

Professional Dress Guide



NOVA | Northern Virginia
Community College

Business Engagement
and Career Services

Dress for Success

People pay attention to how you present yourself! Having a resume and interviewing well is great, but dressing appropriately matters too. You do not have to compromise your style to dress professionally.

Business/Smart Casual	Professional Style
<p>Most common office dress that is appropriate for most business functions. Still business and formal, but a bit of a more relaxed version.</p>	<p>Most formal business attire. Appropriate for most interviews, fairs, and formal events.</p>

Tops: Blouse, collard shirt, or polo shirt, sweater, blazer, cardigan, or vest.

*Wearing a tie is optional.

- Dress.

Bottoms: Trousers, khaki pants or fingertip length skirt.

Shoes: Dress shoes, loafers, flats, or heels are acceptable.

Accessories: Belt and modest jewelry are acceptable. *Jewelry can be more unique.

Tops: Dress shirt and tie, blouse, suit jacket.

- Skirt suit or dress.

Bottoms: Suit pants, slacks, or skirt past knee length. *Suit jacket should match pants.

Shoes: Dress shoes, heels, or flats are acceptable.

Accessories: A nice belt that matches shoes and modest jewelry is acceptable.

How to decide what to wear to your job:

- Review the employee handbook.
- Observe how your colleagues dress.
- Purchase basic pieces of professional clothing first as you build your professional wardrobe.
- Adapt your style to the style for your industry.
- When in doubt, opt to dress conservatively.

Other places events you should dress professionally:

- Graduation.
- Awards Ceremonies.
- Interviews.
- Job/Internship Fairs.
- Networking Events.
- Any Formal Events.

Business Professional - Women



Business Casual - Women



Casual - Women



Business Professional - Men



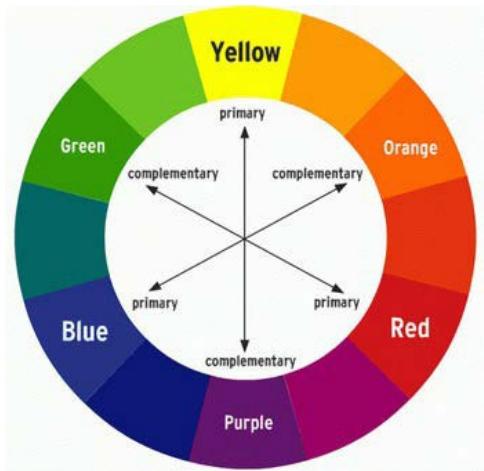
Business Casual - Men



Casual - Men



General Dress for Success Tips



Coordinate outfit/colors with jewelry

Avoid many bright colors

Look well groomed

Keep it simple

Wear appropriate shoes that are clean and polished

Wear well-fitted clothing and avoid baggy clothes.

Pay attention to instructions!

Choose accessories that are not too distracting

Wear conservative dark colored clothes that are clean and pressed

Wear closed toe shoes and avoid sandals

Avoid strong fragrances and cologne

Ensure all clothing items are the proper size and fit

Avoid clothing that is too tight, too baggy, too short, or too long

Additional Resources

Some places to get professional attire

Look for Sales!

Free	For Purchase
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NOVA Professional Clothing Closet (BE&CS Sponsored)• Career Closet -Partnership with WGB (Annandale Campus)• Dress For Success• A Wider Circle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Goodwill• The Closet• TJ Maxx• Burlington• Marshalls• Target• Walmart• Ross• Kohl's <ul style="list-style-type: none">• H&M• Forever 21• JC Penny• Macy's• JCrew• Banana Republic• Ann Taylor• Old Navy

We hope that you found this guide helpful. Do not hesitate to reach out to us for any of your career-related needs.

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