

DRESS CODE FOR OFFICE EMPLOYEES

Professional dress is critical in business. It takes only a few seconds to form a first impression, and more than half of that first impression is based on appearance.

Professional dress is more than our public skin. It is a language. Clothing defines and describes us to the world. In business settings, professional dress sends a message about you, your skills, and about your organization. The impression you make on others influences your credibility, how others relate to you, and therefore your effectiveness. Your image affects the way you communicate in business.

These guidelines will help you determine what is appropriate to wear to work. Clothing that works well for the beach, yard work, dance clubs, exercise sessions, and sports contests may not be appropriate for a professional appearance at work.

Clothing that reveals too much cleavage, your back, your chest, your feet, your stomach or your underwear is not appropriate for a place of business, even in a business casual setting.

Clothing should be pressed and never wrinkled. Torn, dirty, or frayed clothing is unacceptable. All seams must be finished. Any clothing that has words, terms, or pictures that may be offensive to other employees is unacceptable. Clothing that has the company logo is encouraged.

Certain days may be declared dress down days, generally Fridays. On these days, jeans and other more casual clothing, although never clothing potentially offensive to others, are allowed.

Guide to Business Dressing for Work

This is a general overview of appropriate business attire. Items that are not appropriate for the office are listed, too. Neither list is all-inclusive and both are open to change. The lists tell you what is generally acceptable as business attire and what is generally not acceptable. No dress code can cover all contingencies so employees must exert a certain amount of judgment in their choice of clothing to wear to work. If you experience uncertainty about acceptable, professional business attire for work, please ask.

Slacks, Pants, and Suit Pants

Slacks that are similar to Dockers and other makers of cotton or synthetic material pants, wool pants, flannel pants, dressy capris, and nice looking dress synthetic pants are acceptable.

Skirts, Dresses, and Skirted Suits

Dresses and skirts, and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. Dress and skirt length should be at a length at which you can sit comfortably in public. Short, tight skirts that ride halfway up the thigh are inappropriate for work. Mini-skirts, skorts, sun dresses, beach dresses, and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate for the office.

Shirts, Tops, Blouses, and Jackets

Dress shirts, sweaters, tops, golf-type shirts, and turtlenecks are acceptable attire for work. Most suit jackets or sport jackets are also acceptable attire for the office, if they violate none of the listed guidelines. Inappropriate attire for work includes tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with potentially offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans; halter-tops; sweatshirts, and t-shirts unless worn under another blouse, shirt, jacket, or dress.

Shoes and Footwear

Conservative dress shoes are acceptable for work. Wearing no stockings is acceptable in warm weather. Flashy athletic shoes, thongs, flip-flops, and slippers, and are not acceptable in the office.

Jewelry, Makeup, Perfume, and Cologne

Should be in good taste. Remember, that some employees are allergic to the chemicals in perfumes and make-up, so wear these substances with restraint.

Hats and Head Covering

Hats are not appropriate in the office. Head Covers that are required for religious purposes or to honor cultural tradition are allowed.