

FILENE'S BASEMENT, INC.

Strategies for Success at the Filene's Basement Bridal Gown Sale (aka "The Running of the Brides")



The Week Before the Sale:



Pick a team -- people whose taste you trust and are willing to get in there and do shopping battle for you

Hold a pre-sale meeting with your team

- come up with a team uniform- matching hats, t-shirts, headbands, carry whistles-anything that would make it easier to find each other in the crowd
- assign jobs to team members—someone to gather, someone to trade, someone to help you in and out of the dresses, someone to guard your

- inventory from prowlers
- tear out pages from bridal magazines, or print styles from on-line wedding gown sites to show your team what you're looking for
- pick place to rendezvous in the store

The Morning of the Sale:



Dress code-- wear a sports bra and shorts or a bathing suit so you can try on dresses anywhere in the store; **DO NOT WEAR FLIP FLOPS** if you plan to participate in the “rush to the racks” (we’ve seen a couple of nasty tumbles)

Leave your handbag at home—you’ll need both hands for this.

Please, NO MAKE-UP. You wouldn’t want to see the dress of your dreams only to find it smeared with lipstick. **CLEAN HANDS** are appreciated.

No food or drinks inside the store; get rid of trash before the doors open in the receptacles provided

Best Time to Arrive



The doors open at 8am. Brides-to-be and their teams who have been in line the longest will get to the racks first. In fact, it’s possible that the racks will be bare by the time you get into the store. **DON’T DESPAIR!** The dresses are not all gone. You’ll see brides trading or putting dresses back on the racks almost immediately. Use the first hour to look for brides who are trying on dresses you like. Then, be there to grab or trade for her “rejects.”

INSIDER TIP: If you’re not up to the chaos of store opening, arrive late morning or anytime up to store closing. Dresses will be back on the racks and the atmosphere will be much calmer. **REMEMBER,** this sale looks a lot more competitive than it really is—most of the hundreds of people you see in the rush to the racks are helpers, not buyers. Each team ends up with just one dress. (Alright, sometimes two, but that’s rare). There are still plenty of dresses to choose from. In fact, *last year over 90% of the brides-to-be who came to this sale found their dream dress.*

At the Event



Be nice—with all the excitement, shoppers have been known to get a little territorial and competitive. As our security manager once said to a TV reporter, “you don’t want to be walking down the aisle knowing you had to punch somebody out to get the dress.”

Be considerate—have your helpers put dresses you don’t want on the hangers and back on the racks. Think of how disappointed *you’d* be if you found your perfect wedding dress, only to see that it had been trampled on and damaged.

Be fair—keep only the dresses you are seriously considering, and set the others free as soon as possible.

Remember, wedding gowns don’t always run true to size—look not only for your regular dress size, but try a size or two bigger as well. Even if a dress isn’t the perfect fit, at this price it may be worth the cost of alterations. Experts on gown cleaning and alterations will be on hand to advise you.

Try on whatever comes your way--sometimes a gown that isn’t what you pictured yourself wearing turns out to be “the one.”

Be decisive--it’s only a one-day sale and gowns are not returnable.

Have fun--if you find a dress, great. If not and you still have some time to look, go to www.filenesbasement.com/bridal.jsp for the city and date of the next sale.