

WEDDINGS

Wedding Teeth: How To Get The Perfect Wedding Smile

By Jennifer Lai

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When it comes to looking good on your wedding day, some brides and grooms go to the extreme. Last year, Linsey Ray, a California bride [spent nearly the cost of her wedding](#) (a whopping \$20,000) to have her entire body transformed with plastic surgery before her Big Day.

But not all brides go to such drastic lengths to look picture-perfect for their nuptials. In fact, many of us just want a brighter smile or straighter teeth before saying "I Do."

We asked dentist to the stars, [Dr. David Keen](#), a Beverly Hills expert with over 12 years of experience with brides and grooms, to give us some advice on how to prepare those pearly whites for the Big Day.

What are some measures that brides and grooms can take to make sure that their teeth are picture-perfect before the Big Day?

Dr. David Keen: Just like having the perfect dress, your smile is one thing that people will always remember on their Big Day. And it can certainly be the most important accessory. The color of your teeth, in my opinion, is the most important thing that one can concentrate on, and I think it's extremely important to prepare in advance.

The number one thing you should do is get a professional dental cleaning, which can really clean the teeth. You can also do whitening at home either with strips -- something you can do in your spare time -- or you can do something a little more professional grade at the dentist's office, either a laser or Zoom bleaching, etc.

There are also some home tips which you can try before your wedding ... Try dry brushing without toothpaste before you use toothpaste. Dry brushing can remove a lot of stains and tartar and plaque, which can accumulate on the teeth. Doing that can make your teeth look fresher and brighter.

Another thing you can focus on is having nice even strong edges in your smile. Some people have little dings on their teeth or chips or open little dark spaces -- those are very easy to close and restore. It really looks amazing when the edges of your teeth are strong and your teeth are uniform in color.

What are some major "don'ts" for smiling during the wedding photo process?

DK: The key to smiling the best, in my opinion, is framing the teeth. It's important to realize that the hair in many respects frames the face, whereas the lips frame the smile and the teeth. If you can show predominantly your upper teeth (although showing a little lower is sometimes nice), showing the majority of your upper teeth is always the best way. If your upper lip can go up to the top of upper teeth and not

show too much gum tissue, and your lower lip rests just touching the edges of your upper teeth, that usually frames a perfect smile.

Practice smiling in front of a mirror -- good advice?

DK: Yes. One needs to practice smiling and take some practice photographs before the big day -- just take a digital camera with your friends, and measure and experiment with angles. See which angle suits you best. Your smile may look a little bit nicer on one side than another. To be honest, some people are not accustomed to smiling. Many people come to my office and I have to teach them how to smile. You know, you can do some beautiful dentistry whether it's veneers or other things like bonding -- and all of that can make their smile look amazing -- but some people still don't know how to frame it correctly. You need to practice in front of a mirror.

Some experts advise brides to avoid drinking coffee or tea in the days before the nuptials. What do you think?

DK: In general, teeth do stain. That's just a natural thing of life. So given that people want their smile to look the best, what I would probably recommend is having a dental cleaning within a week or two prior to their Big Day, and using either whitening strips or having some brightening procedure up to that time. But I would probably refrain from having the coffees or teas or even red wines, probably a few days prior to their Big Day, if it's possible. I would usually substitute Diet Coke for Diet Sprite. I would go from cabernet to chardonnay, I'd go from the coffees and teas and lighten them down just a bit. After all, it's real life and you want to enjoy your beverages. I think the most important thing is that if you're going to have whitening procedures done, don't drink any of those beverages or fluids for a period of 24-48 hours after, because you'll end up wearing it on your teeth.

Any last tips for getting a great smile on your wedding day?

DK: Women, wear a bright lipstick with an anti-smudge kind of factor. I think that anything that compliments your complexion and contrasts the white color of your teeth will make the teeth look brighter and whiter. You can also munch on fibrous foods like apples, carrots, broccoli etc. -- those foods actually help exfoliate the teeth and loosen the stains, which are really great -- not to mention they're actually really good for you. It's also important to stay hydrated and drink lots of water -- it'll improve your skin, lubricate your mouth, help in preventing staining your teeth. And for a perfect smile you'll want to moisturize your lips consistently well in advance with lip balm. There's nothing better than beautiful lips and there's nothing worse and less appealing than chapped lips in a photo!

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