

Appropriate Attire for the Jobseeker and Professional

Office of Career Services at Capitol Technology University

When applying for a job in any industry, it is important to sustain a positive appearance. Maintaining good hygiene and wearing the appropriate attire may make you a more desirable applicant. Different industries and different companies have varying ideas about what is and is not appropriate, so observing the culture and environment of the industry will help you make suitable choices.

Business Professional

This style is appropriate for interviews, meeting with a client, business networking events, and other important meetings where you will be working directly with people.

Women:

Do:

- Conservative and modest apparel are appropriate for Business Professional attire.
- Wear your hair away from your face. If your hair is longer than shoulder length it needs to be pulled up completely into a neat pony tail or bun.
- Maintain good overall hygiene with washed and combed hair, and groomed and short finger nails.
- Wear makeup, but keep it conservative. Although encouraged, you are not required to wear make-up. You want to look your best, especially in fields where you are marketing yourself as well as the product (ex. sales, marketing, law, etc.).
- Wear conservative closed toed heels, no more than 2 inches high.
- Wear skin colored, translucent hose. (Nothing opaque or colored, with no holes or designs.)
- Suits are appropriate for these settings. Modest neutral pant and skirt suits are both appropriate
- Stick to neutral colors. Black, Brown, Grey. Navy Blue. (Red is not appropriate)
- Conservative jewelry. Stud earrings, small gold or silver chains, pearls, and conservative watches. General rule of thumb for rings is limit 1 to each hand (2 for engagement and wedding ring finger).
- Wear a non-scented antiperspirant or deodorant.

Men:

Do:

- Classic style is best.
- Polished lace up shoes.
- Plain neutral socks that match the suit. The belt should match the shoes.
- Have groomed fingernails.
- You can mix and match suit jackets and pants depending on the casualty of the industry, however we recommend buying suit sets.
- Wear a conservative tie.
- You can wear a conservative watch, class ring and wedding band.
- Wear a non-scented antiperspirant or deodorant. Maintain good overall hygiene with washed and combed hair, and groomed and short finger nails.

Do not:

- Do not wear anything considered “trendy.” You want to stick to a more classic style.
- Do not wear perfume. You do not want to trigger the allergies of the employer.
- Do not wear strong colors of nail polish or make up. Conservative and neutral is best.
- Do not wear flats (Except if medically you cannot wear heels).
- For more formal industries do not mix and match a suit. Most suits can be purchased as a set.
- Do not wear something too low cut, or a skirt that is too short.
- Conservative patterns should be worn on undershirts. Avoid animal print.
- Do not wear too much jewelry. No dangling earrings, large necklaces, or chunky bracelets.
- Do not wear body piercings, or multiple ear piercings. Maintain a natural hair color (no abnormal colors such as blue or green), with matching roots.
- Do not show tattoos and body art.

Do not:

- Do not wear cologne. You do not want to trigger the allergies of the employer.
- Do not wear body piercings, or ear piercings. Maintain a natural hair color (no abnormal colors such as blue or green).
- Short hair is best for men. Shaved or well-groomed facial hair is needed.
- Do not wear a bowtie.
- No strong patterns or color on the socks.
- Do not show tattoos and body art

Business Casual

This style is appropriate for every day office wear, social networking events, and for other less formal events. This section is more subjective and if you are unsure, decisions can be made based on the culture of the industry of that office. Look around at colleagues for guidance.

Women:

Do:

- Conservative and modest apparel should still be maintained; however there is a bit more leniency than in Business Professional.
- Wear your hair away from your face.
- Maintain good overall hygiene, with washed and combed hair and groomed fingernails.
- More makeup can be worn in this category, but still keep it conservative. Although encouraged, you are not required to wear make-up. You want to look your best, especially in fields where you are marketing yourself as well as the product (ex. sales, marketing, law, etc.).
- Wear conservative shoes that are comfortable in an office setting. Heels, flats and boots are allowed, as long as they are not uncomfortable or too flashy.
- Tights and hose can be worn, but are not required.
- Wear slacks or skirt. Stick to neutral colors, but a bit more flexibility. Skirt should not rise higher than an inch above the knee.
- Tops can have patterns, but maintain a high collar.
- Jewelry can be worn, but avoid wearing too much. When in doubt keep it conservative.
- Wear a non-scented antiperspirant or deodorant.

Men:

Do:

- Classic style is best.
- Loafers and lace up shoes are acceptable.
- Plain neutral socks that match the suit. Belt matches the shoes.
- Have clean hands and fingernails.
- You can mix and match suit jackets and pants depending on the casualty of the industry.
- Wear a conservative tie. Bowties can be worn in certain office cultures, but keep an eye out and take a cue from colleagues
- You can wear a conservative watch, class ring and wedding band.
- Wear a non-scented antiperspirant or deodorant.
- Maintain good overall hygiene with washed and combed hair, and groomed and short finger nails.

Do not:

- Do not wear too much perfume. Clients and colleagues may have allergies.
- Do not wear bright fingernail polish. Keep your nails short and clean.
- Do not wear jeans unless in an industry that calls for it.
- Casual Friday does not give permission to wear whatever you want. Khakis or a nice pair of jeans are appropriate, as well as appropriate tops. Avoid t-shirts, or anything too short or low cut.
- Do not wear heels that you cannot walk in.
- Do not wear body piercings, or multiple ear piercings, unless expressly given permission. Maintain a natural hair color (no abnormal colors such as blue or green), with matching roots.
- Do not show tattoos and body art.

Do not:

- Do not wear too much cologne. You do not want to trigger the allergies of the employer.
- Do not wear jeans or tennis shoes unless in an industry that calls for it.
- Casual Friday does not give permission to wear whatever you want. Khakis or a nice jean are appropriate, as well as appropriate tops. T-shirts are not appropriate.
- Do not wear body piercings, or ear piercings. Maintain a natural hair color (no abnormal colors such as blue or green).
- Short hair is best for men, unless given permission by employer to maintain long hair.
- Maintain shaved faces or groomed facial hair.
- Do not show tattoos and body art.

Other things to avoid:

- Bring breath mints, to maintain good smelling breath. Avoid eating malodorous meals.
- Avoid smoking after you've gotten dressed for an interview or an important meeting. You may not be able to smell the smoke on yourselves, but other people will, and that will have a negative impact.

If you have any other questions, please speak directly with The Career Services Office in the Student Life Suite by emailing careers@captechu.edu or calling 240.965.2494