

THE ULTIMATE

Wedding Gown Buying Guide

A TIMELINE & TIP SHEET FOR ARKANSAS BRIDES

9-12 MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING

- o 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.
- o Ask boutiques about upcoming sample sales and trunk shows. *Big discounts are often available during these events.*

6-9 MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING

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

3-6 MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING

- o Your gown is ready!
- o Schedule your fittings. *Generally, 1-3 fittings are required.*
- o Try on bridal accessories like veils, belts, head pieces, jewelry and garters to see what you like.
- o Order any custom veils or accessories now.
- o Begin alterations.
- o Order bridesmaids dresses now. *These generally take*

three months to get in; leave a month to spare for bridesmaid alterations.

- o Purchase cute dress hangers or monogrammed robes for getting ready photos.
- o Schedule engagement photoshoot.
- o Schedule regular beauty treatments: facials, massages, botox, etc.

1-2 MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING

- o 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.
- o Bridesmaids dresses arrive.
- o Begin bridesmaid dress alterations.
- o Rent the groom and groomsmen suits or tuxedos, if you haven't already.

1-2 WEEKS BEFORE THE WEDDING

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

AFTER "I DO "

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

NOTES