## GENERAL GUIDES FOR PINNING SKIRT LENGTH
**- assuming the length is initially level**

1. Providing the overall length is straight and even, all that is necessary is one safety pin (at back and front) to hold the fabric in position at both these places.
2. If the skirt is being worn for a special event (eg. wedding) and it is intended to be worn for both soft (eg. grass) and hard (eg. stone) surfaces, the skirt length should ideally be in the best average position for both surfaces although sometimes, one surface may be the governing factor. For example, a shorter length would be best for a wedding ceremony that is to be on grass all day where only a walk across paving for photos would take place once.
3. If there are other people in a 'group' (ie. bridesmaids - especially if similar ages), all dresses should be identical and/or of similar lengths. This is most noticeably visible after the event when any variations are clearly seen in photos!
4. Ensure the garment is tried on with the correct underwear and shoes. Both of these items can have a knock-on effect on ultimate length.
5. Stand straight, with arms down by sides.
6. It is often a good idea to get someone to take photos of the dress being worn - often the correct and/or better length is more clearly visible by this method.
7. Ensure safety pins are not heavyweight ones and select their suitability for fabric type. Ideally use fine, small safety pins as large, thick ones may mark the fabric by leaving a hole when removed.

### Obtaining correct length

1. Safety should also be a factor in deciding length. For instance, if new and very high heels are to be worn, it would be better to have a shorter length skirt than a longer one but if (for example) other bridesmaids dresses were longer, then a lower heel should be considered as a better option to obtain the longer length skirt (ie. as per the same length as the others).
2. In respect of hard/soft surfaces, this is easily replicated around the house by considering standing on different flooring types eg. wood v. carpet.
3. Once a length is decided (if necessary by adding further pins), walk &/or 'twirl' around to verify how the pinned skirt length moves. Does it become just a bit too long if dancing? … Is it too short and has become unflattering?
4. Tuck the lining (if there is one) underneath the skirt - if necessary roughly pin it up to ensure it is not in the way of the top layer of fabric as it hangs down and over it.
5. Fold under (or if easier, fold up) the dress hem to the desired length and hold in place with additional pins to determine correct length. Viewing a photo of the garment being worn is sometimes easier to check for a correct or best length.
6. **For an average full skirt and long floor length:** standing on a hard surface, toes/shoe tips should just be visible below the hem; on a soft surface, a lower partial instep should be visible (ie. as the shoes 'sink into' a soft surface, the skirt becomes longer). As a guide, it may be a difference of between 1cm (standing on a hard surface) and 3cm (standing on a soft one) although an element of preference will be of importance especially if there are other people in a group (eg. other bridesmaids) to be considered.
7. **For a very full skirt:** the suggested length differences as 6 above will basically apply but depending on the fabric type and hem finish, this can vary considerably. For instance (a) a rolled hem will appear to be shorter (because it 'flutes upwards') in contrast to a flat edged hem (b) a skirt with netting underneath will appear to be longer and the netting will in many instances "get in the way" of any body movement.
8. **For a straight &/or less full skirt:** the main criterion here is one predominantly of 'looks'. If only a minimal amount of shortening is required, use the guide for average full skirt. However, if a much larger amount needs to be reduced, it may affect the ultimate style of the skirt/dress and the manner in which the proportions change. For instance, a lower frill that is a third of the skirts' total length (if considerably shortened) will affect the entire overall style of the skirt (or dress) and in many instances will become unflattering to the wearer. A better option in this instance, would possibly be to (a) increase shoe height (b) remove the frill and replace it at a higher level (c) choose a different style of garment.