

QUICK TIPS

Dress for Success

When choosing your attire for an interview it is important to think about your clothes and the messages they send about you. The first impression you make is critical to your professional image. Your attire should compliment your professional image, but should not take center stage. Use this guide to help you determine appropriate dress for an interview.

{ BASIC INTERVIEWING DRESS FOR SUCCESS TIPS }

- Be comfortable! An uncomfortable suit will become a distraction during an interview.
- Feel confident! Select attire that you feel confident in. That confidence will be evident during the interview.
- You should dress business formal. This means wear a suit, dress, shirt, tie (for men), and nice dress shoes.
- Avoid bright-colored shirts and ties. Stick with darker, conservative colors and fabrics. Potential employers should remember you for your interview answers, not your inappropriate or bold clothing.
- Try on your entire interview ensemble the day before and carefully inspect your clothing for tags, dangling threads, missing buttons, and lint before your interview.
- Jewelry should be minimal and on hands and arms only.
- Cover tattoos and remove body piercings.
- Facial hair should be conservative and well-groomed.
- Clothes should be clean, ironed and wrinkle-free.
- Hair should be clean, neat, conservative, and away from face; do not let your hair become a distraction during the interview.
- Shoes must be polished, new-looking, and comfortable. Heels should be low (1-2 inches).
- Cologne and perfume should be used sparingly if at all. Some people have allergies/sensitivities to certain smells and chemicals.
- Avoid smoking in your interview attire. You do not want to go into an interview smelling like smoke.



{ TIPS FOR PURCHASING INTERVIEW ATTIRE }

- **Do not wait until you have an interview scheduled to buy interview attire.** Plan ahead and buy clothes when they are on sale. Shop around and keep an eye on sales. This will also allow you to be more selective when picking your attire. If you wait until you have an interview scheduled you risk feeling rushed and settling for pieces that may not fit you best. You also risk having to pay more if what you need is not on sale.
- **Invest in "seasonless" clothing.** Purchase a suit that you can wear for an interview in any season. Stick with lighter wool fabrics and other lighter fabrics.
- **Purchase the right pieces.** Invest in high-quality items, such as shirts, blouses, and shoes, that can be easily changed out. Also, see the potential of utilizing pieces of your new suit to create business casual outfits for other settings (ex. pair your new pants or skirt with a nice sweater).
- **Ask for interview attire as a gift.** Ask family and friends to chip in to an "interview suit fund" for birthdays, holidays, graduation, etc. If you are not great at saving cash, ask for gift cards to a particular store where you would like to purchase a suit.

WHAT IF I AM INTERVIEWING FOR A JOB IN A NON-SUIT WEARING WORK ENVIRONMENT?

Even if the employer tells you that you can wear business casual to an interview it is *highly* recommended that you dress in business formal attire. Wearing a suit demonstrates professionalism and maturity.

Adapted from University of Louisville
Career Development Center

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CAREER SERVICES

North Carolina Central University | 1801 Fayetteville Street | PO Box 19585 | William Jones Building, Lower Level
Durham, North Carolina 27707 | (919) 530-6337 | nccucareerservices@ncu.com

Appropriate Interview Attire

WHAT TO WEAR: WOMEN



SUIT: Business skirt or pant suits should be worn. Dark colors such as navy, blue, gray, or certain dark browns are best. Skirts and dresses with coordinating jackets are also appropriate.

SHIRT: Pair your suit with a white or light colored blouse. Shirt should be conservative and should not be low-cut or too sheer.

HOSIERY AND SHOES: Hosiery should be basic color such as brown, off-black, taupe, or flesh tone. Hose should match the color of your shoes, except if wearing flesh tones. Shoes should be closed-toe pumps (1-2 inches) or low-heeled shoes that match your suit.



ACCESSORIES: Be conservative with jewelry. Small earrings, a watch, and a ring will be sufficient. Avoid large, noisy jewelry. Jewelry should be worn on hands and wrists only.

PURSE/BAG: A business-like tote bag is ideal for interviews as you can carry your padfolio, copies of your resume, and other items you may need. If you carry a purse, keep it small and simple.



GROOMING: Hair should be well groomed and out of your face. Make-up should be minimal and neutral; no bright colors or heavy make-up. Fingernails should be moderate in length. Polish should be conservative; clear is always a good choice.

PERFUME: Light or none at all. Interviewers should remember you for what you say, not how you smell.



WHAT TO WEAR: MEN



SUIT: A conservative single-breasted, tailored suit should be worn. Dark colors such as navy blue, gray, or certain browns are best. Striped or plaid patterns are acceptable provided it follows this simple rule: If you can see the stripes or patterns from 10 feet away, don't wear it.

SHIRT: Pair your suit with a white or light blue shirt.



TIE: Choose a conservative tie that compliments your outfit. This is an opportunity for men to express themselves; however, ties should not be too loud or too bright as they could distract the interviewer.

SHOES: Wear black or brown leather shoes that coordinate with your outfit. Shoes should be polished.



ACCESSORIES: Belts should be the same color as your shoes. Dress socks should be basic black, brown, or blue and complement your tie. Make sure your socks are long enough so when you sit down, skin does not show. Keep any jewelry to a minimum. A classic wristwatch is a great choice.



GROOMING: You should be clean and well-groomed. Hair should be professional and conservative. Fingernails should be clean and moderate in length. Cover tattoos and remove body piercings.



COLOGNE: Light or none at all. Interviewers should remember you for what you say, not how you smell.

AVOID:

Mini skirts

Platform, stiletto pumps

Low-cut shirts

Character ties

Shirts with prints or designs

Shorts

Bright-colored suits

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