

# The History Of White Wedding Gowns

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When looking back at history, marriages and weddings have changed significantly since earlier times. When a couple got married in medieval times, it was not simply a union between the bride and groom. It often encompassed the marriage of two families or even two businesses. The wedding gowns that were worn by the bride were considered a status symbol that represented the status and position of the bride's family.

The type of material and colors of the wedding gowns, especially among the upper class and nobility, were meant to show the importance of the couple's families. In the years that followed, brides continued to be adorned in silk, satin and furs along with displaying many bold colors in their wedding gowns. The bride's wedding dress continued to be a representation of the social status, and those of lesser stature wore gowns that were similar in design to those worn by the wealthy, but made from materials of lesser value. The length of the train often determined the wealth of the bride's family, as well as the amount of material used in the wedding dresses. In more recent history, brides were wearing wedding gowns designed after those of popular culture at the time. This was the trend in the western world after the turn of the 20th century. For example, during the 1920's a bride would often wear a short gown, resembling the dresses of the so-called "Roaring 20's" with a long train in the back. Queen Crosses Boundary With White Gown It wasn't until around 1940 that wedding gowns reverted back to the designs of the Victorian age. This is the style that is currently being worn by the modern day bride. The color of wedding gowns prior to the wedding of Mary, Queen of Scots would have been designed with bold colors of purple and reds. When the queen married Francois II of France, she became the first bride to wear white. It was considered as a slap in the face to the French, because at that time white was the national color of mourning in France. However, white wedding gowns did not really catch on until the wedding of Queen Victoria and Albert of Saxe-Coburg. The official wedding picture of her wearing a white gown was widely publicized and prompted many brides to choose white as the color for their own gowns. The amount of material used in the gown remained a symbol of the bride's status in life with many of the brides from poorer families wearing simple church dresses in white. Throughout history, white wedding gowns were considered a sign of innocence and purity, and somewhere along the line was thought to symbolize virginity. This notion has slowly faded and most brides choose white wedding gowns regardless of the current circumstances of the couple. It is not unusual for white to be worn during second and even third weddings allowing the bride to have a white-themed wedding.

Brought to you as a courtesy from the Wedding Gowns Help Center, a member of the Wedding Planning Ideas network.

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