

Dress for Success

What to Know

You should look your best when you go to a job interview. Dress one-step above the dress required for the job. You only get one chance to make a first impression, so make it a good one. Remember, first impressions are formed when the interviewer first sees and greets you. You need to look professional, confident and competent.



To help you decide what to wear to an interview, visit the company and notice what people are wearing. Make sure your interview clothes are appropriate for the job you are applying for and for the location of the interview. Do not wear a suit to an interview at a construction site, and do not wear jeans and a sport shirt to an office setting. You will find differences in the way people dress depending on the industry they work in. It is always better to find yourself over-dressed than under-dressed for an interview.

Try to think ahead to the interview. If there is a possibility you will be required to perform a task, make sure you are prepared. For instance, if you are applying for a job as a welder, you may be asked to demonstrate your skills on the spot. You should have your work clothes and tools available at the interview.

Guidelines

Dress for Men

Use the following list to check yourself prior to an interview. You may want to seek an opinion from someone in the field in which you are interviewing.

- Hair should be trimmed, neat and clean. Have a clean shave. If you wear a beard or a mustache, be sure to trim neatly.
- Wear glasses with clean and clear lenses. Do not wear sunglasses.
- Wear no more than one ring on each hand and a watch. Cover or remove any body piercing.
- Depending on the position you are applying for, wear:
 - A dark suit, with button-up dress shirt and matching tie
 - A solid button-up dress shirt with a matching tie and dark dress pants.
 - A solid colored or pinstriped dress shirt without a tie and dark dress pants.
 - Polo coordinated with dark dress pants
- Tip of the tie should come to the center of the belt buckle.
- Belt should show no signs of wear or weight gain/loss; should match shoes.
- Nails should be cut short, filed and clean.

- Clean and polished conservative dress shoes with dark socks. Work boots may be appropriate for some job interviews. No loafers or tennis shoes.
- Minimal or no aftershave, perfume or cologne; no strong-smelling deodorants and no smoking.
- No gum, candy or other objects in your mouth.

Dress for Women

Use the following list to check yourself prior to an interview. You may even want to seek an opinion from someone in the field in which you are interviewing.

- Clean hair, styled professionally.
- Makeup should be simple. Avoid bright colors or too heavy an application.
- Wear glasses with clean and clear lenses. Do not wear sunglasses.
- Simple earrings, not dangling; a pin or necklace and a watch; no more than one ring per hand; no more than one bracelet.
- Depending on the position you are applying for, wear:
 - A seasonal business suit in solid color or conservative pattern; with blouse in a complimentary solid color such as white, cream or pastel; skirt should come to the knee; or
 - Jacket in a solid color or conservative pattern; coordinating blouse and tailored or pleated skirt in appropriate length; or
 - blouse, coordinating skirt or pants in solid color or conservative print or pattern and appropriate length.
- Nails should be short to medium length; manicured with light or clear polish.
- Comfortable heels or flats, no open toes or backs, no scuffs or nicks in heels.
- Stockings or pantyhose should be flawless (no runs) and conservative in color. Wear them even in the summer.
- Minimal perfume or cologne, no strong-smelling deodorant and no smoking.
- No gum, candy or other objects in your mouth.
- If wearing a skirt, it should come to the knee.
- Carry either a good leather or leather-like portfolio or purse, but not both.