

Packing Wise

Most destination brides ask the paramount question: What's the best way to pack and transport your wedding attire? Find out from *Beverly Clark* how to safely get your gown out of town, whether you're traveling by plane, train or automobile.

Wrap it Up

When you pack the wedding dress at home, use a sturdy box large enough to hold the gown. Line the box with white, acid-free tissue or unbleached muslin and fold the gown so that the top faces up when you're finished—add tissue or muslin in between each folded layer to further protect the fabric, then stuff the bodice, sleeves and any bows. Unless you're shipping your dress, put it in a garment bag before placing it in the box.

Plane and Simple

If you're flying to your faraway affair, be sure to carry your dress onboard with you. Some airplanes allow travelers to hang garment bags in their coat closets. Or, pack the garment bag carefully in a hard-sided suitcase and stow it in an overhead compartment. The same thing applies for the groom—store the tux or suit in a carry-on bag or hand it over to the flight attendant. To transport the bridal veil, put it in a hat box, and roll the veil to help prevent wrinkles.

Train Bound

Again, store your dress in a garment bag and place it within sight, preferably in a spot where no one else can throw a suitcase or heavy bag on top of it. If you'll be traveling when the train is likely packed with people, it may be wise to fold the garment bag with the dress inside a hard-sided suitcase to protect it.

Drive Away

A near-foolproof way to transport your gown is by car. If you're not driving yourself, ask a driving member of the bridal party to bring the wedding dress along. Before putting the dress in a garment bag, use plenty of tissue and drycleaner



bags to stuff the gown so that it maintains its shape. Then drape it flat across the backseat.

In the Mail

Another option is to ship the gown via FedEx, DHL, UPS or Global Priority Mail. This way you can track the shipping of your dress online and know who receives it at the wedding destination. After packing the dress in your own box or one given to you by the carrier, wrap the box in plastic as well as bubble wrap. Insuring the dress is of course worth every penny. And to be on the safe side, make sure the gown arrives at least two or three days ahead of you.

Smooth Moves

Once at the destination, unwrap your attire and hang it up right away in a clean, dry space to let the wrinkles fall out. You can also stuff the bodice with tissue paper to maintain the gown's shape. Unless you (or the wedding coordinator) know and trust the commercial cleaner used by the hotel or resort, don't send it away for cleaning. Use an iron and press the wrinkles starting on low heat on the wrong side of the fabric. If you use a portable hand-steamer, wrap the head of the steamer in a towel to avoid spotting sensitive fabrics. As with any questions concerning your wedding day, don't be afraid to ask the onsite wedding coordinator for transporting tips.