



Dress tips for Interviews and Career Fairs

185 Student Services Building
101 North University Street
Campus Box 2520
Normal, IL 61790-2520

MEN AND WOMEN

- Two piece matched suit is always the best and safest choice
- Everything should be clean and well pressed
- Keep jewelry to a minimum
- No visible body art. Cover tattoos with clothing if possible
- Breath mints—use one before greeting the interviewer, employer representative
- No gum, candy or cigarettes
- Use perfume/colognes sparingly

Women

- Suit with a skirt or a business pantsuit are both acceptable
- Stick with navy, blue, tan, gray, burgundy, black and beige as clothing color choices. Try to use solid colors or conservative prints
- Tailored blouse with a conservative neckline that coordinates nicely with your suit preferable white, off-white, or neutral colored
- If you wear pants, they should be creased and tailored, not tight or flowing
- Skin-colored hosiery or hosiery that coordinates with your suit
- Shoes should be closed-toe with low moderate high heels. Try dark leather, low-heeled pumps
- Briefcase or portfolio in place of a handbag or purse
- No excessively long fingernails. Use conservative nail polish; avoid unusual colors (e.g., green, blue, lavender)
- Small stud earrings instead of dangling or oversized earrings
- Use accessories in moderation. Use the Rule of 13: If you can count more than 13 accessories including buttons, bracelets, rings, earrings, and watch, you are overdoing it

Men

- Long sleeved dress shirt (even in summer) in white or light blue

- Two-piece business suit (solid dark blue, gray or other dark color is best)
- Dark socks, mid-calf length; avoid light colored socks with a dark suit
- Business style leather shoes (lace-up or slip-on) polished and buffed.
- A watch and possibly a ring are the only pieces of jewelry you should wear. No earrings (if you normally wear one, take it out)
- Match shoe and belt color; don't mix black and brown
- Briefcase or portfolio
- Make sure your tie, when knotted, comes to the middle of your belt buckle

BUSINESS CASUAL ATTIRE

(Acceptable at many career fairs, but when in doubt, dress up!)

Do's for women

- Dress "casual" style pants (i.e., Dockers or Gap) and a collared shirt, golf shirt, turtleneck shirts and/or sweater
- Dress slacks instead of dress casual slacks
- Skirt and a collared shirt, blouse, turtleneck or sweater
- Same as above, but add a blazer
- Appropriate business style dresses

Do's for men

- Dress "casual" style slacks (i.e., Dockers or Gap) and a collared shirt, golf shirt, turtleneck shirts and/or sweater
- Dress slacks instead of dress casual slacks
- Same as above, but add a sport coat

General business casual don'ts

- Denim jeans
- Warm up suits, sweat pants
- Open-toed sandals

- Provocative clothing, including excessively short skirts or dresses, tube tops
- Clothing with insignias /slogans
- Spandex
- Sneakers/tennis shoes
- Bare legs/feet, shorts
- Shoes without socks
- Skorts
- Capri pants
- Sweatshirts
- Hats or caps
- Hiking Boots
- Thong shoes/flip flops
- Tank tops or T-shirts

ADDITIONAL TIPS

1. Clothing should always be neat (pressed and clean) and professional.
2. It is best to be overdressed instead of underdressed
3. Don't neglect personal hygiene
 - Overall look should look professional and clean
 - Hair should be clean, trimmed, and combed or styled
 - Fingernails should be neat, clean and trimmed
 - Teeth should be clean
 - Perfumes and colognes should be applied sparingly

GENERAL PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE

Do's for women

- Shirts should be loosely fitting and not reveal undergarments
- Skirts and dresses should be approximately 2 inches above or below the knee and side slits should not exceed 1 inch
- Shoes should have closed toes and the heel less than 2 inches
- Keep the makeup light and natural looking
- Use perfume sparingly
- Wear pants that fit comfortably with or without a crease

Don'ts for women

- Spandex or tight clothing
- Shorts or skorts
- Halters, tube tops, or sheer shirts
- Sandals
- Tacky or oversized jewelry
- Bare feet or legs
- Spaghetti-strap dresses

Do's for men

- Always wear a tie
- Shoes that are polished
- Belts that properly match the shoes
- Facial hair should be neat and clean
- Shirts that are loosely fitting
- Pants that fit comfortably with or without a crease

Don'ts for men

- Ties which include cartoon characters or inappropriate pictures
- Excessive jewelry
- Belts that have large buckles
- Scuffed or worn shoes
- Shoes without socks

Don'ts for men and women

- Visible body piercing, including nose, eyebrow or multiple earrings in one ear
- Baggy, sloppy, tight or ripped clothing
- Athletic wear such as sweats, t-shirts or sneakers
- Excessive perfume, cologne or after-shave