

# BRIDAL GOWN ALTERATIONS COSTS – A BRIEF SUMMARY

By Delbra Percy, *The Couture Seamstress*

## How much do Bridal Alterations Cost?

There is no definitive answer to the cost of wedding gown alterations. However, we have laid out some basic costs and explanations if you have an idea of what may need to be done to your dress. Also, here are some things to consider:

1. Cheaper isn't always better. If the cost sounds too good to be true, it is.
2. Beading and lace will always cost more.
3. There is no way to get a price quote over the phone. Make an appointment and go in to visit the seamstress. Not all bridal seamstresses are created equal. If you are not comfortable with the seamstress, find someone you do feel comfortable with. You will be working with this person for 3 to 4 months through this process.
4. Get a solid final price before letting someone start work on your dress. Our prices do not change part way through the process unless you request an alteration that was not included in the original quote. This is the only way you can budget correctly.

### **The hem (the bottom) \$140-\$350**

The bottom of your bridal gown will almost always need to be shortened. As such the hem is many times much more complicated than it looks. You may see some plastic webbing around the bottom, or feel it in the dress. This is called horse-braid or horsehair, and as a result of that little bit of plastic your price is higher. Have more layers with it? You will be charged more. Have a layer of lace on your bridal gown down there? Yep, the price goes up with that. Is the bottom of your wedding dress beaded? Guess what, the price goes up even more... So what does an average bridal hem cost? From our experience you can estimate \$150-\$350.

### **The sides \$85-\$200**

Many times brides need the wedding dress taken in at the sides. Don't be mad at your bridal boutique for ordering a size too big though, as you would not want to be stuck with a bridal gown that was too small, would you? Again, lace and beading will increase the amount that taking in the sides of your wedding dress will cost. Additionally, most places charge for how much they need to take the wedding dress in, whether it is just in the bust area, the hips, or

along the entire seam... So, what is the average cost for taking in the sides on your bridal gown? From our experience you can estimate anywhere from \$85-\$200

### **The bustle \$75 - \$150**

The bustle (picking the back of the bridal gown off the floor so you can bust a move on the dance floor!). If you have a train a bustle is normally needed. This is where we see many seamstresses make the most profit as they put an insane number of bustle points into wedding gowns. In our experience you should rarely need more than 7 to 9 bustle points; but we have seen as many as 35 in a wedding gown. Can you imagine having your friend or mother under your dress trying to decipher 35 bustle points? Neither can we... so what is the average price for a bustle on a wedding dress? From our experience you can expect to pay \$75-\$125, but beware, many seamstresses will push that number as high as \$250. This is something to ask about!

### **The bra cups – \$40-\$60**

Cups are one of those things that almost all brides want changed in their wedding dresses, but rarely think about. Almost all wedding gowns have a thin cup in them already; but most brides want to add one with a little pushup. The cost to change the cups will vary slightly but you can pretty much expect to pay in the \$40-\$60 range. This includes the cost of the cups and to have the old cups removed and the new ones sewn in.

### **The total \$300 - \$600**

So, in final you may be still wondering... what will the cost of MY bridal alterations be?

From our experience you can expect to pay somewhere between \$300-\$600 for your bridal gown alterations. Designer bridal gowns with lace, beading, and complicated hem lines will be more, but then again you are going to look amazing rocking a Maggie Sottero down the aisle anyways, right?!