Duo Drape Gowns

Anne Miller  
_Iowa State University_

Gail Wallen  
_Iowa State University_

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Duo Drape Gowns

by Anne Miller and
Gail Wallen, H. Ec. 3

Not just any dress will do. Your wedding dress is a very important part of the wedding — and a significant part of the expense!

Nancy Becker and Clara Raplus had often dreamed of making their own wedding gowns, but they decided this could be more than a dream when they enrolled in T&C 424, Designing by Draping.

Combining several years’ sewing experience with professional instruction and advice, Nancy and Clara, both T&C majors at Iowa State, completely designed and constructed their own wedding dresses.

Neither girl had found the exact pattern she wanted, but by creating her own design, she could combine ideas she liked from several different styles.

The muslin pattern each girl made first enabled her to experiment. She could see exactly how the dress would eventually look and fit.

Nancy points out how much time and expense can be saved by fitting a dress as it is made, rather than buying one which needs a number of alterations. After trying on several dresses, she found that necessary alterations would run the cost of a purchased dress considerably higher for her.

Over-all savings were very significant for both girls. Clara’s dress would have cost at least $200 if she had bought it ready-made, she said, but her total cost for material and notions was under $50.

Nancy spent $35 for her dress; it is valued at about $110.

The girls offered several suggestions for others who plan to make their own wedding gowns:

1. Make the bodice from muslin first, fit it carefully, and make the necessary alterations in the muslin shell.
2. Place a sheet under the material so it will stay clean.
3. Keep the dress in a box; do not hang it up because the dress is so heavy it will pull out of shape.
4. Keep it out of direct sunlight so that it will not turn yellow.
5. Wash your hands each time before you handle the material and frequently while you are sewing on it.
6. Dust the sewing machine and table before each use so the dress will not collect dust.

Nancy and Clara suggest that anyone undertaking a project of this scope should have expert help available for technical parts and assistance in fitting, as well as plenty of working space, sewing experience and confidence.