

# The Dallas Post Fall Bridal Showcase

## Tuxedos and ties for wedding swells

By Mike Dale  
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Grooms choosing a smashing ensemble for their wedding day need not be traumatized by overwhelming choices. The decision falls into place quite handily when you consider: Is the wedding in spring, summer, winter or fall? What time of day will the ceremony be held? Will you include a wedding party? How big? What kind of wedding will it be — traditional, eccentric or simple?

### FORMAL WEDDINGS

For very formal daytime weddings, grooms could wear a long jacket, cutaway-style, in black or gray. Trousers could boast a classic side stripe. A white shirt should have wing collars and French cuffs, with studs, a vest, cummerbund, an ascot or four-in-hand tie, black dress shoes and matching hat/gloves and overcoat.

Grooms with formal evening weddings (ceremony after 6 p.m.) could wear black trousers and coat with a white vest, cummerbund and tie. Donning a black top hat and white gloves tied together by a black or gray overcoat would add *joie de vivre*.

### SEMIFORMAL WEDDINGS

This becomes a process of elimination from formal weddings. Matching or contrasting jackets, trousers, shirts, cummerbunds, vests and ties are standard semi-formal wedding fare.

However, delete haute couture accessories such as hats, gloves, overcoats, ascots, etc.

### INFORMAL WEDDINGS

Two styles of dress distinguish this category: the business suit for the conservative set and the "anything goes" look for eccentrics.

Should you opt for a simple wedding in your back yard — or perhaps a civil ceremony at the county courthouse — a business suit will suffice for most grooms. Choose black, gray, navy, dark blue or white, with coordinating tie.

Eccentric bashes are limited only by the imagination. A skydiver tying the knot could wear a tux under his jumping regalia; surfers could wear sandals and shorts, with a white shirt and long, cutaway jacket.

### FASHION SENSE

Fortunately, formal wear is following the fashion world these days. The '90s have ushered in a more relaxed look. Shoulders are softer, fabrics are sensual to the touch, lines are easy on the eye, the fit is less than stuffy than traditional English wear, and the look is elegant.

Consider the shawl tuxedo. Popular among members of "high society" in the 1920s and '30s, it's ever-so-slightly casual look is made for today's softer styles: jackets with rounded shoulders; fabric draped around the chest, and trousers with a fuller cut.

Some unusual entries in the formal wear race? The Ze Tux! by Pierre Cardin has a pseudo V-line from shoulder to pocket. The Grief Companies offer a houndstooth dinner jacket. Henry Grethel boasts a double-breasted tail with matching waistcoat. Raffinati sports a black-and-white bird's-eye fabric.

### TUXEDO HUNTING

Making the correct choice in formal wear takes persistence, patience and the help of a professional. Learn the difference between single-breasted vs. double-breasted jackets.

Collars come in various flavors: shawl, peaked and notched. Bow ties, ascots and four-in-hand

neckwear purvey certain feels.

Cuff links, studs, pocket squares, cummerbunds and suspenders add the spice to your ensemble.

Also take into consideration the fathers of the bride and groom. Today's weddings see them matching formal attire with groom and attendants. When hunting for a formal wear shop, make sure it offers national labels.

Visit several shops and try on different styles. Ask plenty of questions. Gather information.

Do initial scouting three to six months before the wedding day. In terms of fit, jackets should feel comfortable at the neck and shoulders; stand and sit with the jacket buttoned.

Shirts should cuff up to 1 inch below the jacket line. Vest should line up with front of the coat. Trousers should fasten comfortably. Shoes should match or complement the rest of the ensemble. When picking up the tux — two to three days in advance of the wedding — make sure there are no stains, cigarette burns, fabric snags, and the like. Also count the buttons on the jacket.

### ACCESSORIZING

Cummerbunds, bow ties and vests can add zest and zing to otherwise traditional formal wear. Why? Because they reflect more temporal (or fads, if you prefer) styles of dress. Embroidery and tapestry, for example, adds contrast and punch to basic black tux-



### Gorgeous grooms

The wedding day is a time for grooms to shine in elegant formal wear such as this single-breasted shawl tuxedo.

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edos and white formal shirts.

Suggestions: The Fireworks series cummerbunds boast purple-silver and red-silver lame stripes. And Raffinati offers colorful and bold tie-and-cummerbund combinations in fun polka dot prints or paisley motifs.

### FORMAL DO-DON'TS

Brides may be under a higher powered microscope on the wedding day, but that doesn't mean Uncle Miltie and Aunt Polly aren't examining their nephew-the-groom.

Looking your best when in a tuxedo goes to a higher plateau when adhering to formal wear "rules." Cummerbunds should be worn with pleats face up. The wing collar is worn behind the bow tie rather than in front.

Pleated white shirts are the classic choice; ruffled or pastel shirts look dated. Black patent pumps or oxfords are the only shoes appropriate for a formal affair. Black silk hosiery should be worn, except with a white tuxedo.

Boutonnieres should be placed on the left lapel; a silk pocket square makes a smart alternative. When it comes to jewelry, less is more.

### THE GROOM'S GROOM

Want to look your best for the first day of the rest of your life? Get a haircut a few days to one week before the wedding. Hair should look controlled but not shiny.

Leave shaving for the last possible minute. Take it slow and steady when shaving to avoid nicks.

Splurge on a manicure. Hands will be noticed in photographs.

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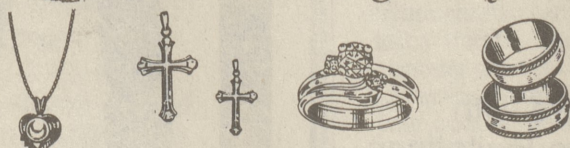


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