

Dress for Success

The importance of Professional Appearance for Job Interviews

What you wear to an interview plays a major role in how you are perceived. Your appearance can signal your level of preparation, professionalism, and understanding of workplace expectations. Dressing appropriately shows respect for the organization and its culture. For interviews, it's best to choose attire that is slightly more polished and conservative than what employees wear day to day, helping you make a confident and positive first impression. **Always Business Professional for Interviews.**

Business Professional Attire



- Two-piece suit and tie; solid, neutral colors are best
- Skirt length should be to the knee

- Solid color or subtle patterned blouse/top/dress shirt
- Minimal jewelry
- Dark shoes with dark socks. If you are unsure which shoe or sock colors “go” with your suit, or what color belt you should pair with your suit/shoes, ask the Career Advisors for advice
- Closed-toe shoes (1 or 2 inches heel height) are appropriate but should be comfortable to stand and walk in; flats or wedges are okay as well
- Trimmed facial hair
- Carry a portfolio, professional bag or simple, small purse (no backpacks)

Business Casual Attire



- Wearing a tie is optional
- Sport coats/blazers are appropriate, but not required
- Shirts should be collared (polo or button-down)
- Dress pant options include slacks, khakis, chinos (No leggings!)
- Dresses or skirt/blouse combinations are appropriate (sundresses are not appropriate)
- Shorts are not considered appropriate for interviews
- Good casual shoes, like loafers, flats, wedges, or low heels (but no flip-flops!) or fashion sneakers

Casual Smart Attire



- Anything listed as Business Casual, and:
- Jeans—avoid rips or holes; darker washes are generally considered more professional
- Clean, plain T-shirts
- No sandals, athletic sneakers or flip-flops!
- Avoid athleisure wear, spaghetti straps or camisoles, or any top that reveals too much bare skin

Non-Clothing Details to Prepare Before an Interview

- Silence your phone: Turn your phone completely off to avoid interruptions or distractions during the interview.
- Check for wrinkles: Neatly pressed clothing shows attention to detail and professionalism.
- Keep accessories simple: Choose items that complement your look without pulling focus away from you or the conversation.
- Consider workplace norms: Visible tattoos, piercings, or bold hair colors may not align with every organization's culture. It's best to wait until you're hired before fully expressing personal style.
- Skip hats and caps: Avoid wearing hats or ball caps to interviews, except for religious reasons.
- Practice good hygiene: Arrive clean and well-groomed, with tidy hair, facial hair, and nails. Use deodorant and keep fragrances light or minimal.
- Mind your breath: Brush your teeth beforehand and bring mints if needed but avoid chewing gum or candy during the interview.
- Keep clothes smoke-free: If you smoke, store interview attire in a clean, odor-free space.
- Limit makeup and empty pockets: Choose natural makeup and remove items from your pockets that could create noise or distractions.