

The PLANNER



PICTURE PERFECT

You know what they say: Pics or it didn't happen. So you've hired a photographer to capture an album's worth of beautiful wedding-day photographs. Great! But there's more you can do to help guarantee good shots. We asked experts—including professional stylists, a makeup artist, and a photographer—to share their top tips for looking your best in wedding pictures (and any future photo ops, too).

TEXT BY CLAIRE SULLIVAN

THE DRESS

Don't reinvent yourself. Sure, it's your most special day ever, but if you choose a wedding-day style that simply makes you feel like a better version of yourself, you'll be more comfortable and confident the day of—and that will come across in photos. "When you're trying on dresses, notice your body language," says Julie Sabatino, stylist and founder of the Stylish Bride. Pay attention to your fidgeting (patting your hips to prevent poofs, or pulling up a strapless bodice over and over), as well as your

facial expression, and opt for the gown that you feel relaxed and happy in.

MAKEUP AND HAIR

Lay a Foundation "Sometimes the most important tools in your makeup arsenal are the things you don't see," says beauty expert Laura Geller. "Placing a thin, waterproof eye primer on your lids and around the bottom lashes will act like a magnet to keep the shadows and liners in place." Brides with oily skin or those prone to a shiny complexion outdoors can opt (continued on following page)

In This Section . . .

Kids at the Wedding—Yea or Nay?

How to Feel Your Best on Your Big Day

Caribbean Locations Beyond the Beach

Surprising Things You Can Rent

Merging Your Money

Your Last-Minute To-Do List

Everything You Never Knew You Needed to Know About Tears

Ask Martha

167



Lengthen the Arms

“Brides and bridesmaids tend to hold their bouquet up high, near their face, but this covers the torso—which can be unflattering,” says New York City–based photographer Jen Huang. Instead, position the bouquet lower, down around your belly button. Hold your arms with a slight bend to them and a finger’s length away from your body to engage your muscles for a leaner, stronger look.

for a matte all-over face primer to keep makeup in place and prevent skin from reflecting the photographer’s flash.

Sculpt and Define “Sculpting your eyes, cheeks, and lips will prevent you from looking one-dimensional in photos,” Geller says. Lightly rim your eyes in liner (not too much, or your eyes won’t look as open), and apply a touch of highlighter to the tops of the cheekbones for added contour—just avoid using it elsewhere, so your face doesn’t look washed out. For lips, Geller swears by lip liner (even if it’s nude) after applying lipstick and gloss, which acts as a sort of stencil to keep it all in place.

Touch Up the Guys, Too “A matte primer is invisible,” says Geller. “It will reduce shine on a bald head or a receding hairline.” Men can also opt for a tinted moisturizer to help smooth out skin.

Brighten Up “Hair generally photographs darker than it is, which can flatten out the skin tone,” says hairstylist and New York City salon owner Adel Chabbi. “Highlighting your hair is a great way to add light and dimension to a hairstyle. If you’re not used to color, I recommend balayage, a process in which highlights are painted into the hair for a look that’s natural and flattering.”

Get Closer

“When you’re trying to capture a large family shot, you want to give the idea of close relationships,” says Huang. She suggests standing as close together as possible, arms around each other. “I often ask family groups to stand uncomfortably close—it sounds humorous, but spaces between people can make it look like they don’t like each other. Touch and proximity are necessary to get a photo with a sense of intimacy.”



THE RIGHT POSE

Shift Your Shape According to Huang, tight shoulders can stiffen up your entire body. “I always ask brides to take a deep breath and relax their shoulders,” she says. “Their entire mood changes, their posture improves, and the tension in their faces disappears, allowing for a natural, realistic expression.”

Aim for Au Naturel When it comes to flattering facial expressions, natural is best, so don’t rush through your session, and follow your photographer’s cues to loosen up. “When I pose brides and grooms, I wait and watch for natural expressions, laughter, and conversation to spontaneously erupt,” says Huang. Asking a bride and groom to walk and kiss at the same time, say, often elicits giggles as they fumble around. It may feel a little silly, but it creates photo-friendly moments.

Enlist Help “On professional photo shoots, you’ll have a photographer, makeup artist, and stylist,” says Sabatino. So why not have a team like this for your wedding? “Designate a friend or hire a professional to help keep long dresses away from any dirt, straighten bow ties, and help everyone look their best.”

10. 22

The most popular wedding date in 2016.



SHIRA SAYS

“If you’re doing a first look, consider taking a little breather right after. Even though a first look is intimate, you’ve often got photographers and videographers pointing lenses your way and people focusing on you. So take a moment alone for the two of you to connect and enjoy each other.”

—Shira Savada, *real weddings* editor

EVONNE & DARREN WONG OF U ME US STUDIOS (BRIDE); CORBIN GURKIN (GROUP); STEPHEN KENT JOHNSON (SHIRA)

MY FAVORITE
5

TIPS FOR FEELING YOUR BEST THE MORNING OF

Nutritionist and best-selling health author Kimberly Snyder suggests a combo of rest, exercise, and smart choices for meals.

Prep for Sleep

For quality z’s the night before your wedding, focus on calming your senses. Turn off electronics about an hour before sleep, and skip the late-night snack. “Try to have your last meal three to four hours before bed.”

Still awake? “Try a few drops of lavender, ylang-ylang, or citrus essential oil on your pillow.”

Drink Lemon Water

To help keep your tummy settled, have a mug of hot lemon water when you wake, and sip a chilled version throughout the day. “Lemon benefits digestion and can reduce bloating.”

Break a Sweat

“Exercise can improve circulation and boosts your mood, so allot time for a workout.” No need to go overboard—a 30-minute yoga session, brisk walk with your ’maids, or solo jog will calm nerves and provide a healthy glow. Just allow plenty of cool-down time.

Get a Massage

“Massage helps relieve stress and promotes a better complexion.” Hire a masseuse for a bit of pampering, or go DIY: “Mix coconut or sesame oil with hot water and massage your entire body in the direction of your heart before hitting the shower.”

Eat for Energy

Simplify your meals so you feel energized and satisfied but not overly full. Try a green smoothie for breakfast, and for lunch, go for an all-veggie soup or a light, fiber-filled salad with avocado.



Should We or Shouldn’t We? HAVE KIDS AT THE WEDDING

The more the merrier, or no kids allowed? To help you decide, we sought advice from couples who did and didn’t include little guests, and a planner who’s seen it all.



We Did... Without a Babysitter

“We initially decided no kids except flower girls and the ring bearer, but ended up stretching the list for those who otherwise couldn’t come. I don’t think anyone noticed them running around—I definitely didn’t, anyway! The kids were well-behaved during the ceremony, and at the reception they had their own table and mostly kept to themselves, playing yard games outside. One of my nieces wanted to dance with me all night, which was so special.”

—Michelle Reigle, married to Dallas Reigle

We Did... With a Babysitter

“We let each family decide if they wanted to bring children along. Our planner recommended a babysitting service, which we hired for our venue. That way, parents could check on kids during the reception and the babysitter was close by. The kids actually gravitated toward one another, so they wanted to be with the sitter instead of the adults. Everyone was able to enjoy the party, and I think the kids had a great time, too!”

—Leigh Crandall, married to Roberto Baibich

We Didn’t

“We decided not to invite children, with the one exception of my 4-month-old niece. One of the reasons we made the decision was based on my experiences at weddings where kids distracted other guests and caused parents to stress over keeping their children quiet. We let our guests know by addressing the invitations to parents only, and we made it a blanket rule to avoid any hurt feelings. We had an evening reception, so in many ways it ended up being nice for our friends with young kids to have a chance to enjoy themselves.”

—Rachel Gantz, married to Ken Gantz

A Planner Says...

“Discuss it as you’re shaping the vision for your event, then stay consistent rather than excluding some children but not all. If you exclude kids, address the invitation appropriately, and consider a follow-up call to communicate your reasoning (for example, you’re having a formal sit-down dinner) and smooth over any disappointment. If you include kids, consider providing child care or seating them in a special space. Incorporate details that will create a fun experience (a separate play space, an activity at their seats, a creative meal designed just for them) and make them feel special, too.”

—Stefanie Miles of Stefanie Miles Events

ELIZABETH MESSINA (KIDS); GETTY IMAGES (MASSAGE)