

Packing Your Wedding Dress

There are really only two options for getting your wedding dress to your destination – ship it ahead or take it with you.

Option 1: Ship Ahead

Our recommendation is to **have your dress shipped professionally**. The thought of parting with your dress may send shivers up your spine, but this is your safest and least cumbersome option.

If you choose this option, you **MUST** first arrange with your Wedding Coordinator or Concierge to *receive and store your dress* for you until you arrive.



All Wedding Dress shops can provide you with a box large enough to hold your dress, and tissue paper to pack it with to prevent excessive wrinkling. If you are going to ship your dress ahead, this box **should then be wrapped** in a plastic garbage bag (*to guard against moisture*) and **placed inside a more sturdy shipping box**, and enough bubble-wrap (*preferred*) or foam peanuts to completely surround your dress box.

Visit your local Post Office, UPS Store, FedEx, or other full-service professional shipping shop and discuss your shipping, packaging and **insurance choices** with the clerks. They should be highly knowledgeable and helpful in determining the best way to get your dress where it needs to go in tip-top shape.

It's important that you choose a service that provides **full insurance coverage** and a tracking number with true dynamic (*up-to-the-minute*) tracking capabilities. Make sure that your dress arrives at your wedding destination at least a week before you do – that way if anything goes wrong, you have time to do something about it.

***** Don't forget to arrange with your destination's Wedding Coordinator or concierge to store your dress for you until you arrive***.**

Option 2: Taking it With You

If shipping is not an option, or makes you too nervous, then forego one piece of your carry-on luggage and take your dress package *on board with you*. In this case, put the dress in a hanging garment bag, then inside the dress box but **DO NOT SEAL** the box (*TSA may ask to inspect the contents and also on smaller planes the box may not fit in the overhead, in which case you should be able to hang it*).

Don't check it in with your luggage, since one of the most likely places your package will be damaged is in baggage handling....your dress **MUST** go 'carry on' with you.

Most airlines will work with you **if you call them in advance** to inquire about carrying it on board and hanging it instead of using the overhead storage, and ask again when you check in and board. If it turns out that you cannot hang it, then keep it in the box for overhead storage, but be careful placing it in overhead bin and watch carefully that another passenger doesn't damage it.

If – **when you call the airline** – you are told you must check your dress package (*generally this only happens if you are on a plane that is too small to accommodate a closet or lacks large enough overhead storage*), then be prepared to check it – use a **hard-sided suitcase** to avoid any possibility of damage during baggage handling. Be sure the dress box fits snugly within the suitcase and stuff any spaces with other clothes to prevent movement.

Regardless of how well you plan your dress's trip, *prepare for the unexpected* – a last-minute plane change (*it happens*) can mean checking the dress **AFTER** being told there'd be no problem hanging it....if that happens, buy the least expensive hard-sided roll-on bag at a luggage store in the airport (*most airports have one*) along with a TSA-approved bag lock and **gate check it**. Sure, it's an added expense but don't sweat the small stuff, *keep in mind the goal* – getting it there so you can shine like you deserve to on your big day!

Also, **HAVE A "PLAN B"**...this might be a rented dress or an alternate (*and more simple*) dress **IN CASE** yours goes astray....it may be far from ideal, but it still much better than getting married in someone else's borrowed dress, or (shudder!) shorts and a tank top.

Some Final Tips from our Experts:

1. Once you arrive at your destination, remove your dress from its package as soon as possible.
2. Hang it in a clean, dry, dust-free, well-ventilated place where you have enough room to spread the skirt out over a white, cotton sheet covered floor (*which housekeeping should be able to provide*).
3. Stuff the sleeves and bodice with white acid-free paper to maintain the dress's shape. If there are any noticeable wrinkles, the hotel's laundry service will be able to steam them out for you, or may have a portable steamer you can borrow.

Although we've focused on the dress, **don't forget the rest of your wedding outfit** — undergarments, shoes, accessories, veil, any special makeup you'll be using, etc — pack all of it together with your dress—if you're shipping your dress, include it all in the shipment—so it stays together (*with your makeup double-packed in waterproof pouches or ziploc-style bags*).

And remember the old adage "**what's good for the goose.....**", meaning *don't forget about your groom's wedding day attire* — whatever he's wearing — whether it's owned or rented — or if he's bringing it along as opposed to picking it up there, it will need just as much attention to be sure it gets to where he needs it to be.

Lastly, enjoy your special day!

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