

15 Interview Attire

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Your personal appearance is of great importance to the job interview process. The image that you present through your personal appearance creates an impression in the mind of the interviewer. Dress, grooming, and hygiene determine your personal appearance.

WHAT TO WEAR

The phrase "Dress for Success" means that you project a professional and positive image by wearing appropriate attire to the job interview. Regardless of your career field, appropriate interview outfits generally are conservative, understated, and business-like. Wear clothing that is consistent with and will appeal to the culture of the company. Proper interview clothing is what can best be described as "corporate attire."

How you dress for the interview will depend to some extent on the job for which you are applying. Dress one step above what you would actually wear on the job. You should neither under dress or overdress for an interview. Generally, wedding or prom attire is considered too dressy. Clothing should always be impeccably crisp, cleaned, pressed, and in good condition. Fabrics should be of a good quality.

SUITABLE ATTIRE

Both men and women should choose a simple, conservative business suit. Women in certain career fields (education, social work, and human services) may elect to wear a tailored dress. Good suit colors for men and women are navy, gray, charcoal, or black. Also taupe or pewter shades for women. Favor a classic, rather than trendy, look. Avoid sporty, cute, or casual looks. Solid, dark colors are better than prints. Avoid pastel, bold, or bright colors. Muted plaids or pin stripes are acceptable. Skirts that reach the bottom of the knee or longer are appropriate.

SHIRTS & BLOUSES

Shirts and blouses generally should be a solid, neutral color. Men's shirts should be white or pale blue. Women's blouses should be white, beige, or red. For women's blouses, most solid, neutral colors will work.

ACCESSORIES

Red is the best color for men's ties. Tie patterns should be subtle. Small even patterns or stripes that coordinate with your suit will work best. The tip of the tie should barely touch the top of the belt buckle. Women's neckwear is crucial: a broach, pearls, a pin, a rosette, a bow, or a tie.

Belts should match shoes. Black or cordovan (burgundy) leather is best for men and women. Also, navy, taupe, or deep brown for women. All leather accessories should match. Accessories to carry should be simple and compact. A leather folder, portfolio, or small clutch purse is enough. Bring a good quality pen. Do not carry a briefcase.

Keep jewelry simple and to a minimum. One ring and a watch. The watch should be of good quality. Women's earrings should be a simple stud type. No dangling earrings or noisy bracelets.

Shoes and socks should coordinate with your suit. Women should select pump-style shoes with a 1 or 2 inch heel in a shade that coordinates with the suit. Women should always wear hosiery. Men should wear mid-calf or over-the-calf socks the color of the trousers.

GROOMING

Be fresh and clean. Avoid cologne, aftershave, or perfume. Makeup should be light and natural. Fingernails should be cleaned and trimmed. Clear or no fingernail polish is best. Hair should be trimmed, clean, combed, and neatly styled. Long hair should be pulled back away from your face.