

Dress For Success

(804) 289-8547 | careerservices.richmond.edu
Office Hours: M-F, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. | Drop-in Hours: M-F, 2 to 4 p.m.



Alumni & Career Services



Five Tips for Dressing Successfully

1. Understand Business Casual vs. Business Professional (see below!)
2. You can inquire whether business professional dress is expected
3. When in doubt, dress conservatively
4. Navy and black are always appropriate
5. Pay attention to details (matching, accessories)

Major “Don’ts”

1. Fragrance and accessory overload
2. Mismatching
3. Going out clothes ≠ professional attire
4. Beware of wrinkles or tags left on newly purchased clothing
5. Never wear dirty or scuffed shoes

Guidelines for Business Professional

- Gray, black or navy suit – pants or knee-length skirts
- Black or brown leather belts
- Black or brown leather dress shoes, closed-toe dress shoes (flats or pumps; avoid stilettos)
- Dress shirts or blouses in white, striped or solid muted colors
- Silk ties – three to five that mix and match with suits
(For tips on how to tie a tie and what colors to wear visit: <http://www.tiepedia.com/>)
- Neutral hosiery if wearing a skirt in a conservative environment, dark socks to match pants
- Trench coat with liner/gloves/umbrella may be necessary depending on the weather
- Newly purchased suit pants usually have to be hemmed or cuffed
- New suits may have vent closure threads on the back of the jacket that need to be cut before wearing



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Guidelines for Business Casual

- Blazer or sport coat
- Polos, golf shirts, cardigans, sweaters, blouses or shirts in muted colors
- Khaki pants, slacks, or other casual dress pants
- Knee-length skirts or dresses
- Neutral socks with khakis
- Business casual is different for every industry; if unsure, dress more formally



Final Touches

- Hands – clean hands and fingernails
- Hair – clean, trimmed, orderly, out of eyes
- Face – brushed teeth, natural makeup
- Scents – avoid perfume, cologne, aftershave, and scented lotion
- Jewelry – less is best, simple earrings, necklace and watch are best; piercing ornaments may or may not be looked upon favorably in an interview depending on the industry/company culture.
- Bags – simple black suitcase, purse, or portfolio
- Body language – promote confidence, eye contact, posture, firm handshake, smile