

Careers in Education

What are career options in the field of education?

Do I need teacher certification and how do I obtain it?

How do I formulate a resume?

What should I expect from an interview, and how should I prepare?

What is a teacher portfolio, and why do I need one?



CAREERS FOR EDUCATION MAJORS

A career in education is no longer limited to teaching. This discipline has expanded to embrace many different and unusual career options.

Marketable skills for education majors...

- Speak publicly to groups
- Manage groups of children
- Keep accurate and usable records
- Adapt quickly to new situation
- Adapt presentation of information to various audiences
- Advise and counsel
- Assess areas needing improvement
- Assess individual progress
- Assess program success
- Grab attention
- Coach
- Communicate with children and parents
- Coordinate and train
- Think critically
- Deal effectively with individuals and groups
- Make decisions and solve problems
- Delegate responsibility to members of work team and encouraging cooperation within team
- Desire to work with children
- Hold individuals accountable for behavior
- Evaluate and supervise
- Gather information on a subject, organize and present it in manner that holds attention
- Guide activities of others, with responsibility for results
- Have a sense of humor
- High energy
- Imagination and creativity
- Initiate and persuade
- Lead and manage
- Maintain order, resolve differences, anticipate and prevent trouble
- Motivate and encourage students
- Organized
- Patience and listening skills
- Plan and organize courses of study and activities such as trips, parties and performances
- Report results
- Research techniques
- Select and effectively use audio-visual and other education materials
- Serve as role model
- Teach knowledge and skills, motivating for peak performance
- Team player with other teachers and staff
- Understand children
- Work under pressure and meet deadlines

Types of employers who hire education majors...

- Adoption agencies
- Advertising and Public Relations Firms
- Boards of Education
- Bookstores
- Camps
- Community Organizations
- Community recreation centers
- Consulting firms
- Correctional Institutions
- Cultural Organizations
- Day care centers and nursery schools
- Elementary, Middle and Secondary Schools; public, private, Montessori, etc.
- Entertainment Industry
- Department of Education
- Department of Defense
- Overseas schools for military dependents
- Department of Labor Educational Resources Information Center
- Health and Human Services
- Library of Congress
- National Archives
- National Science Foundation
- National Endowment for the Arts
- National Endowment for the Humanities
- Peace Corps
- Social Services Agencies
- Vista
- State and local Government
- Four-year colleges and universities
- Group homes
- Hospitals
- Judicial System
- K-12 School systems
- Libraries
- Marketing companies
- Medical and professional schools
- Mental health clinics
- Museums
- National Associations and Councils
- Non-Profit Organization
- Nursing homes/Adult day care
- Professional associations
- Public and private corporations
- Publishers: textbook, newspaper, magazine, book
- Religious Institutions
- Research and Development Centers
- Scouts
- Software companies
- Technical schools
- Test-preparation companies
- The Media
- Two-year and community colleges
- United Way agencies
- YMCA/YWCA

Prospective jobs for education majors...

- Administration: Principal or Superintendent
- Adult Education Teacher
- Alumni relations Coordinator
- Athletic Coach
- Athletic Director
- Child Life Specialist
- Coordinator, Skill Training Program
- Curriculum Specialist
- Day Care Administrator
- Editorial Assistant
- Education Management Specialist
- Educational Materials Sales Representative
- Education and Training Administrator
- Educational Administrator
- Educational Researcher
- Educational Resource Coordinator
- Educational Therapist
- Elementary School Teacher
- Employee Training Instructor
- Equal Opportunity Representative
- Evaluator
- Financial Aid Counselor
- Grant Writer
- Guidance Counselor
- Historic Site Administrator
- University/College Instructor
- Kindergarten Teacher
- Librarian
- Library Consultant
- Management Trainee
- Media Center Specialist
- Missionary Worker
- Occupational and Physical Therapy
- Physical Education Instructor
- Preschool Administrator
- Public Relations Representative
- Purchasing Agent
- Reader/Story Analyst
- Recreation Leader
- Registrar/Admissions Director

- Religious Institution Education Coordinator
- Research Worker/Associate/Assistant
- Resource Teacher
- Salesman/Saleswoman
- School Psychologist
- Secondary School Teacher
- Social Services Volunteer (Vista/Americorps)
- Speech Pathologist
- Special Education Administrator
- Student Admissions Administrator
- Student Affairs Administrator
- Student Personnel Administrator
- Supervisor, Volunteer Services
- Teacher, Adventure/Outdoor Education
- Teacher, Handicapped Students
- Toy Department Manager
- Training Specialist
- Tutor
- Vocational/Rehabilitation Counselor
- Writer

While many students decide to major in Education, so that they can eventually teach, the student's career options are not limited to simply teaching. Even after teaching for a few years or twenty years, the experience gathered over that period of time will be even more beneficial to their pursuit of a different career. It is possible, however, that many of the abovementioned jobs require post-baccalaureate study.

HOW TO BECOME A TEACHER IN TEXAS

For all public school teaching positions a teacher certification is required by state and Federal law. A teacher must be "highly qualified" in the subject matter they intend to teach, which translates to having earned at least 24 college credit hours in the subject. Private schools may or may not require certification. For details on the certification process in Texas, the State Board of Education (SBEC) publishes all the latest information at: www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/certinfo/becometeacher.asp

The State of Texas is facing a major educational challenge—a growing shortage of qualified teachers. Whether you are a recent college graduate, a mid-career changer, a teacher from another state/country, or someone who does not yet have a college degree, the information below outlines how to become a teacher in Texas.

What are the basic requirements for becoming a teacher in Texas?

You must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. Texas institutions do not offer a degree in education. Every teacher must have an academic major, as well as teacher training courses. The only exemption from the degree requirement is for individuals seeking Career and Technology certification to teach certain courses, such as welding or computer-aided drafting.

You must complete teacher training through an approved program. These programs are offered through colleges and universities, school districts, regional service centers, community colleges, and other entities.

You must successfully complete the appropriate teacher certification tests for the subject and grade level you wish to teach. For a list of the certification tests and information on which tests are required, see <http://www.texas.ets.org/>.

How do you choose the teacher training program that is best for you?

Programs for those who do not yet have a college degree. Colleges and universities offer programs for training teachers. You will receive a degree in an academic major, as well as the training you would need to be an effective teacher.

Programs for those who already have a college degree (post- baccalaureate programs). These programs, which include accelerated routes into teaching, offer training on how to be an effective teacher, as well as additional courses you might need in the subject area you wish to teach. Many of these programs can be completed in a year, during which time you may have a paid teaching position in a public school classroom. For a list of these programs, go to <http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/edprep/region.asp>

What types of teaching positions are open?

Texas has shortages in all areas. However, the need for teachers is particularly great in math, science, special education, foreign languages, technology applications, and bilingual education. The types and number of positions available vary across the state.

SBEC has compiled a list of various Job Bank websites that list school job vacancies in the state of Texas. To access the various Job Bank lists in the state, <http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/certinfo/schjobvac/sjobvaca.asp>

[Texas Workforce Commission \(www.twc.state.tx.us/careers/teaching.html\)](http://www.twc.state.tx.us/careers/teaching.html) - Texas will need over 82,000 new teachers by 2008. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects teaching as one of the fastest growing occupations over the next 5-10 years and beyond, with demand and growth continuing to increase. The average teacher salary in Texas is \$38,857. Special programs and incentives are available to help people become and remain teachers.

THE EDUCATION RESUME

What is a resume?

Your resume is a concise and organized representation of you and **must be targeted toward a particular career goal/position title to be effective**. It is your chance to paint a clear picture for a potential employer showing you would be the perfect person for a given position. Employers spend **25 seconds** on average scanning each resume. Your resume should stand out and show that you deserve an interview. Sample teacher resumes are provided at the end of this section.

What's in a resume?

Objective:

- Optional
- If included, be specific about what you are looking for in a position (e.g. To obtain a position in a secondary school teaching science and math. Qualified and interested in coaching swimming and track.)

Education

- Include institution, dates, location, degree (BA, MS, PhD, etc.), major in reverse chronological order (most recent first)
- Optional information includes GPA, relevant coursework, study abroad

Certification

- List names of certifications, certifying agencies and valid dates of certification (may be listed as "pending" if you're awaiting test results)

Teaching Experience

- No two student teaching experiences are alike. Be sure to describe any work you did including and beyond teaching, lesson planning, and assisting the teacher.
- Include name of organization, position, location, dates and duties.
- Provide enough detail (including numbers) to give a sense of scope of responsibility
- Highlight accomplishments
- Include student teaching, field-based observation, substitute teaching and tutoring

Other Experience:

- Include especially any experiences with children (e.g. camps, after-school programs, mentoring)
- May serve to highlight other, less relevant but transferable skills
- Can show well-roundedness

Honors/Awards/Activities

- May include clubs, volunteer positions, scholarships, awards, leadership experience, community involvement, etc.
- Include date (usually only year)

Skills

- Computer: Include operating systems, hardware, software and proficiency level
- Language: Include proficiency level

Professional Affiliations

- List names of organizations (e.g. American Federation of Teachers, National Art Education Association)
- Can include conference participation

Publications and/or Presentations

- Most common on higher education resumes, but if you've done research with faculty or independently and presented at conferences or been published in journals, especially related to education, consider including those experiences
- Format like a bibliography citation

Tips:

- Keep your resume to one page unless you have a lot of experience in your field (two pages maximum)
- There are an infinite number of ways to write a resume, but your format style should be consistent
- Remember that we read from top to bottom and left to right; the most important information should appear at the top of the page, at the top of each section and at the front of every line in order for the reader to notice it quickly
- Do not include personal information (e.g. age, marital status, hobbies, etc.) on your resume
- Do not use personal pronouns, such as "I, my, he, she, it"
- Include the month and year when you are including dates in your "Experience" section
- Use action verbs and include as many words and phrases from the position description as possible
- Avoid unfamiliar acronyms – spell out most abbreviations and dates to make the resume easy to scan quickly
- Use high quality, cotton bond paper that is a neutral color (white, off white, ivory) for hard copies
- Make sure there are no spelling errors or typos; have someone look at your final copy before you send it to an employer

SAMPLE ELEMENTARY TEACHER RESUME

Ivanna B. Teacher

Phone: (817) 555-1176 Email: teacheri@southwestern.edu

OBJECTIVE

To obtain the position of elementary school teacher with Georgetown ISD

EDUCATION / CERTIFICATION

Bachelor of Arts in Child Study and Language Development

Southwestern University
GPA 3.38

May 20__
Georgetown, TX

Early Childhood – 4th Grade Generalist, State of Texas
Project WILD Educator, Council for Environmental Education

pending
January 20__

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Student Teacher – K-1 (6 weeks), 4th grade (6 weeks)

Field-Based Observer – Kindergarten/1st Grade

NYOS Charter School

Spring 20__
Fall 20__
Austin, TX

- Completed two three-week full-teach placements, taking complete charge of classroom
- Observed and learned classroom management strategies
- Worked with an ethnically diverse population of students
- Taught two math lessons using CGI instructional methods and language arts lesson to Kindergarten and 1st graders

Field-Based Teacher – 2nd Grade

Field-Based Observer – 4-5-year-olds / 3rd Grade

Field-Based Observer – Pre-Kindergarten

Various elementary schools, Georgetown Independent School District

Fall 20__
Spring 20__
Spring 20__
Georgetown, TX

- Taught Guided Reading and Shared Reading lessons to 3rd graders
- Taught one lesson per visit to 2nd graders integrating Social Studies, Language Arts, and Social Justice lesson plans and Differentiated Instruction

Afternoon Teacher

Hilltop Montessori School

Summers 20__, 20__
Ft. Worth, TX

- Led class of two- and three-year-old students for half days
- Woke students up from nap, transitioning to snack time and afternoon work time, consisting of independent and small-group activities
- Observed and learned classroom management via Montessori method

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Tutor

Self-Employed

20__ – present
Georgetown, TX

- Tutor female 8th/9th grade student in math, guiding her through homework assignments and reviewing for tests
- Help student prepare for 8th grade TAKS math exam

Tutor

Helping Hands Tutoring

Fall 20__, Spring 20__
Georgetown, TX

- Tutored a 3rd grade girl in Math and Language Arts and a 7th grade girl in Science and Language Arts twice per week
- Helped at-risk students improve performance and stay motivated to engage in school

HONORS / ACTIVITIES

Dean's List, Southwestern University, Spring and Fall 20__, Spring and Fall 20__

Kappa Delta Pi, 20__-20__ (Treasurer)

Presenter, Southwestern Creative Works Symposium 20__

Natural Science Lesson Plan Presenter, 20__ Center for Applied Special Technology conference

SAMPLE SECONDARY TEACHER RESUME

Tamara Teacher

P.O. Box 123, Florence, Texas 76527 (512) 555-9696 teachert@southwestern.edu

OBJECTIVE

A secondary-level teaching position using experience with peer consultation techniques, composition theory and varied literary genres and their representative peoples and cultures

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in English May 20__
Southwestern University Georgetown, TX
GPA: 3.9

Queen Mary University, London, England Fall 20__
Institute for the International Education of Students, London, England Fall 20__
Graduate Seminar, African-American Oral Histories, The University of Texas Spring 20__
Intensive Language Program, Guanajuato, Mexico Summer 20__

CERTIFICATION

Texas 8-12 in English Language Arts (pending)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Student Teacher – English IV and English IV AP January – April 20__
Georgetown High School, Georgetown Independent School District Georgetown, TX

- Planned and delivered all daily lessons and created and conducted assessments
- Developed behavior management plan
- Underwent TAKS training and participated in proctoring exam
- Participated in AP curriculum development meetings
- Encouraged and contributed to plans for a GHS Writing Center

Field Based Placement – Eighth Grade Pre-AP September – November 20__
Tippit Middle School, Georgetown Independent School District Georgetown, TX

- Taught, assisted, and observed eighth grade Language Arts students
- Planned and delivered daily lessons with accommodations and adaptations
- Utilized differentiated instruction techniques
- Analyzed observation data to compile a case study including an FBA and IEP goals
- Attended ARDs and team meetings

CAREER RELATED EXPERIENCE

Writing Consultant, Debby Ellis Writing Center, Southwestern University Spring 20__ – present
Mentor, Georgetown Partners in Education Fall 20__ – present
Assistant Youth Programme Director, The Space, London, England Fall 20__
Staff Writer, *The Megaphone*, Southwestern Student Newspaper Fall 20__

HONORS / ACTIVITIES

Dean's List (each semester) Phi Beta Kappa
Kappa Delta Pi Education Honor Society Alpha Chi
Outstanding Education Student, 20__ Paideia Scholar
English Departmental Honors Student Presidential Scholarship, 20__ – present
Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Honor Society Student Leader Award Nominee 20__, 20__
President, Delta Delta Delta Sorority, 20__ – present Vice-President, Student Congress, 20__ – 20__
Chair, Committee on Student Leadership, 20__ – 20__ Panhellenic Outstanding Junior Award

SKILLS

Language: Spanish (advanced proficiency), Signed Exact English (foundational skills)
Computer: PC; Windows; MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Internet Explorer

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

What to expect and how to prepare

Preparing for the interview:

- **Know yourself:** Reflect on who you are. Make a list of your skills and personal interests. What are your philosophies on education and its subcategories, like discipline, behavior and performance in the classroom? And, above all, ask yourself why you like children and want to teach them. Write your list as if you were sharing it with a stranger who doesn't know you; soon enough you'll be faced with that very scenario.
- **Experience:** Be prepared to elaborate at the interview about your coursework and work experience, both paid and volunteer.
- **Get your portfolio in order:** If you haven't done so, familiarize yourself with your portfolio making sure it is up-to-date. More information on portfolios will be provided later in this packet.
- **Do your homework:** Check out the district in any way you can. This would include web research for the district's website if they have one, and asking questions on education mailing lists or newsgroups. Also, with the current bashing education gets from the general public, you can count on regular articles in the local newspaper. If you are focusing on one district in particular, you should be up-to-date on what the local media is saying about the school district.
- **Prepare your list of questions:** Intelligent, confident job candidates will have their own list of questions for the interviewers.

Stages of the interview:

- **Getting to know you:** This is the key time to make the best first impression possible. It will determine how the rest of the interview will go. The interviewer will attempt to establish a relaxed, yet business-like environment.
- **Interviewee review:** This is where the Interviewer gets to know your interests, your accomplishments, your academic and work background, and your goals for your future. The objective of this stage is so the interviewer can match your interests with your qualifications. Be honest, concise, and thorough in every question.
- **The match game:** As soon as the interviewer is confident that you have the necessary qualifications for this job, he/she will begin matching your interests with the job's responsibilities. If there is a match, he/she will probably explain job details to see how interested you really are in the position.
- **Finishing touches:** At this point, the interviewer should outline the next steps in the hiring process. Be sure that you have understood all information given to you. Provide any additional information requested, and be sure to ask any questions you have.
- **The follow-up:** The interview may be over, but your work isn't. Send a business-like letter via email or mail to your interviewer(s) within 24 hours thanking them for the opportunity to meet with them. Then keep in touch with a phone call to the personnel office every two weeks.

Sample interview questions:

Many of these questions are related to teaching jobs, but can be applied to many different jobs. Students, Parents, School, etc. can be interchanged with Customers, Co-Workers, Company, etc.

Teacher relationships with students

- What kind of students do you like to work with? What type of students could you teach most effectively?
- You give an assignment. A student ridicules the assignment, saying it doesn't make sense. What would you do?
- How do you help students experience success?
- How would you individualize instruction for students?
- What procedures do you use to evaluate student progress besides using tests?
- How would you challenge the slow learner and the advanced learner within the same class?

Teacher relationships with colleagues

- What kind of teachers would you prefer to work with? Why?
- What activities would you like to work with in our school?
- What quality or qualities do you have that would enhance our teaching staff?
- What are some personality characteristics you find undesirable in people?
- Who should be responsible for discipline in a school? Why?
- What needs and/or expectations do you have of the school administration?

Teacher relationships with parents

- What do you feel is the most effective way to communicate with parents? Describe how you have used this/these technique(s).
- Describe the reasons why you would contact parents.

- What would you include in your Open House presentations to parents?
- What community activities would you like to be associated with? Why?

Instructional techniques

- Describe any school experience you have had, particularly in student teaching (or in another teaching position) that has prepared you for a full-time position at our school.
- How would you integrate technology into the curriculum you would teach?
- Describe any innovative projects you have been involved in developing.
- Give an example of how you have used cooperative learning in your classroom.
- What four words would students use to describe your teaching strategies?
- What rules do you have for your classroom?
- Describe your teaching style and how you accommodate the different learning styles of the students in your classes.
- What do you consider to be your strengths and how will you use them in your teaching?

Pot luck questions!

- Why did you choose to become a teacher?
- What are your hobbies and interests?
- What are your plans for continuing your professional growth?
- Tell me about an interesting article you have read recently in a professional journal.
- What contributions can you make to our school?
- What current trends in public education please you? Displease you?
- Tell me about three people who have most influenced your own education and educational career.

Behavioral interviewing

In this interviewing technique, the employer will ask situational questions related to actual past behaviors (rather than hypothetical situations and responses) to predict the employee's future success. With these questions, be sure to be very specific. Employers are not looking for vague or general answers. Describe in detail a particular experience, how you dealt with the situation, and the outcome of the situation. Be honest, but if you later learned that you should have responded differently, be sure to explain this to the interviewer. S/he will see that you learned something from the experience. Example questions include:

- Describe a time when you were faced with problems or stresses at work that tested your coping skills. What did you do?
- Give an example of a time when you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
- Describe the most creative work-related project you have completed.
- Tell me about a situation in the past year in which you had to deal with a very upset parent or a disruptive student, or, similarly, a co-worker or customer.
- Give me an example of an important goal you had to set and tell me about your progress in reaching that goal.
- Give me an example of a problem you faced on the job, and tell me how you solved it.

Interview DOs and DON'Ts:

Interview DOs

- Dress appropriately for the industry; err on the side of being conservative to show you take the interview seriously. Your personal grooming and cleanliness should be impeccable.
- Know the exact time and location of your interview; know how long it takes to get there, park, find a restroom to freshen up, etc.
- Arrive early (about 10 minutes prior to the interview start time; if you get there sooner, wait in your car).
- Treat other people you encounter with courtesy and respect. Their opinions of you might be solicited during hiring decisions.
- Offer a firm handshake, make eye contact, and have a friendly expression when your interviewer greets you.
- Listen to be sure you understand your interviewer's name and the correct pronunciation.
- Even when your interviewer gives you a first and last name, address your interviewer by title (Ms., Mr., Dr.) and last name, until invited to do otherwise.
- Maintain good eye contact during the interview.
- Sit still in your seat; avoid fidgeting and slouching.
- Respond to questions and back up your statements about yourself with specific examples whenever possible.
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question.
- Be thorough in your responses, while being concise with your wording.
- Be honest and be yourself. Dishonesty gets discovered and is grounds for withdrawing job offers and for firing. You want a good match between yourself and your employer. If you get hired by acting like someone other than yourself, you and your employer will both be unhappy.
- Treat the interview seriously and as though you are truly interested in the employer and the opportunity presented.
- Exhibit a positive attitude. The interviewer is evaluating you as a potential co-worker. Behave like someone you would want to work with.
- Have intelligent questions prepared to ask the interviewer. Having done your research about the employer in advance, ask questions that you did not find answered in your research.
- Evaluate the interviewer and the organization s/he represents. An interview is a two-way street. Conduct yourself cordially and respectfully, while thinking critically about the way you are treated and the values and priorities of the organization.
- Do expect to be treated appropriately. If you believe you were treated inappropriately or asked questions that were inappropriate or made you uncomfortable, discuss this with a Career Services advisor.
- Make sure you understand the employer's next steps in the hiring process; know when and from whom you should expect to hear next. Know what action you are expected to take next, if any.

- When the interviewer concludes the interview, offer a firm handshake and make eye contact. Depart gracefully.
- After the interview, make notes right away, so you don't forget critical details.
- Always send a thank-you letter within 24 hours.

Interview DON'Ts

- Don't make excuses. Take responsibility for your decisions and your actions.
- Don't make negative comments about previous employers or professors or anyone for that matter.
- Don't falsify application materials or answers to interview questions.
- Don't treat the interview casually, as if you are just shopping around or doing the interview for practice. This is an insult to the interviewer and to the organization.
- Don't give the impression that you are only interested in an organization because of its geographic location.
- Don't act as though you would take any job or are desperate for employment.
- Don't give the impression that you are only interested in salary; don't ask about salary and benefits issues until your interviewer brings up the subject.
- Don't make the interviewer guess what type of work you're interested in; it is not the interviewer's job to act as a career advisor to you.
- Don't be unprepared for typical interview questions. You may not be asked all of them in every interview, but being unprepared looks foolish.
- A job search can be hard work and involve frustrations; don't exhibit frustrations or a negative attitude in an interview.
- Don't go to extremes with your posture; don't slouch, and don't sit rigidly on the edge of your chair.
- Don't assume that a female interviewer is "Mrs." or "Miss." Address her as "Ms." unless told otherwise. Her marital status is irrelevant to the purpose of the interview.
- Don't chew gum or smell like smoke.
- Don't take cell phone calls during an interview. If you carry a cell phone, turn it off during the interview to be sure it doesn't ring.

Interview attire:

What your clothes say about you

While your conduct, communication skills, and your ability to articulate intelligent and well thought out responses to questions are the most important elements of the interview, appropriate attire supports your image as a person who takes the interview process seriously and understands the nature of the industry in which you are trying to become employed. Your attire should be noticed as being appropriate and well fitting, but it should not take center stage.

Interview attire guidelines for women and men

Suit: A two-piece matched suit is always the best and safest choice.

Conservative colors/fabric

- Navy, dark gray (and black for women) are safe.
- Other color trends may come and go. Avoid the extremes.
- Solids or very subtle weave patterns or plaids (the kind that look solid across a room) are safest.
- Wool and wool blends (or good quality micro fiber for women only) are generally the best fabrics in all seasons. Avoid acetate/rayon blends.

Cost/quality: Invest in quality clothing that will look appropriate during your first two or three years on the job. One good quality suit is sufficient for a job search if that is all your budget allows. You can vary your shirt/blouse and tie/accessories.

Details: Everything should be clean and well pressed. Carefully inspect clothes for tags, dangling threads, etc.

Interview attire specifics for women

Do not confuse club attire with business attire. If you would wear it to a club, you probably shouldn't wear it in a business environment.

Suit-pants/skirts: Tailored pant suits are appropriate for women, especially if the interview or site visit involves getting in and out of vehicles. Pants should be creased or tailored, not tight or flowing. Observe well-dressed women in your industry to see what is acceptable.

Skirt lengths: Your skirt should cover your thighs when you are seated. Unlike what is portrayed on television, showing a lot of skin makes you look naive at best, foolish at worst. Longer skirts are acceptable as long as they are not billowing, but not too narrow to prevent climbing stairs comfortably. High slits in skirts are not appropriate. A small back, center slit in a knee-length skirt is appropriate, a slit to the knee is appropriate for calf-length skirts.

Color/fabric: Women generally have more options with suit color than men, but remain conservative with your color choice.

Shirt/sweaters: Underneath your suit jacket, wear a tailored blouse in a color or small print that coordinates nicely with your suit. A fine gauge, good quality knit shell is also appropriate.

Jewelry/accessories: Wear a conservative watch. Jewelry and scarf styles come and go, so keep your choices simple and leaning toward conservative. Avoid extremes. If your industry is creative, you may have more flexibility in this area.

Cosmetics: Keep makeup conservative. A little is usually better than none for a polished look. Nails should be clean and well groomed. Avoid extreme nail lengths and polish colors, especially in conservative industries

Shoes: Should be leather or fabric/micro fiber. Choose closed-toe pumps. Regardless of what is in style, avoid extremes. Avoid stilettos or chunky platforms. Make certain you can walk comfortably and gracefully in your shoes to portray a professional appearance.

Hosiery: Should be plainly styled (no patterns), sheer, and in neutral colors complementing your suit. Avoid high contrast between your suit and hosiery color. While bare legs are more common and acceptable in the workplace now, hosiery is more conservative and probably a better choice for an interview setting.

Purse/bag: Keep it small and simple if you carry a purse, especially if you also carry a briefcase. Purse color should coordinate with your shoes. You may choose to carry a small briefcase or business-like tote bag in place of a purse. Leather is the best choice, but micro fiber and fine woven fabrics are acceptable.

Interview specifics for men

Suit: Do not combine a suit jacket with pants that don't match.

Conservative colors/fabric: Black for men is considered severe or overly formal, although it is common. Wool or wool blends are the only acceptable fabrics for a conservative men's suit.

Ties: Tie styles come and go. Select good quality silk ties. Avoid fashion extremes, like character ties, in interviews. Notice what men in your industry wear on the job, at career fairs, at information sessions, when they meet with clients.

Shirts: Long-sleeved shirts, even in summer. Choose white or light blue solid, or conservative stripes.

Socks: Dark socks, mid-calf length so no skin is visible when you sit down.

Shoes: Leather, lace-up or slip-on business shoes, preferably black or cordovan. Invest in a good pair; even if you don't wear them daily on the job, you'll need them for other occasions and you should expect to get lots of years out of good shoes. Be sure and wear a black or cordovan leather belt, to match your shoes.

Facial hair: If worn, should be well groomed. Observe men in your industry if you are unsure what's appropriate or are considering changing your look.

Jewelry: Wear a conservative watch. If you choose to wear other jewelry, be conservative. Removing earrings is safest. For conservative industries, don't wear earrings. Observe other men in your industry to see what is acceptable.

Details: Suits typically have tacking stitches to hold vents—on the jacket back and on sleeves – in place before the garment is purchased. Cut them off if your retailer/tailor doesn't. And that tag stitched on the outside of your sleeve is not meant to stay there like other labels—cut it off.

Grooming Tips for Everyone

Hair	Should be clean and neat
Shoes	Should be in polished condition. Make sure heels are not worn.
Details	No missing buttons, no lint; and don't forget to remove external tags and tacking stitches from new clothes.
Hands	Clean fingernails
Fit	Clothes should be clean, neatly pressed, and fit properly.
Smell	Perfume or cologne should be used sparingly or not at all. No odors in clothes. Don't smell like smoke.
Padfolios	Preferred over bulky briefcase. A small briefcase is also appropriate. Only carry a briefcase if you have a reason to. Otherwise, you look silly.
Book bags	Leave it at home for an on-site interview. For an on-campus interview, leave it in the waiting area.

THE TEACHER PORTFOLIO

The ultimate representation of you as a teacher

Why have a teacher portfolio?

A teacher portfolio is not only a collection of works to highlight and demonstrate a teacher's knowledge and skills in teaching, but it is a means of reflection and criticism to improve the effectiveness of teaching strategies. Ideally, a teacher portfolio is a document created by the teacher that reveals, relates, and describes the teacher's duties, expertise and growth in teaching. Each assertion in the portfolio is then documented in an appendix or a reference to outside material, such as videotapes or lengthy interviews. The size of the portfolio varies, but is typically two to ten pages, plus appendices. Bring your portfolio to interviews and offer to show it to the interviewer, but realize

that your interviewer may decline to look due to time constraints. Offering the portfolio already earns you kudos, though, as it shows your preparedness and dedication. Electronic portfolios are another option to share with prospective employers prior to or after an interview but obviously cannot be accessed easily during the interview.

The makings of a teacher portfolio

3-ring binder: Buy it now even if you don't have anything to put in it. Place it on your shelf as a sign of encouragement and a reminder to start saving information for it.

Storage: Figure out the best way to store your information until you are ready to put it into a portfolio. One idea is to have a large enough box to archive things from your classroom for up to a year. Once a year, move the desired items into a portfolio box or file.

Organization: Use tabbed dividers to organize and separate the contents of your portfolio. Identically named folders can be kept in your storage boxes as holding places for information. Sections may include:

- Table of contents
- Resume and certification Information (references, letters of recommendation, transcripts)
- Classroom planning
- Instruction and evaluation (sample worksheets, games, and tests; examples of lessons – units or projects; photos of your classroom in action to illustrate your lesson examples; examples of students' work)
- Personal goals and professional preparation (educational philosophy, classroom management theory)
- Committee work (final results of projects or committees you have been a part of)
- Outside educational activities
- Optional: screen shots and addresses of school or classroom websites you created/designed
- Optional (for electronic portfolio): short video showing you in action in front of the classroom and interacting with students

Set a date: Set a date on your calendar to review your portfolio and sort through your archive box.

Tips to having a great teacher portfolio

Keep it simple: Avoid information overload. Consider it a highlight video rather than a four-hour long documentary.

Keep it timely: Review your portfolio at least twice a year. Use your vacations as times to reflect on your teaching and pencil in changes as needed.

Keep it cheap: Keep a cheap camera and all the necessities with you at all times, so you can capture your students at work at a moment's notice.

Keep it clear: Create a custom cover for your portfolio with a three-ring binder and a clear insert on the cover. Use clear plastic page holders inside to keep the contents clean and neat.

Keep it safe: Use copies of originals, and keep the originals in a safe place when possible.

Keep it legible: Type out all information on a computer using legible font and font size.

Collecting evidence

The earlier in your college career that you begin to assemble materials that will become your portfolio, the better. At the end of each semester, select the most important evidence you have—a thoughtful paper on an educational theory, an effective set of lesson plans, documentation of honors and awards—and file them together. When you begin your job search, you will have the beginnings of your portfolio well established.

References for this packet collected from:

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University at Buffalo

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