

BRIDES

Blog

Wedding Dress Shopping Tips for Pregnant Brides

WEDDING DRESSES

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Photo: Getty Images

First comes baby (bump), then comes marriage! Kerry Washington, Christina Aguilera, Olivia Wilde, Scarlett Johansson, and Mila Kunis are just a few pregnant-and-engaged celebrities. And if they decide to say "I do" with their baby bump à la Drew Barrymore they'll have no problem finding an expert tailor or designer to create a stunning maternity wedding gown, but it can be tougher for non-famous expecting brides to find the right dress. To help alleviate some of the stress that comes along with wedding dress shopping while pregnant, we reached out to a few experts to dish some tips:

Call the bridal salon first: Preparing always ensures a better result, so double-check if a dress shop has an array of sizes available before you stop in. "Ask if they can be put aside for you and make an appointment to go in and try them on," explains relationship expert and author April Masini. "Chances are you'll be greeted by a friendly salesperson that will treat you like a valued friend because you're not walking in cold, and risking no appropriate-sized gowns."

Choose the right silhouette to conceal your bump: For pregnant brides who want to hide their growing tummy, a strapless empire waist dress with a lace or tulle overlay is a smart choice. "Not only will the empire waist highlight the smallest part of your torso, but the nature of the fabric will create a light illusion of the lace as a beautiful design, taking the focus off the lower portion of a bride's figure," explains bridal stylist Lacy Pool.

Choose the right silhouette to flaunt your bump as well: Maternity doesn't have to mean matronly. Case in point: Olivia Wilde killed it in a tight green Gucci gown which put her growing baby bump on display at the 2014 Golden Globes. Channel the star on your big day by rocking a look that showcases your bundle of joy, just remember to find the right fabric. "Silk jersey, English netting and some laces will have elasticity to allow a bit of give and stretch to take shape of the silhouette and hug a 'happy hump,'" Pool says.

Always size up: Usually, it takes four to six months to get your wedding dress once you order it, which means your belly will have grown exponentially by the time you finally slip into the white gown. To ensure a proper fit, you'll want to carefully study sizing charts provided for the dress you're considering. "The general rule of thumb is to add an inch to each measurement for each remaining month of pregnancy from now until your wedding date," says maternity style blogger Becca Daniels. "Once you do the math, see where you end up on the designer's sizing chart and order a dress one size larger." This way, you can gauge your body's changes closer to your big day and alter your dress accordingly.

Embrace extra panels and corsets: Don't freak out if your final fitting day arrives and your dress is too tight. There's an easy solution: panels and corsets. "Ordering a yard of the identical fabric from your gown designer will get the materials ready in preparation for an expert seamstress to do her magic," Pool explains. "By adding a large panel in the closure of the gown in place of the zipper or the buttons and securing with a corset, you'll get a little growing room as well as cinch in the smallest part of your waist. It's literally the best way to change the fit of the dress up until the very last minute."

Keep it simple: There's no need to go overboard with an intricate, over-the-top gown or tons of statement jewelry for pregnant brides. "You need to remember that your bump should be thought of as an oversized accessory; don't try to compete with it," warns Emmy Award-winning stylist and author David Zyla.

Don't forget to get right the shoes: Your belly isn't the only thing that grows — your feet do, too. Since many future moms suffer from foot swelling it's important to take that into consideration when shoe shopping. Choose a stylish, yet comfortable kick with a lot of support and minimal heel height.

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