

The Laws of Dressing for Success

- You never get a second chance to make a first impression.
- If you are confident in your attire, that's one thing you don't have to think about.
- Don't let your clothes speak for you.
- You and your appearance will represent your employer, so don't be surprised that interviewers judge you on what you say and how you dress.

Business Attire / Professional Dress

- Suit or Jacket/Coordinated Pant or Skirt
 - Neutral Colors
 - Patterns okay if subtle
 - Pockets and vents in hem come stitched closed; remove stitching.
 - Dark dress shoe
 - Pantyhose
- Fit (Get it altered if necessary)
 - Skirt length = at knee or longer; sit in it to be sure
 - Trousers = standing barefoot, back of pant should touch floor; varies with width of pant leg
- Beware of
 - Jackets, sleeves, pants, and skirts that are too short/long
 - Too tight
 - No open toe or sling back shoes
 - Minimal jewelry (no piercings; one pair of conservative earrings)
 - No sunglasses or hair ornaments
 - No cleavage
 - Tailored trouser; no leggings or cropped pants
 - No shirt longer than jacket
 - No sleeveless shirts

Business Casual (if appropriate)

- Casual pant (Capri/cropped pant only if specifically appropriate)
- Vest and shirt/blouse (Golf shirt only if specifically appropriate)
- More casual, low-heel shoe
- Sock instead of hose
- No denim, shorts, t-shirts

Cocktail Attire

- Black suit or cocktail dress
 - Any evening event that doesn't require men to wear a tux
 - More accessories

Dressing for Interviews in Business Attire

- The interviewer should see
 - A well-put together person, not fashion
 - No fidgeting with your clothes
- Minimum of two suits
 - In good repair
 - One Black (recommended)
 - Designate first interview suit and second interview suit
- Dark dress shoe
 - Polished and unscuffed
 - In good repair
- May use color for blouse
- Shoes
 - No sling-back
 - No open-toe
 - Reasonable heel height
 - Classic pump
- Hygiene
 - Clean hair
 - Nails clean and well manicured (not too long)
 - Teeth brushed
 - Deodorant
 - No perfume or cologne
 - Cosmetics to a minimum
 - No exposed tattoo

Building a Wardrobe

- Low clothing budget
 - More careful and conservative purchases
 - Buy Quantity over Quality
Low quality clothes won't last as long, but you need quantity now.
 - Don't overlook discount retailers
 - Graduation gift idea
 - Approximately \$80 for a jacket

- Enough clothes to dress for a 5-day week
 - 2 interview suits you already have
 - At least 2 pair of shoes
 - Add pants and shirts to coordinate with interview jackets
 - Add jacket with coordinating bottom (not necessarily a suit)
 - Add color in shirts

- Find a mentor at your firm

- Dressing for a Month (increased clothing budget)
 - A minimum of \$2000 per year (\$167/month)
for your professional wardrobe
 - Buy better quality (\$200 jacket, not \$80 jacket)
 - Buy clothes you can wear and launder for at least 2 years
 - You really need a black suit now
(can be used for black tie events)

Clothing for a Career

- Jacket Example
 - \$80 jacket
 - + \$60 for dry cleaning in a year
 - A rag now
 - This jacket has cost you \$140 or \$12/month
 - \$200 jacket
 - + \$180 for dry cleaning in two years
 - Still looks okay
 - This jacket has cost you \$380 or \$10.50/month
 - \$400 jacket
 - + \$600 for dry cleaning in 10 years
 - Still looks great
 - This jacket has cost you \$1000 or \$8.33/month

- Lesson: Buying quality often costs more up front but is cheaper in the long run.

- Now get serious
 - Replace original pieces that have worn out
 - Don't be afraid to pay a lot for classic, must-have items
 - Higher quality
 - Worn less often
 - Lasts longer
 - 5 years to a varied, all-inclusive professional wardrobe