



# How to choose the right wedding dress

It's probably the most expensive dress you'll ever buy, so it's best to do your research. Here's a guide to finding the perfect dress for the curvy bride. By Daphne Chen

✓ **Pick a flattering cut for your figure**

■ **The A-line**

"It provides the best silhouette. This style (which flares from directly beneath the bodice) gives the appearance of an hourglass figure by nipping in at the waist, then flaring slightly from the hips down," says principal consultant Eunice Tan at Image Flair. "This creates a clean, flowing line to your shape, which is great for curvier figures."

■ **The empire-cut**

According to Tan, the empire-waist is another good choice. "The frock is narrowest just below the bust and conceals your waist and hips." This is also flattering for more boyish shapes, where your shoulders and hips are about the same width, and you have an undefined waist.

■ **The bias-cut**

If you have the curves, we say flaunt it! Your contours will look gorgeous in a bias-cut gown that will skim, but not hug, your curves too snugly. "If you're still a little conscious, wear a full body-shaper underneath to create a smooth bust-to-thigh line", says Tan.

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**Remember to bring the heels you plan to wear on your wedding day to the fittings. You want to make sure the hem length turns out perfect.**

✓ **Check your neckline**

Not all full-figures are shaped the same so it's still important to pay attention to your body shape.

■ **Hourglass**

**Your shape:** Small and defined waist and your shoulders are the same width as your hips.

**Pick:** V-necks, and sweetheart and scoop necklines flatter a strong shoulder and your bustline.

■ **Inverted triangle**

**Your shape:** Broad shoulders and narrow hips.

**Pick:** U-necklines will pull the eye inward and away from broader shoulders, minimising their width.

■ **Triangle**

**Your shape:** Full hips and bottom with narrow shoulders and a defined waist.

**Pick:** Go strapless or opt for an off-the-shoulder piece. Both of these styles create a horizontal line across your shoulders to broaden them.



✓ **Make it fit**

All wedding dress manufacturers have different size charts — most of which run small. So don't be surprised if you have to order a dress that is one or two sizes bigger than your usual. Be sure to give yourself enough time to go for two fittings and at least two weeks in between them for gown alterations. During fittings, be sure that the bodice fits perfectly. At your last fitting, do examine yourself in the gown from every angle to make sure there's no pulling or bulging. If you're not completely happy with it, don't hesitate to request for another round of alterations.

✓ **Know your trimmings**

Embellishments such as beading act as fabulous highlighters on your dress so that you can play up your best features.

Draw attention to the necklace to flaunt a sexy bustline, the bodice to show off a slim waist or the bottom of the dress if you are tall. Bows and ruffles are best left off unless it's something minimal like a small bow at the back.



✓ **Flaunt your arms**

Long-sleeved fitted arms can be particularly elegant for a plus-sized bride who might be uncomfortable with baring her shoulders and upper arms. "You can also look for wedding dresses with sheer chiffon

or lace sleeves — they give some camouflage while still being light and delicate," says Tan.

✓ **Flip through tabloids**

Thinking of designing your own gown? The best way to get inspired is by checking out the gorgeous dresses that curvy girls, like Jennifer Hudson, wear on the red carpet. Look for gowns in a lighter shade for your evening dress (so you have a rough idea as to how it will look in white), while there is more room for different shades in your dinner frock. Tear out the pictures that you love and work with your tailor to create your dream dress.

✓ **Pick the right fabric**

If you want something slinky, go for satin. "Silk isn't very forgiving to untuned areas," says celebrity stylist, June Ambrose, who dresses Mariah Carey. Satin with a duller sheen is a more flattering option. "Satin or jersey are a little heavier and drape nicely on curvy girls."



**Avoid wearing chokers. Not only do they look dated, they also create an unflattering horizontal line across the neck.**

**Experts from Bobbi Brown clue us in on "I do" three makeup must-dos before you say,**

• **You must:**

Draw attention to your assets. If you have doe-eyes, make sure your eyes are the centre of attraction. If blessed with cherub cheeks, sweep the brush from the apple of the cheeks to the hairline for a healthy glow.

• **You must:**

Give dimension to your face. Dust bronzer under your neck and the corners of your face, as subtle contouring will slim it.

• **You must:**

Slap on some sheer and natural lipplie that is not too far off your natural lip colour. Red flaming lips will just draw unwanted attention. Staying true to your skin tone makes sure you'll look fresh the entire day.

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