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Guide



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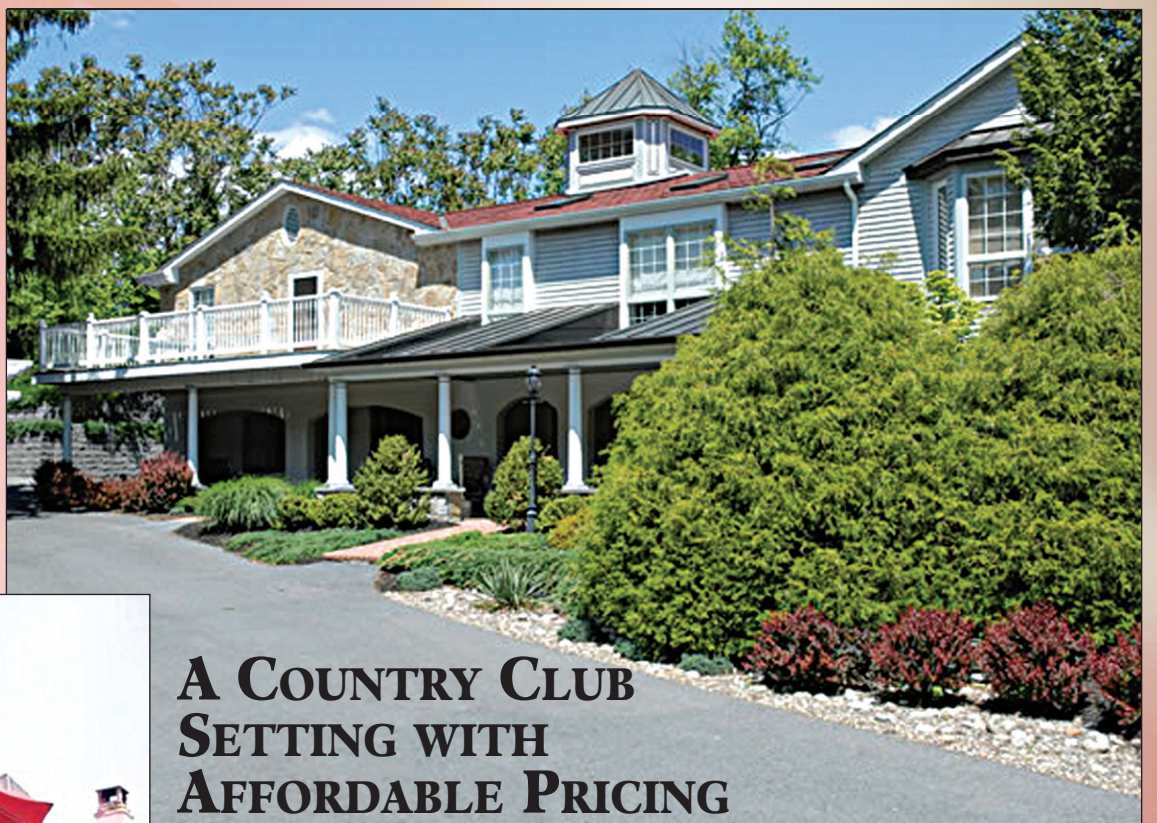


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WEDDING VEILS COMPLETE BRIDAL LOOK

The perfect dress is on the wish list of many a bride-to-be, but no bridal ensemble is truly complete until the bride chooses her veil.

Veils have been worn by brides at their weddings for centuries. Veils can be traced back to the Middle East, where veils helped protect against the weather while also preserving the modesty of the bride. In Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, veils were used as protection against evil spirits.

According to popular wedding website The Knot.com, until Vatican II, all Catholic women were required to have their heads covered in church, including during their wedding ceremonies. Veils were worn for this purpose, but they also symbolized trust in the groom and his love and companionship. Some Christians also see the veil as a visual representation of submission to the Church and to God. Others think of the veil as another beautiful accompaniment to their bridal gown, without attaching any additional meaning to the veil itself.

Veils come in various lengths and can complement the style of a wedding gown. They also tend to add glamour to brides' looks. Here are the types of veils from shortest to longest.

- Blusher: Blushers cover the face, though some extend only to mid-cheek on the bride.
- Flyaway: Flyaways cover just the back of the head. Shorter veils may work better on petite women.
- Shoulder: Shoulder veils are about 20 inches in length and will hit at the bride's shoulders or just below.
- Waist: Waist-length veils cascade down to the middle of the bride's waist.
- Fingertip: These veils extend down 38 to 42 inches, brushing against the bride's fingertips.

- Waltz/Knee: For a dramatic look, many brides may opt for waltz-length veils, which fall to the back of the knees.
- Chapel/Floor: Veils that extend to the floor may be referred to as "chapel" or "floor-length" veils. Such veils cascade slightly behind the bride. Veils can complete brides' wedding day looks. Shorter veils may be comfortable to wear throughout the day and evening, but brides may want to consider detachable veils if they are selecting lengthier options.

FLOWERS

When making floral arrangements for special events, such as weddings, anniversary celebrations or company galas, party planners can save substantial amounts of money sticking with native and in-season flowers. While exotic flowers flown in from afar may make stunning dining table centerpieces, the cost of importing those flowers can be considerable, possibly even more than the cost of the flowers themselves. In addition, conditions to keep non-native flowers looking their best must be ideal, which can be difficult for party planners to ensure. In-season plants are budget-friendly, as prices can skyrocket when party planners choose out-of-season blooms for their get-togethers. While it's possible to get many flowers out-of-season, others are available only in-season, saving planners the trouble of finding ways to pay the often exorbitant costs associated with finding and securing such blooms during their off-seasons. Planners who have their hearts set on particular blooms that are temporarily unavailable should discuss their options with local florists, who may suggest look-alike flowers that are similar in appearance and in-season.

REHEARSAL DINNER HOW-TO

Many couples find their wedding rehearsal dinners to be relaxing respites from the whirlwind of wedding planning. Such dinners enable the happy couple to slow down and enjoy themselves in a relatively casual gathering with their closest friends and family members.

Rehearsal dinners typically take place in the night or two before the wedding. The couple, members of their wedding party, the parents of the bride and groom and others involved in the wedding typically attend this dinner. The couple generally takes the time at the dinner to thank everyone for their contributions to the wedding and to offer some small gifts of appreciation. No rules govern rehearsal dinners, so couples have the freedom to plan the dinners as they see fit.

Rehearsal dinners often come immediately after the ceremony rehearsal, when the wedding party and the officiant go over the timing and details of the wedding. Make arrangements with the ceremony site and officiant prior to making dinner reservations. Parents of the groom traditionally host the rehearsal dinner, so they will be integral in planning the event. That means couples should keep an open and gracious mind. Remember, the rehearsal dinner doesn't have to be a lavish affair, and it can be customized to any budget or preference.

Some couples feel that hosting rehearsal dinners in casual settings can make the dinner more comfortable for members of the wedding, who can use the dinner as an opportunity to mingle and get to know one another before the wedding. This will help to Page 16-WED

tame nerves and enable the wedding party to loosen up and enjoy themselves even more. Some people may be more inclined to socialize and have fun when they're not worried about putting on airs.

Restaurants that have special meaning to the couple often make for great places to hold rehearsal dinners. The bride and groom can suggest their ideas, but ultimately it is the person handling the bill who has the final say. Couples who want greater control over the rehearsal dinner festivities can suggest hosting it themselves.

Despite its name, the rehearsal dinner doesn't actually have to be a dinner, as couples can opt for meals at a different time of the day, like brunch or lunch. An earlier occasion gives guests plenty of time to get home and rest up for the festivities of the wedding to come.

Toasts are expected at the rehearsal dinner, but they tend to be spontaneous, off-the-cuff remarks. A couple with a good sense of humor might not mind being roasted at their rehearsal dinners. The bride and groom should expect to say a few words of thanks to all in attendance, but remarks need not be too formal. Rehearsal dinners may even feature a little entertainment. Tech-savvy parents may put together a presentation with videos or photographs that chronicles the couple's lives separately and their life together. Rehearsal dinners provide an opportunity for couples and their families to spend time together before the larger festivities of the wedding pull them in multiple directions. Plus, they set a fun tone for the wedding weekend to come.

GROOMS: LOOK YOUR WEDDING BEST

Weddings are a chance for couples tying the knot to be the center of attention. All eyes will be glued to the bride and groom on this special day, which makes it even more important for couples to look their collective best. Brides might garner most of the attention on a couple's wedding day, but dashing grooms also will get their share of attention. As a result, grooms must be just as diligent as their blushing brides with regard to grooming and appearance on their wedding days. To look picture-perfect, grooms may want to include these grooming tips in their wedding day preparation.

HAIR - Schedule a haircut with a professional stylist roughly a week before the wedding to get your hair shaped and trimmed. Although trendy hairstyles may show off creativity, keep in mind that photos last forever, and it's often better to stick with a classic cut. A barber or stylist may suggest styles that best suit your face shape and hair texture. Above all, the haircut should be neat. Resist the urge to wash your hair every day before the wedding. Allow some natural oils to build up and make your hair shine in a healthy way.

SHAVING - Shaving is another thing grooms must consider. If you have a beard, make sure it is clean, combed and trimmed. Men who shave the day of their weddings may find their skin is sensitive and irritated, which can lead to redness. Unless your facial hair grows especially fast, shave the evening before. This is a good time to splurge on a professional shave with a straight razor at a barber shop. A hot shave from a professional will produce a close shave with the least amount of irritation when done correctly.

HANDS - Grooms also may want to book a manicure. Keep in mind that salons will do men's nonpolish man-

icures and pedicures, and they can be well worth the investment. Photos of entwined hands or close-ups of the ring exchange will have guests zeroing in on your fingers. Have hands look their best with clean, shaped fingernails and trimmed cuticles.

SKIN - Get plenty of sleep the night prior to the wedding. Being well rested will help reduce puffy eyes, dark circles and sallow skin. It will also put you in a more positive mood, which can help you enjoy the day even more. The day of the wedding, shower using water and a mild soap. Avoid any skin irritation by patting your face and body dry, rather than rubbing it with the towel. Moisturize your skin to avoid dry patches. Stores sell many moisturizers geared toward men's needs, often in unscented or more masculine fragrances.

Reducing shine is key for wedding day photos. Rely on face and hair products that will not add unnecessary sheen to your skin or hair to avoid making you look greasy. Matte hair waxes and sprays will tame tresses. Also, ask your fiancé to pick you up a package of blotting tissues if you are prone to oily skin. These absorbent, typically rice-paper sheets will remove oil from your face and keep sheen to a minimum.

SMILE - Make sure your teeth have been thoroughly brushed and that you have used a minty mouthwash so you're primed for that first kiss. Many grooms also opt for whitening treatments prior to the wedding so they have a dazzling smile.

On their wedding days, grooms will likely be photographed more than any other time in their lives. That means putting extra effort into personal grooming to look their best.

TAME WEDDING DAY NERVES

When couples tie the knot, many changes are in store, many compromises will be made and many lasting memories will be created. But in the weeks and months before their big days, couples can easily get caught up in the whirlwind of wedding planning, never taking inventory of their feelings until their wedding days have arrived.

Come their wedding days, couples should not be surprised if some nerves set in. A survey from the anxiety self-help resource The Fear Source indicated 71 percent of brides-to-be suffered from some type of nerves during the lead-up to their weddings. Ninety-two percent of brides experienced nerves on the day of the wedding or the evening before, while 66 percent reported that it affected their daily lives prior to their weddings or hampered their performance and enjoyment during the day itself.

According to Psych Central, a modern online voice for mental health information, emotional support and advocacy, pre-wedding jitters are common and can be the subconscious telling a person that

something needs to be remedied. Wedding nerves do not mean a wedding is doomed; it just means certain issues may need to be worked through. The following are some ways to tame wedding day nerves.

- Keep an open dialogue. Speak with your future spouse about the things that may be causing your anxiety. Maybe you have doubts on financial choices or where you will be living after the wedding. Communicating openly and honestly is one of the foundations of a strong relationship.
- Slow down and breathe. Wedding planning involves making many decisions, and sometimes couples move at breakneck speeds. Make slowing down a priority. Try to enjoy a quiet dinner with just the two of you. When enjoying peaceful moments, take deep breaths, which can be calming and revitalizing. If need be, consider signing up for a yoga or tai chi class to force you to slow down.
- Address performance anxiety. It's easy to build up the big day in your mind and hope that everything goes according to plan. But it's

impossible to plan for each and every outcome on your wedding day. Focus on everything that can go right, rather than worrying about what might go wrong. Also, realize that your guests are your friends and family members who will be forgiving of any hiccups along the way. You're bound to recover gracefully from any mishaps.

- Work on confidence. Wedding fears may stem from inadequate self-confidence. Give yourself a pep talk and surround yourself with positive people. Keep the worrywarts at arms' length for the time being.
- Recruit more help. Weddings are huge undertakings, so it's no surprise that couples sometimes feel overwhelmed. Ask reliable relatives or friends to double-check all of the last-minute details. This way you don't feel it is all on your shoulders.

Wedding days nerves are to be expected and often have little to do with the decision to get married. Planning such a big event can be nerve-racking, but there are ways to combat any anxiety that builds up as the big day draws near.