

STUDENT BULLETIN BOARD

October 2019

DRESSING STYLES FOR PROFESSIONALS

Business attire is the clothing you wear in professional settings. You might decide how to dress depending on the type of office you work in. or depends on where you are going for an interview or what is the kind of meeting you are going to attend. There are varying levels of business attire ranging from 'casual' to 'business formal'. Based on the setting,, you can decide which kind of business attire is appropriate.

Types of business attire

Below is an outline of the most common types of business attire:

- Casual
- Smart casual
- Business casual
- Business professional
- Business formal
- Gender neutral

1. Casual

Casual business attire is informal clothing worn not only in most business settings but also in many settings outside of work. You might wear casual clothing if you work in an informal office where others wear things like t-shirts, jeans and open-toed shoes. You should avoid wearing casual dress with clients and in interviews, even if the office is casual overall.



Casual for women

Casual dress for women includes items like t-shirts, blouses and sweaters on top. Bottoms might include jeans, cropped pants or shorts. Casual shoes can include sneakers, low heels or sandals.

Casual for men

Casual dress for men might include items like t-shirts, button-down shirts or sweaters on top. Bottoms might include jeans, khaki pants or shorts. Casual shoes can include sneakers, loafers or sandals.

2. Smart casual

Smart casual is another form of casual business attire with a stylish twist. You might include more trendy pieces of clothing if dressing in smart casual. This type of business attire is appropriate for more flexible offices including informal settings. You might also choose to wear smart casual in an interview for a more informal office. This way, you fit in with their informal dress code while still maintaining a clean, professional look that communicates that you care about your appearance.



Smart casual for women

Smart casual for women might include items like blazers, dresses, sweaters, trousers, skirts, blouses, heels, flats, jewelry and scarves.

Smart casual for men

Smart casual for men includes items like sports jackets, ties, khakis, button-down shirts, polos, dress shoes, boots, clean sneakers and belts.

3. Business casual

Business casual is a common form of dress worn in many offices. While many classic business staples are used in business casual wear, there are casual elements included like khakis. Business casual is appropriate for many interviews, client meetings and office settings. Because it is not very casual and also not very formal, this is usually an appropriate way to dress if you're unsure about the setting.



Business casual for women

For business casual, women can wear pencil skirts, blouses, button-down shirts, trousers, khakis, blazers and sweaters. They can accessorize with simple jewelry and belts. Shoes can include flats, loafers, mules, boots or heels.

Business casual for men

For business casual, men can wear trousers, slacks, khakis, button-downs, polos, or sport coats. Jackets and ties are optional but can be used to accessorize. Business casual shoes include loafers, lifestyle sneakers (with leather or canvas), oxfords or boots.

4. Business professional

Business professional is a traditional form of attire used in more conservative settings or companies with strict dress codes. You might wear business professional in industries like accounting, banking, finance, government or law. Business professional clothes should be well-fitted and may be tailored to fit you specifically.



Business professional for women

When dressing for business professional, women should wear tidy dresses, skirts or slacks. Tops should include neat button-down shirts or blouses with a blazer. Business professional shoes include classic heels no higher than three inches, loafers or tidy flats. Women can accessorize with minimal jewelry and belts.

Business professional for men

When dressing for business professional, men should wear a dark-colored (gray, navy) suit and tie. The tie should be simple, avoiding bright colors or busy patterns. Men should wear a button-down shirt (preferably white or light-blue) and belt. Pair with a professional, closed-toed shoe like an oxford or loafer.

5. Business formal

Business formal is reserved for the most formal settings such as award ceremonies, special dinners, benefits or other important evening events. Business formal is similar to “black tie,” but should be reserved to maintain professionalism.



Business formal for women

For business formal, women might wear a dark pants suit, skirt suit or suit dress. In some cases, a long evening dress may be appropriate. Shoes options include formal flats, heels, oxfords or loafers. Minimalist jewelry can be appropriate.

Business formal for men

For business formal, men might wear clothing similar to “business professional”—a dark suit and tie. For this setting, a black suit is appropriate with a light button-down shirt. Wear oxford or loafer shoes with clean lines. Avoid wearing brown shoes if you select a black suit. Accessorize with belts, a tie clip or small, minimal cuff links.

6. Gender neutral professional dress

There are several ways of dressing for the workplace and different degrees of formality that do not adhere to a gender binary.

You can dress gender neutral elements up or down depending on the situation for which you’re dressing. For casual dress, jeans, sweaters and shirts are all great options. For shoes, you might choose trendy sneakers, sandals or loafers. For more formal forms of dress, you might choose slacks, trousers or neat chinos. Options for tops include sweaters, button downs or shirts with cardigans. Shoes might include loafers, oxfords or stylish lace-up shoes.

Pant suits are a great option for any formal settings. These can be paired with flat or slightly heeled oxfords or loafers.



Final Business Attire Tips

When deciding how to dress for a certain situations, there are a few things to consider: If you work in an office, pay close attention to the way people dress. While the office may be casual, you might notice that people in leadership positions dress slightly more formal. You may choose to dress similarly to the people who hold the position you would like to reach.

If you're going to an interview, check the company's "About us" page and social media profiles for clues about their culture. They might have pictures or videos about their offices where you can see how employees typically dress. If you're still unsure, ask your recruiter or other contact what they recommend you wear to be successful in the interview.

If you're going to business meeting, ask your colleagues who may know or have met with this same person about how their offices operate and how you can appear respectful and professional during your meeting with them.

In any setting, avoid overly large or busy accessories, heels that are four inches or higher, and any clothing with profanity or possibly offensive imagery or phrases.

Interview Attire Guide

- Start by researching the company's dress code.
- Follow our workplace attire guide below.
- Choose clothes that make you feel comfortable and confident.
- Use your best judgement and don't overthink it.
- Avoid revealing clothing.
- Choose clothing accommodating to the climate and season.

- Check for stains, snags, pet hairs and holes.
 - Ensure clothing is pressed and wrinkle free.
- When preparing for an interview, think of selecting your interview attire as the icing on the cake — that final detail that pulls all your efforts together.
 - When considering how to dress for an interview, use your best judgment and don't overthink it. You should choose clothes that make you feel comfortable and confident — nothing that you'd have to tug or pull at or something that would wrinkle easily on your commute to the interview.
 - Avoid revealing clothing and anything that doesn't fit properly.
 - Check for stains, snags, pet hair and holes. Make sure it's cleaned and ready a few days before your interview.
 - The night before the interview, lay out or hang up your outfit. It should be out of reach of children, housemates or pets.
 - How to match your outfit to the workplace
 - Because you've already researched the company, you should have a sense of the workplace and what level of formality is appropriate. Look at photos on their social media sites to get a sense of what people wear at the office.
 - For more casual workplaces, professional-looking casual job interview attire is appropriate. For women, this could mean:
 - Dark jeans, a blouse and cardigan
 - A knee-length skirt and button down shirt or blouse
 - Both options can be worn with flats or heels, avoid open-toe shoes
 - For men, this could mean:
 - Dark jeans or slacks and button down shirt or polo
 - This can be worn with any closed-toe shoes that are neat and clean.
 - For a business casual environment, you'll need to dress up a bit more. For women, this could mean,
 - Black or navy dress pants or pencil skirt
 - Button down shirt and cardigan or jacket
 - Flats or heels are appropriate
 - For men, this could mean,
 - Black or navy dress slacks with a belt, button down shirt and tie
 - A blazer is optional
 - For a formal workplace, wear a dark-colored suit. For women this can be a tailored dress with matching jacket or suit pants or skirt with matching jacket. For men, this means suit pants and jacket with a button down shirt and tie.

You might use different styles of business attire for different settings or occasions. Pay attention to the dress code, if applicable. If not, look to other people's style of dress or ask around if needed. Dressing appropriately can help you be seen as a professional employee who cares about their success in the role.

*Sources : <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/starting-new-job/guide-to-business-attire>
<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/how-to-dress-for-a-job-interview>*