



Photo Lukasz Wierzbowski

ready or not

GEORGIA CASEY RECKONS GOING OUT ISN'T ALL IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE.

Getting ready to go out is more enjoyable than going out. There, I said it. It's the time of the night when anything is possible. Your make-up is pristine, your bank account hasn't been drained by \$26 cocktails, and your friend hasn't drunk-dialled her ex (yet).

As a lifelong introvert, I've always preferred preparing for an event to attending the event itself. I remember getting ready for my first high school social in year eight. Although I had recently gotten my braces off and should have been ready to embrace my nascent teenagerhood with enthusiasm, I was instead filled with dread. Unsure of what to expect and fearful of the potential presence of boys as old as 15 (!!!), I clenched my newly straightened teeth in the days leading up to the big night.

When Friday afternoon rolled around, my girlfriends and I assembled to get ready. For reasons unclear to my 29-year-old self, we decided it was crucial that we all wear a variation of the same thing: denim shorts, a loose muscle tee with a bralette underneath and a white ribbon in our hair. Devastatingly chic. As the dulcet sounds of Taio Cruz's "Dynamite" floated from an iPod Touch, I could feel my anxiety melt away. We ate Maltesers and TeeVee Snacks from the packet, took photos with our digital cameras and brushed our eyelids with Urban Decay. I couldn't tell you what happened at the social, but I do remember that the experience of primping and preening with my friends had made me feel like a proper teenager. This is where my love for the early parts of the evening began.

I know, I know, we should all be going out more. In our post-COVID, screen-addicted world, I acknowledge that there is something to be gained from actually leaving the house to rub elbows with our fellow humans. Young people, especially, are in dire need of affordable third places where they can congregate

and make mistakes IRL. But just because you can argue that going out offers more benefits than simply getting ready, that doesn't make it more enjoyable. Just like going to the dentist isn't more enjoyable than eating a block of chocolate.

As I stand on the precipice of my 30s, getting ready looks a little different these days. It often involves my husband making me a martini as I perch on our bathroom counter to get as close to the mirror as possible to apply my mascara (my eyesight isn't what it used to be). Occasionally, my sister or best friend will join me, but more often than not I am alone. I get to sip my drink and play songs that are too embarrassing to broadcast in a public forum; it's heavenly. As much as I enjoy my solo ritual, there was one day last year that captured the excitement I felt on that Friday afternoon so many years ago.

August 23rd, 2025, my wedding day. My mum, sister and I piled into the car at 7am and drove to my best friend's apartment. We opened the door and, as we took in the morning sun and river views, found that she had decorated the place with flowers. The day was spent in hair curlers and face masks, doing tarot readings on her living room floor while we passed around glasses of chilled vermouth and cheese. On what I had expected to be an extremely stressful and emotional day, the vibes were immaculate.

Getting ready isn't just the act of slapping on some make-up while you wait for the Uber to arrive, necessary as it sometimes may be. It's about taking a beat with yourself to relish optimistic anticipation, or sitting on the floor in front of your mate's smudgy mirror while soaking in some delicious gossip. Although I never learnt how to do my hair, I do believe that I have mastered the art of getting ready. ✨