and amount of work to be done.

- Ask about return policies or refunds. *Sales are usually final.*

- Narrow down bridesmaids dress choices.
- Order custom suits for the groom and groomsmen.

#### 3-6 MONTHS

- Your gown is ready!
- Schedule your fittings. *Generally, 1-3 fittings are required.*
- Try on bridal accessories like veils, belts, head pieces, jewelry and garters to see what you like.
- Order any custom veils or accessories now.
- Begin alterations.
- Order bridesmaids dresses now. *These generally take three months to get in; leave a month to spare for bridesmaid alterations.*
- Purchase cute dress hangers or monogrammed robes for getting ready photos.

#### 1-2 MONTHS

- Schedule your final gown fitting. *Take your shoes, veil and other accessories.*
  - Bring your mom, maid of honor or a bridesmaid so they can see how to help you get into your dress on the day of.
- Bridesmaids dresses arrive.
- Begin bridesmaid dress alterations.
- Rent the groom and groomsmen suits or tuxedos, if you haven't already.

#### 1-2 WEEKS BEFORE

- Pick up your gown from alterations. *Don't lose or gain much weight after this point.*
- Make sure to have it carefully or professionally steamed, if needed.
- Hang your gown in a secure and high place to ensure safe keeping.

#### AFTER "I DO"

- Designate someone to get your wedding dress home safely.
- Have your gown preserved professionally so you can treasure it forever.