

Do and *“Don’t You Dare”*

Wear That to the Job Fair

When attending a job fair, always check with the event organizer for the suggested dress code. In most cases, traditional business, business appropriate or business casual is best. The difference depends on the level of job you are looking for. You can never go wrong with business appropriate. Remember, even if you know a specific employer you are targeting has a casual work environment, you always want to dress a level above the daily dress code.

Your appearance begins making a first impression before you even speak. Be sure your job fair attire supports your image as a professional who takes the job search process seriously and understands the nature of the industry you are targeting. Your attire should be noticed as being appropriate, but it should not take center stage.

DO:

Carry a leather portfolio to collect business cards and carry résumés.

Avoid distracting attire. Make it easy for others to focus on your eyes.

Wear a third piece:
-jacket
-sweater
-sweater vest

Coordinate jackets and slacks—matching is always best.

Make sure your clothes are clean, pressed, and fit properly.

Wear dark neutrals such as navy, gray or black. Subtle patterns are fine.

Wear comfortable and professional shoes. Polish any scuff marks.

Maintain your hair. Style or comb it before a business event.

DON'T:

Wear large or gaudy jewelry. Simple and plain is best.

Wear clothing that fits poorly (too tight or too baggy).

Wear tennis shoes or heels higher than 2.5 inches

Wear clothes that are missing buttons or have loose threads.



Appropriate Business Attire Tips Based on Gender

WOMEN:

Hair should be brushed, well styled and clean.

Tailored pants suits are appropriate, make sure pants are tailored and fit well.

Avoid large or gaudy jewelry and clothing patterns that may be distracting.

Carry a leather portfolio instead of a purse during interviews.

Your skirt: ends at knees or just above them, covers thighs when seated.

Shoes: closed toe pumps are safest, heels should be 1-3 inches and covered.



Business casual: skirt or slacks, nice shirt, comfortable shoes.

Business casual: kha-ki pants, collared shirt, comfortable formal shoes.

MEN:

Hygiene should be well maintained; clean fingernails and groomed facial hair.

Always wear long sleeve collared shirts, a tie, and an undershirt.

Ties should be made of good quality silk. Avoid character ties and weird patterns.

Carry a leather portfolio instead of a briefcase during interviews.

Make sure slacks are well pressed and fit well; they should not be too short.

Wear dark socks that match shoes or pants. They should be mid-calf length.

Interview outfits

DO

Business casual

This interview look would be appropriate for these industries: IT, startups, teaching, entry-level government positions, environmental engineering, aerospace (non-management), architecture, health-care/life-sciences research, social media, advertising/PR and retail.

Detail adds interest but doesn't distract

Sweater and pants fit well

Casual, yet polished

Pants are appropriate length for heels

Business professional

This more formal interview look works for these industries: health-care management and sales, hospital administration, biotechnology, banking, personal financial services, academic administration, hospitality, pharmaceutical sales and aerospace management.

Blouse color, collar style go well with the suit

Minimal jewelry

Jacket not too short, not too long

Tip: Check yourself in the mirror before leaving the house

Could wear heels rather than flats to increase formality

DON'T

Necklace too large

Tip: Avoid any bright or patterned clothing that may be distracting

Too tight

Cotton capris: too casual

Too informal; this would be a better outfit for shopping at Pike Place Market (with different shoes)

Meet the experts

Local career experts Lisa Quast, CEO of Career Woman, Inc., and Josh Warborg, district president of Robert Half International, provided critiques of these outfits.

"Appropriate attire depends on the industry and company in which you will be interviewing, the geographic location and time of year."



Quast

"Suits in conservative colors, such as black, gray or navy, paired with light, solid-colored shirts are a safe choice."



Warborg

DO



DON'T



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