

## WHAT TO WEAR & WHAT NOT TO WEAR TO AN INTERVIEW

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### WHAT TO WEAR:

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#### *BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL (CORPORATE, CLIENT-BASED ROLE OR INDUSTRY):*

- **Suit:** A two-piece suit (pants or skirt) in a dark color (black, navy, or charcoal) works best. Highly recommend getting it dry-cleaned first. (Only button the top button to the suit jacket.) Do a little research to make sure you are following proper suit etiquette.
- **Collared Shirt:** Make sure it is ironed/pressed, and fits well (no gaps or spaces between the buttons when you sit/stand/twist.) Try lightening up a dark suit with a white or soft-colored shirt. Conservative patterns are fine.
- **Conservative Accessories:** Your (neck)tie/scarf needs to be a solid color if wearing a patterned shirt (and vice versa.) Belts should fit belt loops well, and match shoe color.
- **Conservative Jewelry:** Wear a *nicer-looking* watch (it doesn't have to be expensive, but it should not *look* cheap.) Simple studs (diamond/crystal/cubic zirconia/pearl) are best if you want to wear earrings. A simple mid-length, thin-chained necklace or sophisticated statement necklace is fine.
- **Shined Shoes (dress shoes/closed-toe heels):** Stick with leather (or leather look-a-like) if you can. Buff out scuff marks prior to your interview. Your shoes need to match your suit and belt. Heels should be a conservative height.
- **Matching Colors:** Black (shoes & belt) on black or charcoal (suit). Sable brown or black (shoes & belt) on navy blue (suit.) Do not mix and match brown and black. Socks should be a similar or darker color than pants, and shoes should not be a lighter color than socks.

## **BUSINESS CASUAL (TECH/START-UP/CREATIVE ROLE OR INDUSTRY):**

- **Slacks:** Khakis or dark colors are better. Pants should be a non-denim fabric, and paired well with dressier shoes.
- **Open-collar shirt, Blouse, or Sweater:** Jewel tones look best (i.e. dark pink, red, blue, dark green, yellow, dark purple etc.) A fun yet classy pattern is more than acceptable here.
- **Conservative Dress/Pencil skirt:** Stick to thicker fabric that fits well, but isn't too form fitting. Opt for a "business" style (little to no flow, neutral/dark color, and a hemline barely above the knees.) A pattern is fine as long as it isn't too distracting.
- **Blazer or Sport Coat:** Can be worn over a dress, collared shirt, or blouse to achieve the *business-casual* look. Try sticking with neutral or darker colors.
- **"Pop of color":** If pants and shirt/blazer/sweater are more conservative colors, try adding a scarf/tie, cardigan/shirt, or belt of a complimentary (and brighter) color.  
*Example: red & black, yellow & navy/blue, purple & gray*
- **Classy jewelry:** Earrings with a slight/short dangle are acceptable; silver and gold is fine. Save your exotic earrings and bracelets for another time.
- **Flats/Heels/Loafer-style shoes:** Closed-toe shoes are preferred, "peep toe" would be fine as well. Shoes need to match your outfit in style (business casual.)

## **WHAT NOT TO WEAR:**

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### **AVOID WEARING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING TO AN INTERVIEW:**

- **Specialized Jewelry:** Avoid wearing more than two rings per hand or more than one earring per ear. Replace face jewelry (lip, nose, eyebrow, etc.) with clear plastic pieces.
- **Stiletto heels/Flip Flops/Sandals/Boots/Sneakers:** It is not appropriate to wear shoes showing your heels or toes to an interview—especially if your feet are not groomed. Avoid super high heels, sneaker or tennis shoes, and bulky casual-looking boots.
- **Bare legs:** It is more professional to wear stockings/tights/hosiery; even in humid summer weather. Stockings can be in neutral colors or a similar color to your shoes.
- **Out-of-Date Suits:** Keep an eye on the lapels (too wide or too narrow), it may be cheaper to pay for alterations than purchase a new suit. Do a little research and make sure you are following proper suit etiquette.

- **Short skirts/Sundresses:** Hemlines should not be more than three inches above the knee. Sundresses are too “flowy” and much too casual.
- **Décolleté:** Avoid low-cut or plunging necklines that enhance cleavage or chest hair.
- **Sleeveless/“Spaghetti straps”:** Try to avoid showing off shoulders in an interview. Opt for lighter material in higher temperatures.
- **Capri pants/Leggings:** Even if you “dress them up” with a nice shirt or shoes, they are still unacceptable.
- **Denim:** No jeans or jean jackets. Even chambray shirts may be considered “too casual.”
- **Leather jackets/blazers:** Just don’t do it. It is tacky, and looks like outerwear.
- **Turtlenecks:** It isn’t 1996. Avoid at least in the first go-around.
- **T-shirts:** This should go without saying, but just so everyone is clear—no tees. Printed or otherwise classic cotton.
- **Wild Nail Polish:** Extremely long, dirty, or ungroomed nails are also a turnoff.
- **Perfume or Cologne:** Try to avoid if you can. Some people are very sensitive to scents. Definitely DO wear deodorant, however.
- **Printed or “Trendy” Purses/Pocketbooks/Handbags/Computer bags:** Bags or purses should be a conservative color (black/brown) and inconspicuous.