

# What am I going to wear?



*MK Pulse's* image consultant, *Nancy Stevens* of *Altered Image*, answers the dilemma of what to wear when those invitations come flooding in!

It's that time of year when those creamy envelopes start dropping through the letterbox, inviting us to weddings, balls and the races.

This can, however, prove to be very stressful because inevitably the first thought which springs to mind is: "What am I going to wear?" This, of course, should be the best part of being an invitee, but for some of you, not possessed with the shopping gene; this can prove to be 'Nightmare on Shopping Street'.

Ascertain what sort of wedding it is. If it's terribly posh, top hat and tails or black tie (late afternoon), then it's almost easier to choose an outfit because you know exactly what is expected.

If you are able to find out the colour scheme and what the M.O.B and bridesmaids are wearing, then forearmed is forewarned...

Traditionally head-to-toe pastels have been a perennial and these poor women spend all day trussed up like a toilet roll dolly holder, looking terribly uncomfortable.

Races

Can be worn with fascinator and bolero, wedges (so none of that sinking feeling...)



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If the wedding is very low key and casual, then smart casual is more difficult to achieve.

With my wedding clients, once we have established a relationship, I look at body shape, what colours would suit and what the budget is.

The English generally have the monopoly of hat-wearing at weddings and who could forget Andie McDowell's fab hat in *Four Weddings*?

If you aren't a savvy shopper and searching for the perfect outfit fills you with dread,

then I'm the equivalent of your Gok Wan but without the need to go on national TV and humiliate yourself in front of millions of people.

The races can prove to be a sartorial nightmare, just have a look at the fashion disasters at Aintree earlier this year. The adage, less is more, should be adhered to. The girls on the *The Only Way is Essex* show more restraint! An elegant maxi dress with wedges and a fascinator will be just perfect. No heel sinking into the grass and it's an outfit which can be worn again throughout the summer. I'm a great believer in getting value for money.

It is still not the done thing to wear cream or white to a wedding and I personally would not recommend black. Do

not, under any circumstances, try to upstage the bride. Once again, this is where maxi dresses come into their own, as cost-per-wear has to be a consideration and also it alleviates the need to do the fake tan, waxing or the wearing of tights which in the summer, is not the most comfortable experience.

Hats are back but as the delightful Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie proved, money does not buy class and those were Phillip Treacey hats! If you want to avoid 'hat hair', then fascinators are the way to go and cost a fraction of the price. They do, however, make the outfit that little bit more special.

If you are M.O.B or M.O.G and you do want to make a sartorial splash, then ensure that your hat is not too wide or high, particularly if you are vertically challenged as this can make you look like a toadstool.

SamCam, in my opinion, did commit a major fashion faux pas by NOT wearing a hat to the wedding of the decade and for this she has been severely berated. She never puts a foot wrong fashion-wise, but on this occasion, she did.

Wearing a suit can be so last century and a dress and bolero (as no woman past 40, likes her upper arms) or a pashmina is a much

Mother of the bride

Can be worn with hat or fascinator to match shoes.



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There are some utterly fabulous maxi dresses out there but if you are of petite proportions, this can prove to be a tad tricky as in some instances nearly a foot of fabric needs to be removed for the dress to be a sensible length and this can spoil the effect. They can also swamp you if you have a tiny frame, conversely however, a block of colour can make one appear taller rather than go for separates. Sadly, the High Street does not cater for petites much and what is petite can end up being terribly frumpy.

Colour blocking is massive this season and there is a plethora of amazing jewel colours as well as this season's most popular colour, salmon pink. Shoes and

bag no longer have to match as this is a bit "Queen Mum". Platforms are perfect for avoiding those teetering moments and are so comfortable.

So my advice is to go for an outfit which you're able to wear again as when I'm doing Wardrobe Weeding sessions, the most unworn outfits are those bought for weddings. Always think cost-per-wear. Have an utterly fabulous Wedding season! ☐

Wedding guest



This dress looks fab with a cream bolero and navy fascinator and can be worn again. If you are a plus size, this is THE most flattering dress. Monsoon do the best range of plus sizes on the High Street.

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*Nancy xx*