Professional Attire

Women
Business Professional

Suit
- Avoid trendy styles
- Jacket sleeve length should fall 3/4 inch below wrist
- Neutral Colors: black, grey, brown, navy

Pants
- Pants are good for site visits
- Capris and cropped pants are not appropriate

Skirt
- Skirts should be knee length and not too tight
- Avoid high slits

Shirt
- Blouse or camisole
- Preferred colors are white or light colors
- Cleavage should not be showing

Shoes
- Avoid open toed shoes or sandals
- Wear basic pumps with a low heel, 1-2 inches high
- No stilettos or platforms
- Wear neutral hosiery or trouser socks

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Women
Business Casual

- You may wear a blazer or suit jacket with pants or skirt
- Trendier or casual suits are also appropriate

- Dress pants or khakis are acceptable
- Avoid capris

- Should be knee length and not too tight
- Avoid high slits

- Blouse
- Sweaters including knit sweater sets and cardigans

- Avoid open toed shoes or sandals
- Heels or flats are acceptable

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Accessories

**Women**

**Jewelry**
- Should be simple - avoid big, dangly earrings
- Wear only one pair of earrings
- Maximum of one ring per hand

**Handbags**
- You may use a small and simple purse or professional bag
- No backpacks or large purses

**Men**

- Be conservative with watches and other jewelry
- Earrings might not be viewed positively
- Match belt to shoes

**Other Tips**

- All clothes should be neatly ironed
- Suits usually have tacking stitches to hold vents in place before purchase; make sure these are removed
- You should also carefully inspect for dangling threads, lint, and missing buttons
- Tattoos and piercings (other than ears) should be covered
- Bring a portfolio with copies of your resume, transcript, a notepad, pen, and your list of questions for the employer

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Suited for Business

A suit is the smartest choice for a professional woman and is the most important item in her wardrobe. Women today have more flexibility in suit choices. Pants suits are more widely acceptable for women in business today. If you choose to wear pants, opt for a matched or coordinated suit, rather than slacks and a jacket. A blazer is considered more casual and can be an option for a classic business casual look.

Suits in dark neutral colors such as navy, black, brown, purple, gray or olive green, are more authoritative. Be sure to select a shade that complements your coloring. If you are a very light, fair-skinned person, you will look overpowered by a black or dark suit. Instead, look for shades of camel, teal, blue or blue-gray. If black is your choice or is required by your company, soften it at your neckline with a light top and/or a light color accessory. Teal is one of the universal colors which means, it complements everyone’s natural coloring.

Avoid suits in bright colors such as orange, yellow, hot pink, unless you are in a creative field where this look is not only appropriate but expected. A red suit is considered a new neutral; red is also a color that tells others you are prepared to stand out and be noticed. Wear it when you are dealing with a large group or convention and you want the participants to listen to what you have to say. A patterned suit is another choice, look for tweeds, checks, herringbone and subtle plaids.

The New Suit

The new suit also has a softer silhouette and simple design. Unlike a few years ago, today you don’t have to intimidate anyone with huge shoulders. Shoulders are softer because of the fashion trend. You have many choices: the lapelled jacket either notched or shawl-collared; the V-necked tailored; the box jacket; and the cardigan with soft shoulders. The so-called two-piece or Channel-style suit, to be worn without a top, is another option; even though it is an elegant choice, it is not as versatile to mix and match with other pieces in your wardrobe. You may only be able to match the skirt with other jackets. The non-lapelled and V-necked suit are styles that will accommodate many different necklines. A jacket without lapels would set off blouses or knit tops with high collars, jewel collars and even a simple V-neckline, allowing you to wear a scarf, or a necklace for variety. Wear high-quality pantsuits with silk or cotton blouses, fine-gauge cotton or silk shells.

Fabrics

The best fabrics for suits are the all-seasonal fabrics such as gabardine, lightweight wool, wool crepe, silk, linen, cotton and rayon blends, and micro fabrics. Most fabrics today have some stretch fiber added which makes the garment more flexible and less wrinkled. Linen is a cool fabric during the warm months, but it wrinkles so much that you will lose your polished look after sitting for more than an hour. Instead, buy linen and silk blends or linen and wool blends which give you comfort without the wrinkles.

Selection

When selecting a jacket, pay attention to the details of construction. It is important that you check the quality of a suit because, in general, accepted industry standards are lower for women’s clothing than for men’s clothing. Look for even trims and hemlines. Your suits and jackets are the most important item in your wardrobe, so select the best quality you can afford.

The Proper Fit

When deciding upon a jacket, be sure that it fits you properly. Examine the shoulders: Do they look natural and not severe? Excessive padding at the shoulders is passé. If you want to balance wide hips, try some moderate shoulder pads. Many women wear their jackets too small. Your jacket should not wrinkle across the back or under the collar and you must be able to button it easily. Even if you do not button your jacket, it must have enough space for a blouse, top, vest or sweater; buttons should never tug or pull, be loose or hang. Because you will need to button your jacket at least one of the buttons before any presentation, be sure that the lapels, buttons and vents look smooth and comfortable when buttoned-up.

Check sleeve buttons occasionally for replacement. The length of the jacket will depend on two criteria: your body proportions and the fashion trends. If you wear pants, they should be creased and tailored, not tight or flowing. If the pants have pockets, they must remain closed. You need to choose current styles for your suits, skirted or pants, that flatter your figure and body proportions.

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