

## Beautify your hands for that big day

Some couples begin their wedding preparations up to a year in advance of the big day. They're wise — nothing should be left to the last minute.

And that includes the bride's hands and nails, says award-winning manicurist Debbie Krakalovich. Although the manicure itself can be done a day before the ceremony, the hands should be treated to good care well before that.

Krakalovich, owner of the Nail Shoppe in Toronto and 1986 winner of an international manicurist competition in New York City, offers some advice on beautifying your hands for the special day.

You should have weekly moisturizing treatments, she says, either a hot-glove treatment at a salon or a petroleum jelly treatment at home. For the latter, simply smear on the jelly before retiring and cover the hands in old gloves or socks to keep the bedding grease-free.

Never cut or trim the cuticles; just push them back and massage in a cuticle remover, which dissolves dead skin.

"That cuticle is a protection — it's like a weather stripping on a door," Krakalovich says, explaining that without it, dirt and bacteria could get in at the base of the nail and damage nail growth.

Not only that, she adds, the more you cut, the thicker the cuticle will grow back in.

Never file your fingernails after a bath, when they will be soft. It causes splitting. Toenails, however, which are much thicker, should be soaked before cutting.

To dress up the nails, take off any old polish by wiping the nail with polish remover in outward strokes. If the

nails are dry and brittle or if you remove polish daily, you should use a conditioning polish remover or at least one with a low level of acetone.

File the nails from side to centre using short, one-way strokes; sawing back and forth causes splitting. The emery board should be on a slant under the nail to avoid peeling at the tip. Shorten the nail with the abrasive side of the board, and shape with the fine side. Don't file the sides of the nail, just the tip.

Soak the hands in warm, soapy water to cleanse the nails and soften cuticles. Use a pumice stone to remove any nicotine stains or hard skin at the fingertips.

Push back cuticles with a cotton-wrapped blunt end of an orange stick, and then cover them with cuticle remover, massaging it in with a circular motion.

To protect the nails while gardening, washing dishes or scrubbing floors, wear rubber gloves with cotton linings. Rubber alone makes the hands perspire too much, and the body oils can wreck the manicure; the cotton lining, however, absorbs the oils.

Krakalovich suggests the best way to ensure beautiful nails is to start with a professional manicure, where you can watch pro techniques and learn about various products available. The expert start will make it easier for you to maintain the nails.

## There's an exciting array of bridal gowns this Fall

Exchanging vows in a gown designed by David Fielden would stand a bride in some pretty high-profile company: he dresses the likes of Joan Collins, Jane Seymour and Bianca Jagger.

Or, perhaps the bride would rather be outfitted by Andrea Wilkin of Britain, whose creations include a gown that was first runner-up to the one Sarah Ferguson chose for her marriage to Prince Andrew.

Adding these much-in-demand designers to an exciting array of bridal gowns on the market this year for fall, Valenciennes salons in Montreal and Toronto are also showing new collections for the fashion-conscious bride by Fiorito, New York's Carolina Herrera and Canadian designer Tricia Cochran.

Typically, Fielden's gowns display a highly theatrical, contemporary look. A particularly striking autumn entry for the more daring bride features white silk taffeta, tulling and black polka-dotted embroidery on a fluted miniskirt that's ribbed at the hem for standout flounciness.

Wilkin, winner of the coveted Top Designer award from *Bride* magazine in Britain, leans to the kind of elegant romanticism that characterizes historical love stories. Sensual off-the-shoulder sleeves, gossamer tulle overlays and soft silk roses are combined to that effect on a gown she calls Clarissa.

One Fiorito fall gown combines

ivory Vonchan satin with pale pink silk and a trim of Nottingham lace. He also excels in creating the fairy-princess effect, with delicate satin ribbons and bows and tiny pearl strands dangling from sleeves and waistlines, ready to flow magically with the bride's slightest movement.

Herrera, whose first bridal collection lies "somewhere between English country and a more contemporary look," according to Marjorie Ironmonger of Valenciennes salons, is showing a strapless gown with re-embroidered lace bodice, bolero jacket and ankle-length stiff taffeta skirt.

Striking but restrained hand-beading on fine raw silks is fast becoming Cochran's trademark, and her gowns are especially popular with the 25- to 35-year-old bride who wants a sophisticated look, or something not-too-fussy for a garden wedding.

Although some designers continue to bead bodices completely, Anna DiRenzo of Duetto Wedding Attire notes a trend to beading concentrated in smaller areas of the gown.

DiRenzo also cites several different kinds of detail having an impact this fall — notably shirring, or gathered trimming, soutache (braided) cording, and asymmetrical bodice treatments.

"For the past couple of years many gowns looked much the same: necklines were usually high and decorated with lace. Now we're seeing pretty crew necklines with just enough

beading, sequins or pearls to look like jewelry at the base of the neck."

Shirring is showing up on sleeves and at necklines and hips. Canadian designer David Rea uses it on a taffeta gown to set off the scooped neckline, dropped elongated waist and elbow-length sleeves. Except for a touch of piping, shirred sections are the only detail, and the result is elegantly simple.

### ADVANTAGES OF BRIDAL CONSULTANTS

If you had the money, time and expertise, you would have no trouble at all planning your wedding.

But, if you are like most brides today, you are on a budget, are working (which really puts a crimp in your free time), and you're not too sure about all the technical details that go into organizing a wedding.

That's where the professional bridal consultant comes into play, according to Gerard J. Monaghan, President of the Association of Bridal Consultants.

"Working with the bride and bridegroom, the consultant provides the experience, has the time and — perhaps most importantly — helps keep the bride within her budget," Monaghan said.

Consultants can save money through their contacts in the wedding business, Monaghan said, and are not an added expense, even though they were once used only by the rich and famous.

## Brush up on your bridal trivia

Who was the trend-setter responsible for giving us the lacy white bridal veil?

We have one Nellie Curtis to thank for the lacy look. According to legend, Curtis, granddaughter of America's first First Lady Martha Washington, chose to wear a long lace scarf to her wedding to Major Lawrence Lewis. Curtis's inspiration came from a flattering comment made by her fiancé one time after he had glimpsed her through lace curtains at an open window.

Why do some consider a bride's handkerchief a good-luck symbol?

It has more to do with the tears she blots up with it. Early agriculture cultures saw the bride's wedding-day tears as a fortunate sign of coming rains for the crops. Later, it was held that a bride who cried at her wedding would never shed another tear about her marriage.

What is the significance of the quaint custom of carrying a bride over the threshold?

Its beginnings weren't exactly quaint. The Roman bride, demonstrating her reluctance over leaving her father's house, had to be dragged over the threshold to her new residence. Some cultures also believed in evil spirits hovering about at the threshold. The bride was lifted over it to ensure her safety.

### ADVICE FOR OLDER BRIDES

Anyone who believes that all brides are young and blushing should consider these facts: Today, one fifth of all women getting married for the first time are over 25. Of these, one third are in their thirties, forties, or older.

*Bride's Magazine* has some advice for this group of brides:

- Many older brides prefer small ceremonies with only family and close friends attending, but it's perfectly okay to choose any size ceremony you like.

- What about the question of being "given away?" This ritual can easily be omitted if it makes you feel uncomfortable.

- Whatever size your ceremony, your reception may be as large and lavish as you wish. Invite friends, relatives, business associates. If certain reception customs such as throwing the bouquet or tossing rice seem a little "young" to you, leave them out.

- Feel perfectly free to wear a long, lacy white wedding dress if this is what you've always imagined you'd do.



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