



## In-Veiling

A look at the tradition  
of the wedding veil

Meghan Lawlor | Meghan Lawlor Collections

A wedding gown without the veil is like the table without the linen. But why does such a small element hold so much value? Why do brides even wear a veil and where did the idea of wearing a veil even begin? Today, we see many different veil silhouettes and styles, the choices can be overwhelming. To understand the importance and tradition of the veil, we must first look back to the beginning, the route of all the significance.

There are many different stories about the origination of the veil. The veil got its start as an article of clothing that women would wear to cover their head and face. In the beginning, married women wore veils to conceal their beauty from other men, keeping their face for their husbands. As hoods came into fashion, veils were abandoned. The unmarried bride then began to wear veils, during her wedding, until she arrived at her new home on that night, leaving the privilege of the unveiling to her new husband.

Bridal veils are also thought to have started during Roman times. Brides wore veils over their head to shield themselves from evil spirits. They believed that evil spirits could steal the women away from their future union. The veil was worn to hide the beauty of the bride so the evil spirits did not try any malicious advances.

In medieval times the veil was a symbol of modesty. It covered the bride indicating her chastity and purity. The veil was also worn to protect her from "the evil eye", a superstition believed throughout the period. As veils covered the brides' faces, another tradition emerged.

The blusher (the part of the veil that covers the face) was always left down

until Rachel Emeinu was due to marry. A biblical story in the Old Testament (found in the book of Genesis) tells the tale of Rachel and Jacob. Jacob met and fell in love with Rachel, daughter of Laban.

When Jacob approached Laban to ask for his blessing to marry Rachel, Laban declared that Jacob must first work seven years to earn the right to marry his daughter. After the seven years of service, Laban required another seven years. As fourteen years pass, Jacob then confronted Laban about the marriage and is granted permission. However, Laban's eldest daughter Leah has yet to be married. Laban then placed a veil over Leah's head to conceal her identity. As a result Jacob married Leah instead of Rachel, and the tradition of lifting the veil at the altar began. Fathers of the brides now reveal the identity to their future son in law to reassure him the promised bride is the one to be married.

Although the veil got its start hundreds of years ago, it has become a traditional wedding essential. The veil completes the look that the gown begins. Whether purchasing a new veil or borrowing one for the ultimate "something old", the veil is a tradition that continues strong yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

---

*Meghan Lawlor graduated with two Bachelor's degrees, one in International Relations and one in Fashion Design. Upon graduation she continued her education in France at the Paris Fashion Institute where she studied the art of style and the execution of couture. After working in a couture house, Meghan started her own company, Meghan Lawlor Collections which provides brides and bridal salons with high quality bridal veils, garters, jewelry, and footwear. You can reach her at (602) 510-8375.*