

Something I really want to stress is setting a price at the first appointment and having the client pay in full before you start the work. You can deal with these situations so much easier when the work isn't already done and you are then asking to get paid. Please don't put yourself in that position.

- My favorite pricing expectation quote is at the client's first consultation. I insist on being paid before I even begin working on a dress. So this is how I go about setting this expectation after I have gone through the pricing of each item of work I am doing for them: **"Your total comes to (blank). I take venmo, card, or cash. How would you like to pay today?"**

Usually, they just pay with no questions asked. If they can't pay, I say:

**"Okay, I understand, just so you know, I won't begin working on your dress until I am paid in full."**

If they offer to pay half down and half when it's done, I say,

**"I am willing to do half of the work for half down, and then when you pay the other half, I will begin working on the other half of the work."**

If they really have a problem with this, then I say,

**"I don't feel that I am a good match for doing your alterations."**

Send them on their way.

- If a client wants to negotiate the price of your work: ( Don't feel you need to justify your pricing, the less said the better. Keep it short)

**"My price is not open to negotiation. Perhaps you should find someone who is better aligned with your budget."**

In my opinion, people who like to negotiate are going to be problematic clients. They are a big red flag and you should simply set them loose right from the start.

- If a client wants additional work done than is not in the original contract:  
**"I would be happy to do that for you as long as you are happy to pay me for the extra labor and materials it will take to do that."**

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Write the new order on a new contract and have them pay in full.

- Here is what to say if you are asked to do some high skill work that you will need to charge a significant amount for, such as a heavily beaded dress, horse hair braid hems, lace hems, build ups, etc. This is a good way to prepare the client and yourself for the “sticker shock” of the work that's going to need to be done.

**”I am so happy to do this extensive work for you as long as you are just as happy to pay me for the huge amount of skill and labor it will involve.”**

It gives you the confidence to set your price as high as it needs to be, and yet it is kind to the client. It does seem to work magic.

- They say that the bridal shop quoted them a much lower price than what you are charging. (Keep in mind that just because they say this, doesn't make it true.) Or they don't like your price for any other reason that they might come up with:

**“Interesting. Well, this is my price, you decide whether you want to work with me. Perhaps you need to find someone who is a better fit for your budget.”**

There is nothing wrong with losing business from clients who don't want to pay for your skills. You only want clients who are happy to pay your price. Let these difficult people walk away. Let them talk. It's not your job to make their budget work.