INFO:

Intro:

Princess Diana was Princess of Wales while married to Prince Charles. One of the most adored members of the British royal family, she died in a 1997 car crash.

Who was Princess Diana?

Born Diana Spencer on July 1, 1961, Princess Diana became Lady Diana Spencer after her father inherited the title of Earl Spencer. She married the heir to the British throne, Prince Charles. They had two sons. Diana died on August 31, 1997, from injuries she sustained in a car crash in Paris. She is remembered as the "People's Princess" because of her widespread popularity and global humanitarian efforts.

### Princess Diana Lifetime:

July 1, 1961

*Diana Frances Spencer born in Norfolk, England*

1969

*Diana's parents divorced; her mother ran away with an heir to a wallpaper fortune*

1970

*After being educated at home by tutors, Diana was sent to Riddlesworth Hall, Norfolk, a boarding school*

1973

*Diana began her education at the West Heath Girls School, Kent, an exclusive girls' boarding school*

1974

*Diana moved to the Spencer family estate in Althorp*

1976

*Diana's father married Raine Legge, whose mother was Barbara Cartland, romance novelist*

1977

*Diana dropped out of West Girls Heath School; her father sent her to a Swiss finishing school, Chateau d'Oex, but she only stayed a few months*

1977

*Charles and Diana met again; she taught him to tap-dance*

1979

*Diana moved to London, where she worked as a housekeeper, nanny, and kindergarten teacher's aide; she lived with three other girls in a three-bedroom flat purchased by her father*

1980

*On a visit to see her sister Jane, who was married to Robert Fellowes, an assistant secretary to the Queen, Diana and Charles met again; soon, Charles asked Diana for a date*

February 3, 1981

*Prince Charles proposed to Lady Diana Spencer at a dinner for two at Buckingham Palace*

February 8, 1981

*Lady Diana left for a previously-planned vacation in Australia*

July 29, 1981

*wedding of Lady Diana Spencer and Charles, Prince of Wales, at St. Paul's Cathedral; broadcast worldwide*

November 5, 1981

*official announcement that Diana was pregnant*

June 21, 1982

*Prince William born (William Arthur Philip Louis)*

September 15, 1984

*Prince Harry born (Henry Charles Albert David)*

1986

*strains in the marriage began to be obvious to the public*

March 29, 1992

*Diana's father died*

June 16, 1992

*publication of Morton's book Diana: Her True Story, including the story of Charles' long affair with Camilla Parker Bowles and allegations of five suicide attempts including once during Diana's first pregnancy; it later became apparent that Diana or at least her family had cooperated with the author, her father contributing many family photographs*

December 9, 1992

*formal announcement of the legal separation of Diana and Charles*

1994

*Prince Charles interviewed by Jonathan Dimbleby, admitted he had had a relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles since 1986 (later, it was questioned whether his attraction to her had been rekindled earlier) -- the British television audience was 14 million*

November 20, 1995

*Princess Diana interviewed on BBC, with 21.1 million audience in Britain*

February 29, 1996

*Princess Diana announced she'd agreed to a divorce*

August 28, 1996

*divorce of Diana, Princess of Wales, and Charles, Prince of Wales, final; Diana received about $23 million settlement plus $600,000 per year, retained the title "Princess of Wales" but not the title "Her Royal Highness," continued to live at Kensington Palace; agreement was that both parents were to be active in their children's lives*

late 1996

*Diana became involved with the issue of landmines*

1997

[*Nobel Peace Prize*](https://www.thoughtco.com/women-nobel-peace-prize-winners-3529863)*went to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, for which Diana had worked and traveled*

June 1997

*Christie's in New York auctioned 79 of Diana's evening gowns; proceeds of about $3.5 million went to cancer and AIDS charities.*

1997

*linked romantically with 42-year-old "Dodi" Fayed, whose father, Mohammed al-Fayed, owned Harrod's Department Store and Paris' Ritz Hotel*

August 31, 1997

*Diana, Princess of Wales, died of injuries sustained in a car accident, in Paris, France*

September 6, 1997

*Princess Diana's funeral. She was buried at the Spencer estate at Althorp, on an island in a lake.*

## Princess Diana Style:

Princess Diana was the original monarch who ruled the art of royal dressing, long before [Kate Middleton and her cool fashion brands](http://www.marieclaire.co.uk/fashion/kate-middleton-fashion-brands-the-duchess-of-cambridge-s-top-60226) came along. After all, she seamlessly embraced [Royal etiquette](http://www.marieclaire.co.uk/fashion/royal-fashion-etiquette-kate-middleton-the-queen-500012), all the while setting her own fashion rules, like [not wearing gloves on official visits](http://www.marieclaire.co.uk/news/fashion-news/princess-diana-gloves-478587), [starting this trainer trend](http://www.marieclaire.co.uk/news/fashion-news/princess-diana-trainers-kate-middleton-522979) and single-handedly making [this Dior handbag](http://www.marieclaire.co.uk/fashion/princess-diana-lady-dior-bag-515255) one of the most coveted in the world.

Take a look at Diana's most memorable and stylish outfits Here.

Today, almost 20 years on since Diana’s death, her style still fascinates the world, so much so that Kensington Palace has dedicated an entire exhibition to her ([Diana: Her Fashion Story](http://www.marieclaire.co.uk/life/things-to-do/diana-fashion-exhibition-467908)), showcasing some of her most famous outfits, including the pale pink David Emanuel blouse she wore in her engagement portrait.

## Princess Diana’s wedding dress

It might surprise you to hear that when Princess Diana first got engaged, she had no interest in fashion. But overnight, she went from a shy young aristocrat to a soon-to-be princess in the limelight, and had to dress accordingly. At first, her style was very twee. As Diana’s former stylist, Anna Harvey, reveals, ‘Diana started off being really safe with her style. It was all very ‘Laura Ashley’.’ Cue bows, frills and, in other words, every little girl’s interpretation of a fairytale princess.

[Princess Diana’s wedding dress](http://www.marieclaire.co.uk/fashion/princess-diana-s-wedding-dress-secrets-revealed-254236) embodied exactly that aesthetic, thanks to its cathedral length trail, puffy sleeves and miles and miles of taffeta – and FYI, did you know there was a second dress made as a back-up, and that [her wedding tiara had a special meaning](http://www.marieclaire.co.uk/news/fashion-news/princess-diana-wedding-tiara-527865)?

On top of that, the young Princess had to follow a strict dress code, which included dressing suitable for the occasion, and according to who she met, for examples other Royalty, children etc.

## Princess Diana’s style in the 1980s

In the mid to late 80s, as Diana’s love of fashion and her confidence grew, she began to make some bolder fashion choices. The exhibition curator, Eleri Lynn, commented, ‘We see her growing in confidence throughout her life, increasingly taking control of how she was represented, and intelligently communicating through her clothes.’

There were the bold evening gowns, including the midnight blue Victor Edelstein dress she wore to dance with John Travolta on a state visit to the US to meet Ronald and Nancy Reagan. In fact, that dress was hailed as a departure from her usual ‘safe’ style. She became known for her Dynasty-esque sequin gowns, and bold coloured shoulder pads, which she pulled off elegantly. During the day, she favoured power suits and dress in equally bright designs and prints, always worn with matching accessories like pillar box hats.

## Princess Diana’s style in the 1990s

It wasn’t until the mid-90s that Princess Diana really found her style; it was no coincidence that this coincided with her divorce. Gone were the brash colours and exaggerated silhouettes of the 80s, replaced in favour of sleeker, more minimal styles in muted tones.

Perhaps one of her most famous of all was the black Christina Stambolian ‘revenge dress’ she wore to the Serpentine Gallery summer party in 1994, the same night Prince Charles admitted to having an affair with Camilla. Many would have hidden away from the limelight, but she emerged confident as ever.

Diana almost didn’t wear the dress, which she thought was too low cut, and in fact had intended on wearing a Versace gown instead, but was put off at the last minute after a release went out announcing her outfit.

She nailed her working wardrobe, favouring chic Catherine Walker suits and tailored dresses, and became known for her simple evening dresses.

Twenty years on from her death, Princess Diana’s style is still an inspiration to many. Scroll down to see her most iconic looks.

**Diana’s whole story:**

**Aristocratic Upbringing**

British royalty Princess Diana Spencer was born on July 1, 1961, near Sandringham, England. Diana, Princess of Wales, was one of the most adored members of the British royal family. She was the daughter of Edward John Spencer, Viscount Althorp, and Frances Ruth Burke Roche, Viscountess Althorp (later known as the Honorable Frances Shand Kydd). Her parents divorced when Diana was young, and her father won custody of the children. Following her initial education at home, Diana attended Riddlesworth Hall School and then West Heath School.

She became Lady Diana Spencer after her father inherited the title of Earl Spencer in 1975. Although she was known for her shyness while growing up, she did show an interest in music and dancing. Diana also had a great fondness for children. After attending finishing school at Institut Alpin Videmanette in Switzerland, she moved to London. She began working with children, eventually becoming an assistant at Young England Kindergarten.

**Marriage to Prince Charles**

Diana was no stranger to the British royal family, having reportedly played with Prince Andrew and Prince Edward as a child while her family rented Park House, an estate owned by Queen Elizabeth II. In 1977, she became reacquainted with their older brother,  Prince Charles, who was 13 years her senior.

As the heir to the British throne, Prince Charles was usually the subject of media attention, and his courtship of Diana was no exception. The press and the public were fascinated by this seemingly odd couple—the reserved, garden-loving prince and the shy young woman with an interest in fashion and popular culture. When the couple married on July 29, 1981, the ceremony was broadcast on television around the world, with millions of people tuning in to see what many considered to be the wedding of the century.

**Family Life and Divorce**

On June 21, 1982, Diana and Charles had their first child: Prince William Arthur Philip Louis. He was joined by a brother, Prince Henry Charles Albert David—known widely as "Prince Harry"—more than two years later, on September 15, 1984. Initially overwhelmed by her royal duties and the intense media coverage of nearly every aspect of her life, she began to develop and pursue her own interests. Diana served as a strong supporter of many charities and worked to help the homeless, people living with HIV and AIDS and children in need.

Unfortunately, the fairy tale wedding of Princess Diana and Prince Charles did not lead to a happily-ever-after marriage. The two became estranged over the years, and there were reports of infidelities from both parties. During their union, Diana struggled with depression and bulimia. The couple's separation was announced in December 1992 by British Prime Minister John Major, who read a statement from the royal family to the House of Commons. The divorce was finalized in 1996.