

Levels of Professional Attire



Casual business attire is informal clothing worn not only in most business settings but also in many settings outside of work. You might wear casual clothing if you work in an informal office where others wear things like t-shirts, jeans and open-toed shoes. You should avoid wearing casual dress with clients and in interviews, even if the office is casual overall.

Examples: t-shirts, blouses, button-down shirts, sweaters, jeans, khakis, casual dresses, sneakers, low heels, loafers, sandals.

Smart casual is another form of casual business attire with a stylish twist. You might include more trendy pieces of clothing if dressing in smart casual. This type of business attire is appropriate for more flexible offices including informal settings. You might also choose to wear smart casual in an interview for a more informal office. This way, you fit in with their informal dress code while still maintaining a clean, professional look that communicates that you care about your appearance.

Examples: blazers, sports jackets, blouses, polos, button-down shirts, dresses, sweaters, trousers, skirts, khakis, boots, clean sneakers, heels, jewelry, scarves, belts.



Business casual is a common form of dress worn in many offices. While many classic business staples are used in business casual wear, there are casual elements included like khakis. Business casual is appropriate for many interviews, client meetings and office settings. Because it is not very casual and also not very formal, this is usually an appropriate way to dress if you're unsure about the setting.

Examples: blouses, button-down shirts, polos, sport coats, blazers, sweaters, pencil skirts, trousers, khakis, slacks, ties, jewelry, belts, loafers, flats, mules, oxfords, boots, heels, leather or canvas sneakers.

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Business professional is a traditional form of attire used in more conservative settings or companies with strict dress codes. You might wear business professional in industries like accounting, banking, finance, government or law. Business professional clothes should be well-fitted and may be tailored to fit you specifically.

Examples: tidy dresses, skirts, slacks, dark colored suits (navy, gray), button-down shirts (white, light blue), blouses with a blazer, classic heels, loafers, tidy flats, oxfords, simple jewelry, belts.

Business formal is reserved for the most formal settings such as award ceremonies, special dinners, benefits or other important evening events. Business formal is similar to “black tie,” but should be reserved to maintain professionalism.

Examples: dark pants suit, skirt suit, or suit dress (dark colors), button-down shirt (light color), oxfords, loafers, heels, formal flats, jewelry, belts, tie clip, cuff links.



Gender Neutral Professional Wear

There are [several ways of dressing](#) for the workplace and different degrees of formality that do not adhere to a gender binary.

You can dress gender neutral elements up or down depending on the situation for which you’re dressing. For casual dress, jeans, sweaters and shirts are all great options. For shoes, you might choose trendy sneakers, sandals or loafers. For more formal forms of dress, you might choose slacks, trousers or neat chinos. Options for tops include sweaters, button downs or shirts with cardigans. Shoes might include loafers, oxfords or stylish lace-up shoes.

Pant suits are a great option for any formal settings. These can be paired with flat or heeled oxfords or loafers.