

*"If you look professional, well-dressed, or dressed according to the occasion, you'll come across as someone who is capable of doing a job, is professional enough to understand what is necessary for success, and has a good personality as well."*

-NEIL PATEL

## YOUR APPEARANCE MATTERS

An interviewer's first impression of you usually plays a pivotal part in their hiring decisions. This impression is shaped by your appearance, which consists of your attire, grooming, and hygiene.

To give yourself the best chance of success, you need to present your best self.



## CHOOSING YOUR OUTFIT

Present a professional and positive image by dressing appropriately. Interview clothing tends more towards a mature, conservative, understated, and executive style.

Choose an outfit that matches the company's culture. The position you are applying for should also inform your outfit choice. Plan to dress one step above the typical work attire for that role.

The interview is a chance for you to make an impression. Your outfit should help you feel comfortable, confident, and professional.

Make sure your outfit is not a distraction to keep the focus on your qualifications. Avoid styles that are flashy, sporty, cute, or casual. Your clothes should be impeccably crisp, clean, pressed, and in good condition. Check for pet hair, holes, or stains.



## WHAT IS APPROPRIATE ATTIRE?

Opt for a simple, conservative business-appropriate outfit for your next interview. When choosing your outfit, be aware of fit. Anything that is too large may appear messy and anything too snug may appear ill-fitting. Steer clear of outfits that are too revealing or provocative.

Choose colors that suit your workplace and role. Acceptable suit colors for more formal industries include navy, gray, charcoal, taupe, pewter, or black. For creative roles, there is more leeway to dress in more colorful shades. Favor a classic look over a trendy one. Solid, dark colors are preferable to prints. Shirts and blouses should generally be solid and neutral in color.

Avoid loud and flashy colors. Neutral colors convey professionalism and are less distracting. If possible, opt for high-quality fabrics.



## ACCESSORIES

Choose accessories that complement your outfit and do not distract.

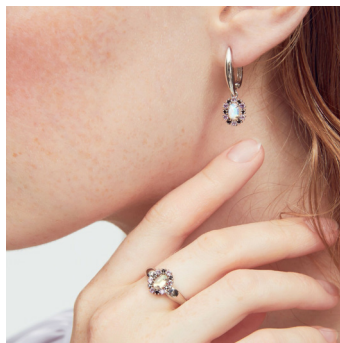
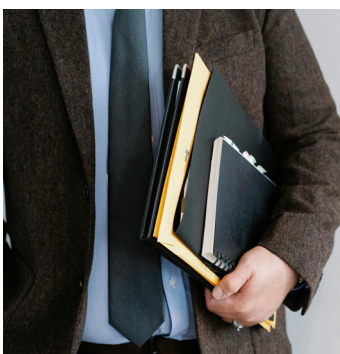
When selecting a tie, be bold. Choose a color that contrasts with the suit color (for example, a red tie with a navy blue suit or a yellow tie with a gray suit). Pick subtle patterns, avoiding anything artsy or novel. The tip of the tie should just touch the top of the belt buckle. Aside from ties, women may accessorize with pearls, a simple necklace, or a bow.

Belts should match the shoes, with black or burgundy leather being ideal for both men and women. Women may also consider navy, taupe, or deep brown.

Shoes and socks should complement your suit. Do not wear casual or athletic shoes. Women should choose shoes that are fairly low-heeled. Avoid shoes with an open toe or back. Men should wear mid-calf or over-the-calf socks that match the color of their trousers.

Keep jewelry simple and minimal. Opt for modest jewelry and a simple watch.

Travel light. A leather folder, portfolio, or small clutch purse is sufficient. Avoid carrying a briefcase.



## LOOK & FEEL IMPORTANT

One option for interview attire is the distinctive, impactful "power look". This is achieved through contrasting colors rather than matching or blending them. You can create striking contrasts by pairing a dark suit with a light shirt and a bold tie. For example, consider combinations like:

<i>navy suit</i>	<i>gray suit</i>
<i>white shirt</i>	<i>white shirt</i>
<i>red tie</i>	<i>gold tie</i>

The final touch is your attitude and confidence. Pair your outfit with your confidence, and impress the interviewer.



## GROOMING & HYGIENE

Be freshly showered and brush your teeth right before the interview, if possible.

If you choose to wear cologne, aftershave, or perfume apply lightly. Otherwise, avoid completely. Keep makeup light and natural.

Ensure your fingernails are clean and trimmed. If you choose to have nail polish, avoid loud and flashy colors, patterns, designs, and lengths.

Hair should be trimmed, clean, combed, and neatly styled, with long hair pulled back away from your face. Men should be clean-shaven. However, a carefully trimmed beard or mustache is also acceptable.

Cover tattoos and body piercings. Don't chew gum or candy.

*\*Content credit - University of Montevallo Career Development Center*