



# ICONIC Celebrity DRESSES

Explore the celebrity dresses that have left a lasting impression

*Written by Michelle Rowley*



Photograph: Scott Nelson / Stringer, Getty Images

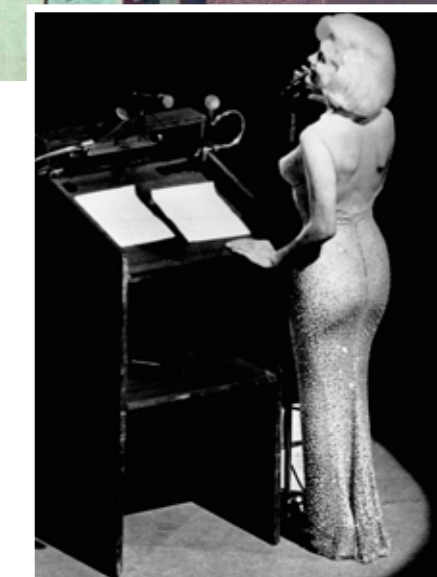
**C**elebrity fashion history is woven with unforgettable dresses – garments that defined eras, symbolised cultural shifts, and left lasting impressions on the red carpet and beyond. From Audrey Hepburn's chic black Givenchy dress in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*

to Jennifer Lopez's plunging green Versace gown, these iconic pieces continue to inspire designers and makers today. Whilst there's some celebrity dresses you probably wouldn't want to recreate (Lady Gaga's meat dress anyone?), we explore how to sew some of the stars' best loved dresses. Get ready to bring these legendary looks to life!

## CLARE DANES

Claire Danes' white pleated angel dress in Baz Luhrmann's 1996 adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Romeo + Juliet* symbolised purity and ethereal beauty. Featuring soft pleats, a fitted bodice (and all-important wings!), it enhanced Juliet's innocence and left a lasting influence on romantic fashion trends. Recreate the dress with the 1950's Marilyn

Monroe Sewing Pattern from The Vintage Sewing Company, a multisized PDF pattern which has a similar two part gathered bodice and flared skirt. Alternatively you can choose view C from McCall's 8211 fit & flare dress pattern using either a lightweight pleated fabric such as chiffon or georgette or create pintucks in plain white cotton.



Photograph: Bettmann / Contributor, Getty Images

## MARILYN MONROE (& KIM KARDASHIAN!)

When Marilyn Monroe wore the 'Happy Birthday, Mr. President' dress in 1962, it became an instant sensation. Designed by Jean Louis, the sheer, form-fitting gown, embellished with 2,500 crystals, scandalised and mesmerised audiences when Monroe wore it to breathlessly serenade JFK. Its bold, sultry design symbolised Monroe's allure and cemented her status as a cultural icon, forever linking fashion with political history. Whilst Kim Kardashian's attention-grabbing decision to wear the dress to the 2022 Met Gala sparked controversy, it reaffirmed the dress's legendary status in popular culture. Channel your inner Marilyn with Charm Patterns' Hollywood Dress. This pattern is inspired by classic Hollywood glamour and offers a draped wrap design reminiscent of Monroe's style. It includes multiple sleeve options and skirt lengths, allowing for customisation to match the original look. To achieve the authentic appearance, choose a nude-toned fabric embellished with crystals or sequins and ensure a snug fit to capture the dress's form-fitting silhouette.

Photograph: 20th Century Fox / Handout, Getty Images

## AUDREY HEPBURN

The long-standing collaboration between Audrey Hepburn and the designer Hubert de Givenchy is legendary, with the looks they created together leaving an impact on the world of film and fashion. They carefully crafted designs that suited Hepburn's simple and understated look, such as that floor-length satin black dress for her character Holly Golightly in the 1961 film *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. Even if you have not watched the film, you've

certainly seen the dress. The gown defined chic sophistication and popularised the little black dress as an essential wardrobe staple for generations to come. Feeling inspired by Hubert and Audrey? Recreate the look with McCall's 7897 from the archive collection. Sew up view B without the cummerbund and back skirt in black satin. Whether you decide to accessorise with pearls, cigarette holder, long gloves and sunglasses is up to you!



Photograph: Silver Screen Collection / Contributor. Getty Images

## KEIRA KNIGHTLEY

The use of colour in film costume has played a key role in shaping characters and leaving lasting impressions, such as Keira Knightley's exquisite green silk gown in the 2007 film *Atonement*, which reflected both her character Cecilia's beauty and envy to great effect. Designed by Jacqueline Durran, its bias-cut silhouette, plunging back, and flowing fabric exuded elegance and sensuality, making it one of the most iconic dresses in film history. Recreating this dress would be a challenging but rewarding project that would capture the elegance of 1930s fashion. While exact commercial patterns may not be available, you can achieve a similar look by modifying existing patterns and carefully selecting appropriate fabrics. For instance, Vogue 8814 offers a bias-cut dress with a similar silhouette, but you would need to adjust the neckline and add details such as the low back and delicate straps to more closely mimic the original dress. Or how about combining a camisole top, such as the True Bias Ogden Cami, with view B of McCall's 8453 stunning skirt. To replicate the fluidity and sheen of the original dress, opt for an emerald green silk charmeuse or satin, which will provide the necessary drape and lustre.



Photograph: Scott Gries / Staff. Getty Images  
Photograph: Jacopo Raule / Contributor. Getty Images

## MEGHAN MARKLE

Although Meghan Markle's (Duchess of Sussex) Givenchy boat neck wedding dress was the epitome of simple sophistication, we might struggle for an occasion to wear something similar. The stunning Stella McCartney halter neck dress she wore for the evening reception, which was still seen by millions, is however something we could get on board with. The sleek silk crepe, floor-length dress complemented her minimalist bridal style and made it an instant fashion hit. Sew your own version with Vogue 1748, an elegant special occasion dress pattern with a high collar and pleat detail at the neck. Whilst silk crepe would be optimum for recreating Meghan's dress, choose rayon challis, crepe or georgette for a more budget friendly alternative.



Photograph: WPA Pool / Pool. Getty Images

## JULIA ROBERTS

Who doesn't love the 'polo scene' dress worn by Julia Roberts' in the 1996 film *Pretty Woman*? Designed by Marilyn Vance, the belted brown and white polka dot midi dress exuded classic elegance and cemented its status as an iconic cinematic look. Sharing the same name as Julia Roberts' famous character in the film, the Simply Sewing Vivian Dress seems the ideal pattern to recreate the famous dress! Choose

the round neck version of this dress to recreate the look, raising the neckline if you wish to make a more accurate representation of the original dress. Alternatively, McCall's 8060 has a neckline closer to the original but a more flared skirt. Use a lightweight polka dot crepe or viscose, grab a wide brown belt, and white gloves, and voilà!



Photograph: Hulton Archive / Handout. Getty Images

## KATE MIDDLETON

When Kate Middleton (HRH Princess of Wales) wore a blue wrap dress by Issa to announce her engagement to Prince William in 2010, it sparked a fashion frenzy. With the elegant silk jersey dress beautifully matching her sapphire engagement ring, the iconic dress cemented the beginning of her long-standing influence on fashion.

Sew your own with The Alice Dress – a pattern we featured in issue 38 and available in our online shop. Get the best results with fabric that is a similar drape and weight to the original dress.



Photograph: Chris Jackson / Staff. Getty Images

## JENNIFER LOPEZ

Jennifer Lopez's iconic revealing green chiffon dress worn at the 2000 Grammys, was a daring, tropical-inspired piece with a deep plunging neckline and flowing sheer fabric. Designed by Donatella Versace, it revolutionised red-carpet fashion and Lopez called it "my biggest fashion moment ever." Incredibly, the massive public interest in the dress was the motivation for Google's president Eric Schmidt to create Google Images! To create a somewhat more modest version of the eye-catching dress use Vogue's 1735, with its deep plunging neckline, to achieve a similar dramatic look without going beyond your navel! Add a front split if you want to get closer to the original dress and opt for a sheer silk chiffon to mimic its flow and drape. The original dress featured a citrine-studded brooch at the waist. You can create a similar effect using rhinestones or costume jewellery pieces.



Photograph: Scott Gries / Staff. Getty Images  
Photograph: Jacopo Raule / Contributor. Getty Images

## MARILYN MONROE

An unforgettable cinematic moment was born when Marilyn Monroe's white halter neck dress was caught in an updraft over a subway grate in the 1955 film *The Seven Year Itch*. Designed by William Travilla, the dress – with its billowing pleated skirt – symbolised Hollywood glamour and cemented Monroe's bombshell image. The scene became legendary, influencing fashion,

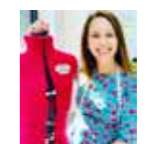
pop culture, and advertising, making the dress one of history's most recognisable garments. Have your own Marilyn moment with either Butterick 6682 or Butterick 5209 to recreate arguably the most famous dress in film history. These stunning halter-neck dresses from the Butterick archives have been re-issued to enable you to capture the true vintage style.



Photograph: Bettmann / Contributor. Getty Images

## EMMA STONE

Emma Stone's Mary Zophres' bright yellow dress in *La La Land* captivated audiences, becoming an instant icon of cinematic fashion. Its vintage-inspired silhouette, delicate floral pattern, and twirling movement enhanced Mia's dreamy, hopeful character, whilst the bold yellow left a luminous presence in the film's nostalgic aesthetic. Do you want to dance around like Emma Stone in your own version? Then look for a 1950's inspired dress pattern that also includes a fitted bodice, a circle skirt and cap sleeves. View A of McCall's 7599 is a great match, as it features a very similar neckline – you will just need to widen the shoulder straps further to create the look of the cap sleeves.



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