



# UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO Career Development Center

## INTERVIEW ATTIRE



**“If you look professional, well-dressed, or dressed according to the occasion, you’ll come across as someone who is capable of doing a job, professional enough to understand what is necessary for success, and has a good personality as well.”**

-NEIL PATEL

### PERSONAL APPEARANCE

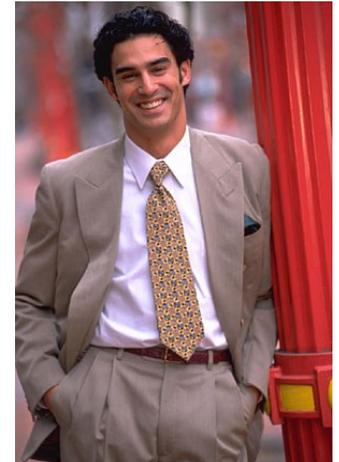
Your personal appearance is of great importance to the job interview process. The image that you present through your personal appearance creates an impression in the mind of the interviewer. Your personal appearance is determined by dress, grooming, and hygiene.

### WHAT TO WEAR

All candidates are expected to project a professional and positive image by wearing appropriate attire to the job interview. Regardless of your career field, appropriate interview outfits generally favor a mature, conservative, understated, and executive look. 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 or business 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 underdress or overdress for an interview. Avoid flashy, sporty, cute, or casual looks. Avoid styles that are too revealing or provocative. 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 for their next job interview. Women’s suits should more typically be skirt suits. Women in certain career fields may elect to wear a pants suit or a tailored dress.

Good suit colors for men and women are navy, gray, charcoal, taupe, pewter or black. Favor a classic, rather than trendy, look. 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 and blouses generally should be a solid, neutral color. Men’s shirts should be white, beige, or pale blue. Women’s blouses should be white, beige, or red. For women’s blouses, most solid, neutral colors will work.



## LOOK IMPRESSIVE

The sharp, bold, impressive look that is sometimes referred to as the “power” look is achieved with contrasting, rather than matching or blending colors. Striking contrasts can be created by mixing a dark suit with a pale shirt and a bold tie. When choosing color combinations, consider the effect created by such contrasts as:

navy suit / white shirt / red tie  
gray suit / white shirt / gold tie



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. Men should wear lace-up oxford style dress shoes with mid-calf or over-the-calf socks that match the color of the trousers. Loafers are typically too casual for professional interview attire.

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 clanky bracelets.



## ACCESSORIES

Bold is the best advice when choosing a tie. Tie color should contrast the color of the suit (Examples: Red tie with navy blue suit, yellow tie with gray suit). Tie patterns should be subtle. Avoid patterns that are artsy, novel, or asymmetrical. 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 neckware might include pearls, a simple necklace, 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. Travel light.



## 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. Hide tattoos and body piercings.



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