

# Professional Dress Guide



**NOVA** | Northern Virginia  
Community College

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**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.

<b>Business/Smart Casual</b>	<b>Professional Style</b>
Most common office dress that is appropriate for most business functions. Still business and formal, but a bit of a more relaxed version.	Most formal business attire. Appropriate for most interviews, fairs, and formal events.
<b>Tops:</b> Blouse, collard shirt, or polo shirt, sweater, blazer, cardigan, or vest. *Wearing a tie is optional. - Dress. <b>Bottoms:</b> Trousers, khaki pants or fingertip length skirt. <b>Shoes:</b> Dress shoes, loafers, flats, or heels are acceptable. <b>Accessories:</b> Belt and modest jewelry are acceptable. *Jewelry can be more unique.	<b>Tops:</b> Dress shirt and tie, blouse, suit jacket. - Skirt suit or dress. <b>Bottoms:</b> Suit pants, slacks, or skirt past knee length. *Suit jacket should match pants. <b>Shoes:</b> Dress shoes, heels, or flats are acceptable. <b>Accessories:</b> A nice belt that matches shoes and modest jewelry is acceptable.

<b>How to decide what to wear to your job:</b>	<b>Other places events you should dress professionally:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Review the employee handbook.</li><li>♦ Observe how your colleagues dress.</li><li>♦ Purchase basic pieces of professional clothing first as you build your professional wardrobe.</li><li>♦ Adapt your style to the style for your industry.</li><li>♦ When in doubt, opt to dress conservatively.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Graduation.</li><li>♦ Awards Ceremonies.</li><li>♦ Interviews.</li><li>♦ Job/Internship Fairs.</li><li>♦ Networking Events.</li><li>♦ Any Formal Events.</li></ul>

# Business Professional - Women



# Business Casual - Women





# Casual - Women



# Business Professional - Men



# Business Casual - Men

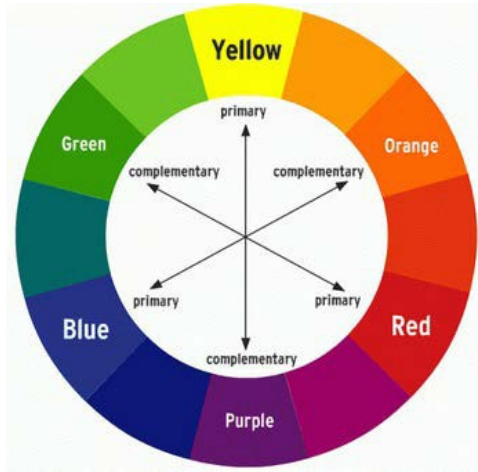


# Casual - Men





# General Dress for Success Tips



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

**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

- NOVA Professional Clothing Closet (BE&CS Sponsored)
- Career Closet -Partnership with WGB (Annandale Campus)
- Dress For Success
- A Wider Circle

### For Purchase

- Goodwill
- The Closet
- TJ Maxx
- Burlington
- Marshalls
- Target
- Walmart
- Ross
- Kohl's
- 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.

NOVA Career Services Email: [novacareerservices@nvcc.edu](mailto:novacareerservices@nvcc.edu)



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