



Professional Dress Guidelines for Interviews

Your overall appearance is only one factor an interviewer evaluates during a job interview, but it's really important because it's the first visual impression you give. Luckily, your appearance is something you can plan in advance.

Dress the Part

When deciding what to wear for a job interview, researching the company you're interviewing for is critical. You need to determine in advance the appropriate style of dress for the industry and company; some are more conservative or casual than others. Some employers' adoption of "business casual" dress policies makes interview-wear decisions more difficult. A rule of thumb: unless you've gotten clear messages that the interviewer expects you to dress casually, you should dress professionally. Always err on the side of conservatism. You can even ask ahead of time how standard dress is decided by a given employer; peers, advisors, or even the recruiter themselves are good resources – don't be shy about inquiring!

A few words about Individuality

Although your unique style is important, the interview is not always the best time to demonstrate this via your wardrobe. You may not be the suit type or you may adore your multiple facial piercings, but keep in mind that you will have plenty of opportunity to display your individual style once you land the job. Keep in mind that you, too, have a choice in the hiring process and the interview is a great time to find out whether you would be comfortable within an organization. Use the interview to determine the corporate culture and your potential fit therein.

General Guidelines to Follow

- A two-piece conservative suit in a dark color is best.
- Wear a long-sleeve, button-down, dress shirt or blouse.
- Avoid heavy or dark make-up or extremely long fingernails.
- Stay away from anything very tight or baggy and make sure you feel comfortable
- Bring a professional bag/briefcase, or a nice portfolio-type folder (leather or dark canvas). If you bring a bag/purse, keep it simple and uncluttered.
- Wear minimal jewelry/piercings; let the sparkle of your personality make you shine!
- Choose a tie with subtle pattern that coordinates with your outfit.
- Think clean! This means clean nails, showered and good breath.
- Avoid strong fragrances. Skip perfumes, colognes and aftershaves, but do wear deodorant or antiperspirant.
- Test-drive your interview wear. Check to see that you're comfortable whether you're walking, sitting or standing. Also, make sure that your clothes are crisply ironed, hemmed and stainless, and shine your shoes.
- Keep any items that scream "Student!" at home, such as backpacks, gigantic water bottles and other campus gear.
- Bring an "Emergency" Kit for Interview Day:
 - Mint
 - Tissue
 - Safety Pin
 - Small Comb
 - Bobby Pin
 - Hair ties
 - Tide pen
 - Toothpick/Floss

Remember, while you want to look professional and neat for your interview, dress for comfort and confidence, as well. During the interview, both you and the employer will want to concentrate on your skills, abilities and interest in doing the job, not on your clothes. If you need additional help, please come to [drop-ins](#) or make an appointment on [Handshake](#).