

Appropriate Dress 101

In Gear
101 Series

Appropriate Dress

What is the difference between business formal and business casual?

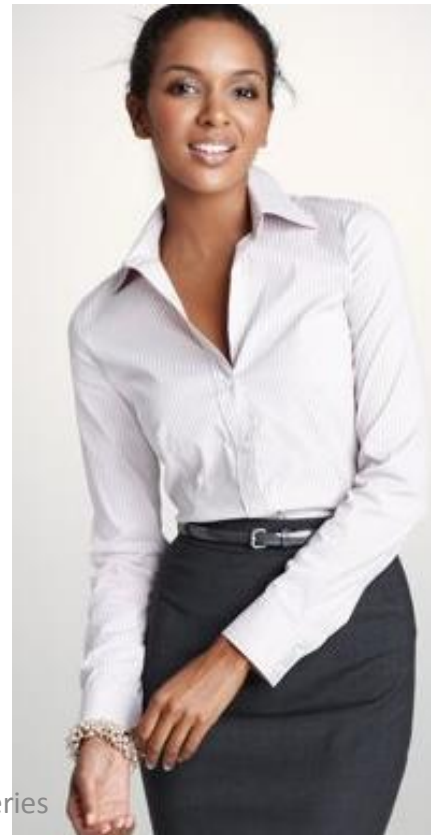
Business Formal



2/17/2011

In Gear 101 Series

Business Casual



Business Formal

Business Formal means jackets are required.

Always wear Business Formal to:

- Interviews
- Career Fairs
- Company Presentations*
- Formal Networking Events (e.g. Career Treks)

Business Formal is
sometimes referred to as
“Business Professional”

APPROPRIATE EXAMPLES:



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Business Formal Mistakes



INAPPROPRIATE

- Shirt untucked
- Cotton tee or tank top
- Rolled sleeves on jacket
- Skirt is too short
- Open-toed shoes



INAPPROPRIATE

- Dresses without jackets are unacceptable, including wrap dresses
- However: This outfit would be acceptable for business casual dress**



INAPPROPRIATE

- Low-cut shirt, possible cleavage
- Informal layering
- Skirt is too short
- Informal jacket
- Unprofessional shoes

Rules of Business Formal

1. A matching suit is the best thing to wear.
2. If you wear a dress, wear a jacket.
 - Dresses with cardigans are too casual.
3. Closed-toed shoes in black, brown or blue.
4. Classic button-down shirts or formal blouses only.
5. Stay away from:
 - Revealing clothes like tank tops, low-cut blouses, and tight skirts.
 - Casual work clothes like khakis, capri suit pants, wrap dresses, and $\frac{3}{4}$ length jackets.
 - Fashion fads like untucked shirts covered by vests or “formal tees” under jackets.

When in doubt: Be conservative.

Business Casual

Business Casual means jackets are not required.

Acceptable outfits include:

- Dresses (as long as shoulders are covered)
- Skirts with button-downs or professional blouses
- Pants with button-downs or professional blouses

APPROPRIATE EXAMPLES:



Business Casual Mistakes



INAPPROPRIATE

- Pants are too tight
- **Tight-fitting styles are unacceptable for skirts, pants, shirts and dresses**



INAPPROPRIATE

- Skirt is too short
- **Skirts should hit at knee, even when worn with tights**



INAPPROPRIATE

- Trends like untucked shirts under vests are unprofessional
- Shoes are strappy and unprofessional



INAPPROPRIATE

- Denim is unacceptable
- Shoes are provocative and unprofessional

General Guidelines

The next few slides provide general guidelines that will help you choose items that will be acceptable for any kind of business dress.

General Guidelines: Skirts

- Length: skirts should hit at or just above the knee.
- Fit: skirts should never be tight-fitting.



APPROPRIATE



INAPPROPRIATE

General Guidelines: Shirts

APPROPRIATE



Classic Collared



Modest Silk



High Neck



Simple Print

INAPPROPRIATE



Cotton Tee



Sleeveless, no jacket



Low Cut



Tank Top

General Guidelines: Shoes

- Black, blue and brown are the safest colors
- No metallics (gold, silver), no provocative styles
- No strappy sandals, flip flops or tennis shoes

APPROPRIATE



INAPPROPRIATE



Strappy



Provocative



Metallic



Sandal

Final Details

Perfume can be distracting, especially in interviews. Apply only light perfume for professional meetings and events.

Always put your best “business heel” forward by dressing appropriately for each occasion.

Remember, dressing appropriately helps you:

- Make a good impression
- Appear professional
- Show respect for the people you are meeting