



CENTER FOR CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Attire for Interviewing

SUITS

- Choose dark, solid colors—dark gray, charcoal, navy, or black, in a tightly woven fabric. In some industries, olive, pin-stripes, or glen plaid may work. Avoid flashy or showy fabrics.
- Pants suits or skirt/dress suits are appropriate.
- Women's jackets may be single or double breasted; short or long. Choose styles that look best on you. Avoid flashy buttons or trim.
- Knee-length skirts are most appropriate. Skirts should be no higher than 2" above the knee. Test the fit by sitting down.
- Men's suits should be conservative single-breasted, two- or three-button jacket, be with or without a vent, but avoid two-vent jackets.
- Make sure your suit is altered to fit properly—sleeves should break just below your wrist.
- Have your suit pressed to keep it looking crisp.

TOPS

- Purchase at least two good-quality dress shirts, blouses, or fine-gauge sweaters to wear under your suit jacket for interviewing. Once you have the job, buy more (7-8).
- White or light blue wrinkle-free cotton is a good men's shirt choice. Avoid polyester or polyester blend shirts.
- Tailored blouses in solid colors are best.
- Look for fabrics that resist wrinkling and staining. Washable fabrics may be best.
- Avoid sleeveless tops if you plan to take off your jacket.
- Dress shirt collars should be stiff but comfortable (too loose looks unprofessional; too tight, you'll feel like you're choking).
- If buying a button-up shirt with a pointed collar, be sure that it has collar stays.

SHOES

- Black, navy, or neutral colors for shoes
- Always keep your shoes polished and well-maintained.
- Make comfort a priority and practice walking ahead of time.
- Conservative shoes (e.g. close toed, closed heels basic pumps no higher than 2" - 2½" heels or wingtips) are optimal. Lug or platform soles or strappy sandals are not as professional. Ground-down soles are out!

STOCKINGS/SOCKS

- In more conservative industries, wear stockings with skirts.
 - Make sure there are no runs in your stockings and carry an extra pair in your bag in case of emergency.
 - Match your socks to your suit, shirt, or tie.
 - Solid color socks are better. Black or navy is best.
- Socks should be high enough so no skin is visible when you sit down and cross your legs.

ACCESSORIES

- Limit jewelry to two pieces at most. Consider minimizing body art and piercings (except for one pair of earrings) during interviews and until you understand the organization's culture better.
- Belts should match shoes.
- Scarves and ties are an inexpensive way to change an outfit's look. Colors should work back into your suit or work well with the shirt. A simple pattern is best for interviews.
- Purchase at least two good-quality silk ties. Once you have the job, expand to seven or eight. Use a double Windsor knot to minimize a bulky appearance. The tie should end at your belt line.
- Carry a padfolio or a neat bag, such as a briefcase or structured tote that matches your shoes. Avoid having multiple bags (e.g. purse, briefcase, etc.). Don't carry your backpack.