Tuxedo choices for your wedding day

There are many grooms-to-be who leave choosing their wedding day attire to the last minute. After all, it's something that doesn't require much thought at all, right?

Actually, choosing your attire requires careful consideration of several variables. As such, many men are intimidated by the process — another reason for procrastination.

However, acquiring a few pointers will help make the process easier if you have limited experience with wedding day attire.

It's first important to consider the style of your wedding. What time is it being held? What is the size of the wedding party and the number of attendants? Will it be held in a church with a reception at a fancy catering hall, or is it a more laid-back affair at a park or on the beach?

All of these questions will help determine the formality of the event. Your wardrobe choices should coincide with this level of formality.

Tuxedos are often the attire of choice for weddings that are moderately or ultra formal. A tuxedo with a bow tie and tails is a very formal look. For the majority of weddings, a tuxedo without tails, with a matching vest and regular tie, will be adequate for the groom and groomsmen.

On some occasions, especially casual weddings, grooms choose to wear a sports jacket and slacks, rather than a tuxedo.

Tuxedoes are flattering for most men, especially when a black tuxedo is chosen. Black is slimming, and simply slipping into a tuxedo can enable anyone to look sophisticated.

Working with a tuxedo shop representative can help you find a tuxedo that fits well. These garments are available in a number of sizes, but a reputable shop will make minor alterations to ensure a perfect fit.

You want to be sure there is no pulling in the jacket and that the pants are a good length. Also, shirtsleeve length is important (the cuffs should extend past the jacket a little bit), as well as the fit of the shirt collar. You want to be comfortable the entire duration of your wedding.

Tuxedo jackets come in many styles, with the basics being single- or double-breasted. Double-breasted jackets may add a little bulk, which should be avoided by heavy men or those who are very slim.

Jackets also come in different lengths. Choose one that is proportionate to your height, so your body does not look overwhelmed by the jacket. Here are a few of the styles:

• Cutaway jacket— This jacket is shorter in the front and tapers to one longer tail in the back. It is traditionally a formal daytime jacket.

• Traditional tuxedo jacket— As mentioned, this can be single- or double-breasted and feature varied numbers of button closures. The lapels may also be varied.

A peaked lapel forms a "V" at the collar and points upward. A notched lapel has an indentation at the collar in the shape of a triangle. A shawl lapel has no indentation and smoothly curves around the neck.

• Mandarin jacket— Mandarin-style jackets do not have a lapel but a collar that stands straight up. There are six buttons along the front. It is worn with a mandarin-style shirt without a tie.

• Long coat— The long coat is best worn by tall, broad-shouldered men and is traditional in colder weather. The coat extends beyond the fingertips of the wearer.

• Dinner jacket— This is a variation on the regular tuxedo jacket, but it is usually ivory or white in color. This can set the groom apart from other members of the wedding party.

Many grooms-to-be opt to rent their tuxedo instead of purchase one. Wedding experts recommend renting the attire three months before the wedding. All groomsmen should rent their tuxedos from the same shop for a uniform look.

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It is also customary to coordinate the tuxedos with the gowns bridesmaids will be wearing. One way to do so is with a similar colored tie, vest or cummerbund. Take a color swatch of one of the bridesmaids' gowns with you to the tuxedo store for assistance with matching the look.

Pick up the tuxedo a day or two before the wedding and try on every piece, including the shoes, to check for fit. This way you have time for an exchange if something is not right or to pick up a missing tie or cufflink, which is apt to happen.

Rented tuxedoes usually need to be returned the day after the wedding or the next business day. Elect a member of the wedding party to handle tuxedo returns, because you're likely to be on your honeymoon at this point.

Source: Metro.

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