

***What's a Watteau?  
What Every Bride Needs to Know  
About Trains***

Every bride intuitively knows that the allure of her gown resides in the details. So selecting just the right touches can require much time and energy as you begin to define your own personal style. This will certainly require effort on your part, but in the long run will pay off amply when you achieve just the look you are going for. Today's bride has more options than ever before which can at times make crafting your own personal style seem a little daunting. *Not to worry!* Choice is a good thing and deciding on something as essential as the train you wish to have for your gown can be a delight if you know just what it is you are looking for. With this in mind check out all the options you have as you endeavor to define your own personal train style!

*Here is the terminology to help you find and try on the different train styles:*

- ∞ *Brush:* Reaches just to the floor beneath your dress hem, 'brushing' the floor as you walk. This style works with virtually all wedding types as it can be formal to less formal, appropriate for outdoor weddings for its lack of drag, and fine for beach weddings. Brides say they can move most easily in a train of this type. Walking, turning and moving is not a problem during the ceremony, and they're happy not to have to carry around six pounds of bustled fabric all night.
- ∞ *Court:* A short and maneuverable train, the court attaches at the waist and extends behind you for three feet.
- ∞ *Chapel:* A formal to semi-formal style, the chapel train attaches at the waist and extends behind you for four to five feet.
- ∞ *Cathedral:* A formal style of train, this one attaches at the waist and extends behind you for six to seven feet.
- ∞ *Royal:* An ultra-formal style, the royal train extends ten feet or more from its attachment position at your waist.
- ∞ *Watteau:* Attaches at your shoulders or the top of your back (yes, like a cape) and falls to the bottom hem of your dress or just a little bit beyond that.

The train of your wedding gown may quite possibly be the most elegant accent you incorporate into your look. For this reason, you'll want to pay close attention to what works for you when selecting this bridal essential. The bottom line-what's *your* train style? Do you see yourself as ultra-formal with yards of glorious train trailing behind you, or would something short and maneuverable suit you better? Let's face it, the *royal* may be your heart's desire, but could be a disaster if you're planning an outdoor wedding. Can't decide? You're not alone. Some brides have been known to have two- one for the ceremony and one for the reception. However, if this doesn't fit with your budget (and for many of us it doesn't) go with the one that reflects the essence of who you are which is always the most important thing to remember when defining and creating your own unique bridal style.

Sharon Naylor's newest book is *What's Your Bridal Style*, co-written with Casey Cooper of Botanicals Inc. in Chicago. This book outlines the NEW first step in wedding planning, helping you to define your style before you talk to any of your wedding vendors. Look for it at [www.sharonnaylor.net](http://www.sharonnaylor.net) and [www.botanicalschicago.com](http://www.botanicalschicago.com).

For example, just what is a *watteau* and how on earth would you ever know if you even wanted to wear one? A *watteau* is a type of train that attaches at your shoulders or the top of your back (yes, like a cape) and falls to the bottom hem of your dress. So, if this style is for you, go for it! If you're planning an outdoor wedding a *brush* train would be perfect as it reaches just to the floor. This train gently *brushes* the ground as you walk and makes movement a dream because you are not bogged down with reams of bustled fabric to worry about. The court, the chapel and the cathedral ascend in length from three feet of train to as much as six or seven feet depending on which one you choose. These three styles all attach at the waist and vary in degree in terms of formality. The court is the shortest and most maneuverable, followed by the chapel which can be either formal or semi with four to five feet of train trailing behind you. The cathedral is the most formal of the three "C's" and can extend out as far as seven feet. And finally, there's the royal train. The royal attaches at the waist and can extend ten feet or more, making quite a statement for the ultra-formal bride.