

PROFESSIONAL STYLE GUIDE



Dressing for Success

Your professional attire is a key part of making a strong first impression and feeling confident in any career setting. This guide provides inclusive style options for feminine, masculine, and gender-neutral looks.

Whether you're preparing for an interview, internship, or your first full-time job, this guide will equip you with the knowledge to dress with confidence and professionalism.

Types of Professional Dress

Business Casual

A polished yet relaxed look. Best for networking events, casual office environments, and everyday workplace wear.

Business Professional

A step up from business casual. Best for interviews, corporate offices, and finance and law industries.

Business Formal

The most professional attire, typically requiring a full matching suit. Best for high-level business meetings, formal corporate events, and industries with strict dress codes.



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FEMININE

Business Casual

Tops & Dresses

- Blouses, sweaters, or structured tops in neutral or soft colors.
- Knee-length or midi dresses with modest necklines

Pants

- Tailored trousers, midi skirts, or dressy ankle-length pants
- Dark jeans (if appropriate)

Jackets

- Blazers and cardigans can elevate the look but aren't always necessary

Shoes

- Flats, loafers, low heels, or ankle boots
- Clean, leather sneakers



Business Professional

Tops

- Button-down shirts, blouses, or tailored sweaters; solid or subtle patterns work best
- Knee-length or midi dresses with modest necklines

Pants

- Well-fitted dress pants or pencil skirts in neutral colors

Suits & Jackets

- Structured blazers in neutral colors or minimal patterns

Shoes

- Closed-toe pumps or dressy flats

Business Formal

Suits & Jackets

- A matching pantsuit or skirt suit in neutral tones
- Choose high-quality fabric when possible

Blouses & Dresses

- Silk or structured blouses with a tailored fit
- Dresses should be knee-length or longer

Shoes

- Closed-toe heels (2-4 inches) in neutral shades or dressy flats
- Black or nude shades are best



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MASCULINE

Business Casual

Tops

- Collared shirts (button-downs, polos) or sweaters.
- Fitted, opaque, plain t-shirts

Pants

- Chinos or dress pants
- Dark jeans (if appropriate)

Jackets

- Blazers and sportcoats can elevate the look but aren't always necessary

Shoes

- Loafers, oxfords, or other flat dress shoes
- Clean, leather sneakers



Business Professional

Tops

- Crisp, collared button-down shirts in solid or subtle patterns, tucked in

Pants

- Well-fitted dress pants in neutral colors (black, gray, navy)

Suits & Jackets

- A well-fitted blazer or suit jacket is very common, often expected

Shoes

- Polished dress shoes (Oxfords, Derbies, or loafers) in black or brown



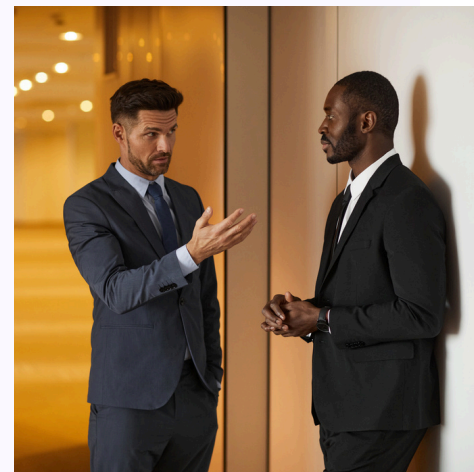
Business Formal

Suits & Jackets

- A full matching suit in dark, neutral colors (black, navy, charcoal); tailored fit is best
- White or light-colored dress shirts
- Tie in a classic pattern or solid color

Shoes

- Black or dark brown dress shoes (Oxfords or cap-toe Derbies), clean and well-maintained



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GENDER NEUTRAL

Business Casual

Tops

- Button-up shirts (solid colors, subtle patterns) or collared polos
- Fitted, opaque, plain t-shirts in dark colors
- Professional or traditional looking sweaters or cardigans (layered over a collared shirt or worn alone)

Pants

- Comfortable, well-fitted trousers, slacks, or chinos
- Dark jeans (if permitted)
- Avoid anything with holes or that is too baggy

Jackets

- Blazers and sports coats can elevate the look but aren't always necessary

Shoes

- Loafers, oxfords, or other flat dress shoes
- Chelsea boots
- Clean, leather dress sneakers



Business Professional

Tops

- Button-up shirts (neutral colors or subtle patterns)

Pants

- Tailored dress pants (straight-leg, slim-fit, or wide-leg)

Suits & Jackets

- Well-fitted blazers (single-breasted or double-breasted) or vests

Shoes

- Oxfords or loafers in black or brown
- Chelsea or lace up professional boots



Business Formal

Suits & Jackets

- Button-up shirts (white or light colors)
- Full matching suit (jacket + trousers in the same fabric and color)
- Dark, neutral colors (black, navy, charcoal, deep gray)
- Single-breasted or double-breasted blazer with structured shoulders

Shoes

- Oxfords or loafers in black or brown

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TIPS & RESOURCES

Dress for the Industry

Do your research! Business formal is expected in fields like finance and law, while business casual or professional is acceptable in many creative or tech industries.



Grooming & Hygiene

Clothing isn't the only part of your appearance that makes an impression - Neat hair, brushed teeth, and clean nails contribute to a professional look.

Dress for Virtual Meetings

Ensure your top *and* bottom half are dressed professionally for your meeting.

Dressing professionally can help you feel more confident, and you never know when you might need to stand up!



Budget-Friendly Options

Dressing professionally doesn't have to break the bank - check out second hand clothing stores such as **Dress for Success** and **Plato's Closet**.

Other affordable options include Old Navy, H&M, Uniqlo, and TJ Maxx.