

Rachel Trevor-Morgan
in her shop in
St James's, London



'I'd never tell her she looks dreadful'

Rachel Trevor-Morgan, milliner to the monarch, reveals how many hatpins one uses

I've been making hats for the Queen for six years. Hats are incredibly important to her look – they make her outfit seem finished, and I think people are quite taken aback when they see her without one. It's very, very rare.

"There are practical issues: the brim mustn't be too big, because she's got to get into and out of a car, and because people have come to see her. Taupe and nude shades are obviously not colours for the Queen; she doesn't often wear them. She wears clearer, stronger colours, because they suit her and make her stand out. I mostly work with [dress designer] Stewart Parvin, and I'm sent a sketch and a swatch and start with that. You take into account the occasion, if you know what it is, but often you don't. Sometimes you know it's likely to be for

Ascot. We delivered about eight outfits earlier in the year and I've seen three of the hats so far. I think, 'Oooh, look, she's wearing my hat!' It's very exciting.

"I think she's found the style that suits her. She's not going to be trying out extraordinary new styles, because she'd probably look silly. There's a lot to be said for finding a look that really suits you when you're in your eighties. Obviously, the Queen is very busy, so I might get one or two fittings. If something's not working or there's something she's not liking, she will say. It's a discussion, as with any other client, but it is the Queen. I would never tell the Queen she looks dreadful; I would say, 'Do you think perhaps we should change this?'

"I flap about her hats more than anybody else's. You want them to look good, and you

want her to look good. You're trying to make something that's different, within a fairly tight remit. We always deliver three hatpins with the Queen's hats. She's got good hair for hatpins.

"I think it's wonderful that the Duchess of Cambridge is patronising different milliners. Everyone wants that gig. She tends to wear smaller headpieces. I have mixed feelings about fascinators: a little headpiece is great for a banquet, but I'm not sure it's right for a wedding.

"I thought it was a great pity that some people didn't wear hats to the royal wedding. What did I think of Princess Beatrice's hat? Interesting. It wouldn't have been what I would have chosen for the occasion, let's put it like that." **HILARY ROSE**

Rachel Trevor-Morgan's hats start from £500