FIT IN A FLASH

Want to look 10 pounds leaner in photos—without dieting? Focus on a few optical illusions you and your photographer can employ.

By Hillary Quinn

Find a dress that adds less Pay attention to your body type, and choose a gown that won't add pounds. **Thick waist:** Consider a princess or an A-line style, both of which flare from mid-torso, allowing the fabric to fall gracefully over your midriff rather than accent its width. **Full bust:** Stay away from high necklines and heavy beading—all of that fabric and fuss will make your chest look bigger. Opt for a clean, open-neck style (like a V-shape or scoop), which is especially minimizing. **Big hips:** Camouflage overabundant curves with a full-skirted gown. Basque-waist looks are especially figure-flattering because they hold in your waist and tummy, add length to your midsection, and balance your bottom. **Flabby arms:** Off-the-shoulder designs are best because they hide the upper arms (where the fat tends to settle) but still show off nice shoulders, elbows, and wrists. Long sleeves are also an option. Make sure they're made from a sheer fabric like chiffon or organza for a soft, elongated look. **For any figure:** Stiffer fabrics tend to be slimming because they mold your body and create a trim silhouette.

Taking a stand

Good posture and positioning are key to looking lean for the lens, says Seattle photographer Bradley Hanson. To ensure you're captured at your most attractive angles, ask your shutterbug not to shoot from below. "Photographing from a lower vantage point gives the illusion of width," explains Hanson, "whereas shooting from above has a slimming effect on the face." Avoid looking at the camera straight-on, which shows your face at its widest. "Tilting your head and shoulder slightly away from the photographer can reduce the visual presence of your body," Hanson explains. Looking to hide specific figure flaws? Use bridal-appropriate props to your best advantage. For example,

Don't look now—giving the camera a chic shoulder could result in a trimmer figure.

to divert attention from a not-so-toned tummy, hold your bouquet just below the belly button. "This draws the eyes further downward," says Hanson. "And keep elbows pointed slightly outward, so they don't look like an extension of your waist."

Makeup makeovers Bet you didn't know that a few little makeup maneuvers can create a slimmer countenance. "For instance, well-placed bronzer can give the illusion of a thinner face," says New York makeup artist Lea Siegel. Using a large, fluffy brush, apply bronzer to your brow bones, chin, cheekbones, and under the jaw line. For that head-to-toe, thin-tanned look, go to a salon for an allover bronzing treatment. "Do a trial run a few weeks before the wedding so there are no weird surprises," advises Siegel. For makeup hues, use shimmery shades sparingly to avoid a puffy look. "Makeup with a little luminosity, used lightly on the top of the cheekbone, produces slimming hollows on your face," she says.

The way you wear your wedding-day hair can also give the appearance of a thinner visage. "An elegant chignon, worn at the nape of the neck, usually provides an elongated look to the face and body," says Christo, owner of the eponymous New York City salon. "Also, you want to avoid any styles that call for a headband, which will highlight and frame a full face." Keep hair accessories low-key, choosing styles (simple tiaras and hair clips) with minimal decoration. 🖎

Dress rehearsal

Let a fashion run-through work wonders for you

One of the best ways to perfect your posture—and pinpoint any problem areas—is to do a test photo session before your wedding. Book your photographer for an hour on the day of your final fitting (be sure to get salon approval first), so he can shoot you in your gown, testing different camera angles and positions. He should use a digital or Polaroid camera so you can preview the photos instantly and discuss the best way to handle any body issues you may have. A salon shoot not possible? Ask him to snap a few photographs of you in your most formal dress to study your look.