Dress for Success

Appropriate Attire for a Job Interview

Career Portals
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Terms

- **Appearance**: The way someone or something looks

- **Business Casual**: In general, business casual means dressing professionally, looking relaxed, yet neat and pulled together. The interpretation of business casual differs widely among organizations and is often a cause of confusion.

- **Classic**: Clothing that has become a tradition
Terms, Continued

- **Fad**: A practice or interest followed for a time with exaggerated zeal
- **Formal Wear**: Formal wear, formal dress, and evening wear are general terms for clothing suitable for formal social events, such as a wedding, formal garden party or dinner, débutante cotillion or dance
Terms, Continued

- **Interview**: A formal consultation usually to evaluate qualifications (as of a prospective student or employee)

- **Professional**: Exhibiting a courteous, conscientious, and generally businesslike manner in the workplace

- **Smart Casual**: Smart casual (as distinct from business casual) is a loosely defined dress code; casual, yet "smart" (i.e. "neat") enough to conform to the particular standards of certain Western social groups
What Not to Wear

Strangest interview outfits human resources managers have heard of or seen:

- “A blanket worn as a shawl”
- “A skirt made out of plastic”
- “Jeans with suspenders”
- “Spandex”
- “A cat suit”
- “A crazy hat”
- “A sequined top”
- “A tie-dye T-shirt from the ’80s”
- “A sweatshirt and sweatpants”
- “Pajamas with slippers”
- “A swimsuit and cover-up”
- “An applicant wore the uniform from his former employer.”

Source: OfficeTeam survey of 674 human resources managers at companies with 20 or more employees in the United States and Canada
# Do’s and Don’ts

## Interview attire don’ts and do’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DON’T</th>
<th>DO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assume you can “dress down,” even if a company has a very casual atmosphere</td>
<td>Err on the conservative side and wear a suit or blazer. If you’re working with a recruiter or HR representative, ask him or her for insight into the dress code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wear anything that is uncomfortable</td>
<td>Test-drive an outfit to ensure it fits well and makes you feel confident; also dress in layers so you can be at ease regardless of the temperature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show up in clothing that is wrinkled, stained or torn</td>
<td>Pay attention to details and conduct a final head-to-toe assessment before leaving the house to ensure everything -- including your hair, nails and shoes -- is presentable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overaccessorize</td>
<td>Choose simple jewelry and be subtle with makeup, perfume or cologne</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: OfficeTeam*
Job Interview Dos and Don’ts

Activity

Is this appropriate for a job interview or not?
Appropriate or not?

1.
Appropriate or not?

2.
Appropriate or not?

3.
4. Appropriate or not?
Appropriate or not?

5.
Appropriate or not?

6.
Appropriate or not?

7.
Appropriate or not?

8.
9.

Appropriate or not?
Appropriate or not?

10.
Appropriate or not?

11.
Appropriate or not?

12.
How did you score?

- 12: You’re a top contender for the job
- 7 - 11: Improvement needed
- 0 – 6: You’re going to miss out on a job opportunity
Interview Attire

- Practice good hygiene
- Wear well-fitting clothing
- Dress appropriate for the workplace
- Dressing up is better than dressing down

- Don’t dress for a party or the club
- Wear classics not fads
- Dress for Success Video  click on link
Clothing for Men and Women

• Suit
  ◦ a 2-piece that matches

• Conservative colors/fabrics
  ◦ navy, dark gray and black are safe
  ◦ wool or wool blends are classics that never go out of fashion

• Details
  ◦ clean and well-pressed (ironed)

• Jewelry
  ◦ Dressing for Work
    click on link
Clothing for Men

- **Ties**
  - avoid what’s in style; solid, classic silk ties are best
  - [How to Tie a Full Windsor Knot](#) click on link

- **Shirts**
  - long sleeves are best, even in summer time; white or light blue are best
Clothing for Men

- Socks
- Shoes
- Belt
- Facial hair

- Career Spots
  Interview Dress for Men  click on link
Clothing for Women

• Skirts/dresses
  ◦ knee-length; should cover thigh when seated

• Shoes
  ◦ Flats or a low heel are best

• Hosiery
  ◦ plain, no styles or patterns, complement outfit

• Career Spots
  Interview Dress for Women click on link
Clothing for Women

• Cosmetics (if worn)
  ◦ simple and conservative
  ◦ nails should be short, well groomed, clear polish

• Purse
  ◦ small, simple, match color to outfit
Grooming Tips

- **Hair**
  - neat and clean
- **Shoes**
  - polished and good condition
- **Details**
  - no missing buttons
  - no lint
- **Hands**
  - clean nails
Questions?
Resources and References

Images:
• Microsoft Clip Art: Used with permission from Microsoft.

Websites:
Resources and References

• CareerSpots.com (2013). Interview dress for men

• CareerSpots.com (2013). Interview dress for women
Resources and References

