



Building a Wardrobe

from The Complete Idiot's Guide to Successful Dressing

In Corporate America

As an assistant VP in banking, you'll need a closet full of tailored suits at the ready-and for such a conservative profession, women's suits will likely need to be skirted. How many suits are required when you wear one everyday? Enough so that you don't have to repeat the outfit more than every three days. (Nothing holds up well to constant use, and wool suits especially need to "air" a few days between wears).

No matter what your profession, you should have enough shirts, blouses, or other tops to get you through the week. Men should stick with formal, fitted styles with spread, or straight collars, in smoothly woven fabrics. Women can wear cotton or silk blouses and fine-gauge wool, silk, or cotton tops that layer nicely under a suit jacket. And since women also have the option of wearing dresses, a coat dress or sheath that matches a suit jacket provides a nice change of pace.

If your otherwise sartorially uptight company has instituted a casual-day policy, you have several choices. At the dressiest end of the dress-down spectrum would be something along the lines of a navy or black blazer and gray flannel trousers worn with a turtleneck or a polo sweater. While this outfit would work for either sex, women could also pair a twin set or tunic with the trousers.

If khaki's are kosher, males can wear a pair with a sport jacket (or that same blazer), an oxford cloth shirt and sweater; females may want to substitute a silk blouse for the rougher textured shirt and skip the sweater altogether.

The At-A-Glance Corporate and Conservative Man:

- Suits (at least three in all season fabrics)
- Jackets (at least one sport coat preferably a dark blazer)
- Pants (one dark wool flannel or gabardine and one pair of khakis)
- Dress shirts (at least five, one for each workday, in various colors and patterns, and preferably one with French cuffs)
- Casual shirts (one patterned, one white cotton, both long sleeved)
- Sweaters (one V-neck, one polo style)
- Accessories (classic wrist watch, cuff links, five ties in assorted patterns, pocket squares*, Dressy and more casual leather belts, suspenders*, dressy leather lace-up shoes, casual leather or suede shoes, leather briefcase)

*Items are optional.

The At-A Glance Corporate and Conservative Woman:

- Suits (at least three, all with skirts; if pants are permitted, or you travel a lot, one suit should also have matching pants)
- Jackets (a dark blazer, one twin set)
- Pants (one dark wool flannel or gabardine and one pair khakis)
- Dress blouses/tops (at least one for each workday, including one in white cotton)
- Casual shirts (one long sleeved with a convertible collar in a silky fabric)
- Sweaters (one turtleneck)
- Dresses (a solid color sheath that matches a suit jacket)
- Accessories (classic wristwatch, tailored earrings, a string of pearls, gold or silver necklace, cuff links, a square and oblong scarf, leather belt, leather pumps, leather handbag, leather briefcase or tote)



On the creative side

As an account executive at a public-relations firm with an eclectic roster of clients, you have more latitude in how you dress, so softer, less structured suits and separates will form the basis of your wardrobe. The expected result: polish with personality and a higher trend quotient.

For client meetings, press events, and lunches with editors, a suit that works together with additional separates provides lots of mileage. For a Saturday afternoon book signing with an author/client, an unmatched jacket and pants with a mock turtleneck sweater fit the bill. When chained to your computer to churn out a press kit, khaki's and a denim shirt over a white tee are comfortable, yet presentable; for a spur of the moment meeting, just dress up the look by slipping on a dark blazer.

The At-A Glance Creative Man:

- Suits (one in a solid color)
- Jacket (a dark blazer and a patterned sports coat that coordinates with suit trousers)
- Pants (one dark gabardine and one flannel, one pair of khakis)
- Dress shirts (at least three white cotton)
- Casual shirts (one each: long sleeved denim, polo, white tee)
- Sweaters (one mock turtleneck, one polo)
- Accessories (classic wristwatch, three ties, dressy and casual leather belts, dressy lace-up shoes, leather monkstrap shoes, leather backpack)

The At-A Glance Creative Woman:

- Suits (one solid-color three piece: jacket, pant, and straight skirt)
- Jackets (one dark blazer and one patterned jacket that coordinates with suit pants and skirt)
- Skirts (one, perhaps with pleats, that works with two jackets)
- Pants (one each: dark gabardine, flannel, khakis)
- Dressy blouse/tops (one each: silk blouse, white cotton shirt, silk shell)
- Casual shirts (one long sleeved denim, one white tee)
- Sweaters (one fine gauge turtleneck and matching cardigan)
- Accessories (classic wristwatch; gold hoop earrings, gold studs; collar pin; one oblong, one square scarf; leather belt; leather pumps; suede flats; leather handbag; leather tote)

Ten Keys to Successful Dressing

1. Recognize that you have less than 10 seconds to make a good impression.
2. Know that what you wear influences others and can at least make you appear to be more confident and in control.
3. Focus on being appropriately dressed – every day.
4. Plan ahead; don't "wing it."
5. Avoid attire that makes others feel uncomfortable. You want to stand out for your performance, not your clothes.
6. Develop a consistent style of dress that takes into account your physical assets and flaws.
7. Spend enough to make the grade. It's worth it to splurge on one or two great outfits that make you feel invulnerable.
8. Play it safe. When in doubt, dress conservatively.
9. Take cues from your superiors.
10. Sweat the small stuff. Attention to detail is a virtue that employers look for in an employee's work and wardrobe.



Dress for success no myth. Clothes still influence advancement despite more relaxed work atmosphere.

By Staff Writer Nicole Jacoby

NEW YORK (CNNfn) - It appears the clothes do make the man -- or at least create the manager.

Despite a trend toward increased casualness in the workplace, experts say what you wear still matters if you want to climb to the top.

Unfortunately, figuring out what to put on has become more difficult, as suits and starched shirts get shoved aside for khakis, miniskirts and blue jeans.

"Dress has become very situation sensitive," said Nancy Nix-Rice, the founder of image consulting firm First Impressions and author of *Looking Good: A Comprehensive Guide to Wardrobe Planning, Color & Personal Style Development*. "We've moved past the time when one rubber stamp set of rules works for everyone."

Relaxed dress requirements were supposed to simplify employees' lives by putting less pressure on them to conform to specific molds. But in many cases, business casual has only complicated matters.

For one, the widespread acceptance of more relaxed dress has left many workers wondering where to draw the line. Are leggings and sneakers OK if your boss is wearing them, too? Can you be punished for being too dressy - especially if you work for one of the many young and hip startups that have sprung up in recent years?

"The business casual trend has been such a double-edged sword," said Nix-Rice. "There was a lot of research initially that seemed to substantiate that it improved morale and performance... but what seems to have happened is that it has decayed to such an extreme (that the opposite is happening.)"

With telecommuting, e-mail, pagers and cell phones increasingly becoming the norm in workplaces across the country, some employees might wonder why appearances matter at all anymore.

But ironically, the reduction in live contact may have actually bolstered the significance people put on the real-life interactions that do take place.

"When we are face to face, it has become even more important to be extraordinarily professional -- to match the image people have already created in their minds," said Susan Bixler, president of The Professional Image, Inc. and author of *The New Professional Image: From Business Casual to the Ultimate Power Look*. "You don't want them to think: 'Oh gosh, she sounded so much more professional on the phone.'"

Fashion not the issue

First impressions can have a very real impact on your career. They can influence prospective job offers, whether you secure that much-needed promotion or land that multimillion-dollar deal. And like it or not, clothes are a big part of those initial meetings.

Having said that, there's more to advancement than what you wear.

"Obviously, you can't be an idiot and have a great wardrobe, but it does open up mental doors to what you have to say and offer," said Nix-Rice.

Dressing for success does not translate into being a slave to fashion. In fact, in many cases, fashion is completely beside the point.

"It's not about what trends dictate about what's in and out. It's more about understanding clothing and getting an excellent fit, getting colors that make you look healthy and finding styles that are good for your proportions," said Nix-Rice.

Many employees lose points not for lacking style, but for overlooking details, such as slips that peak out from under skirts or hair that has been combed in the front, but not back.

Dress for the job you want -- not the job you have -- is advice commonly touted. It might be all right for an office assistant to wear jeans and a t-shirt. But his boss might have a hard time picturing him giving important presentations if she's never seen him in a tie.

Fitting into your environment may be at least as important. While looking professional is certainly necessary, coming off as too dressy can backfire if casual dress is the norm at your firm.

"You don't want to look so formal that it seems like you are trying to intimidate or put distance between you and the other person," said Nix-Rice.

When younger isn't better

There's nothing like being mistaken for a recent college grad for many 30-something professionals, but sometimes looking too young can also set your career back.

"We all want experienced people handling our legal affairs, financial affairs, consulting with us," said Bixler. "If someone looks so young and is just too fresh-faced, we might wonder, does this person have the experience to help me and be credible?"

When your wardrobe says more about your age than your resume, a makeover may be in order. Wearing matronly dresses probably won't do the trick, but avoiding youthful outfits - such as jeans or short skirts - might be a good idea. You might not be able to look older, but you may be able to emit a more serious demeanor by choosing clothes that are low-key and conservative.

Dressing too old can be a problem as well -- especially among the clunky-shoed, messenger-bag-toting crowd that has come to dominate the workplace in recent years. An employee whose wardrobe is stuck in 1983 may come off as stiff, unapproachable and unable to "lighten up."

But before you trade in your pressed navy blues for a pair of Dockers, remember that dressing outside your age range can result in another problem altogether.

"A lot of times you see older people trying to act or dress young, but they just don't have the body to do it," said Bixler. "...Golf shirts and khakis are great if you're young and trim, but they don't do much to camouflage that tummy and all the late meals you've been taking in."

For older employees, Bixler recommends a crisper business casual look, such as slacks and a blue blazer.

The bottom line

No matter how casual the workplace, it is almost always easier to dress down, than dress up. So if you've got a big interview or an important presentation planned, going for the jacket and tie is probably a good idea.

"If you're overdressed, you can always take off the jacket or push up your sleeves to get down to the appropriate level," said Bixler. "But if you are underdressed, all you can do is apologize."

If you're interviewing at a new company, try and find out what their dress codes are before you go in for the meeting, so you can get a good sense of what is appropriate and what is not. But remember that the interview may be your only chance to make a statement, so you might not want to be too casual even if the general atmosphere is relaxed.

"At an interview, the employer is thinking: 'This is the best (the job candidate) is ever going to look,'" said Bixler. "So you don't want to take it down too far."

Fashion and Grooming Suggestions

The Well-Groomed Man

Compiled by Kim Wadsworth/Wadsworth Style

DEVELOPING SARTORIAL SKILLS:

How to make the right modern choices for your wardrobe



KISS: Keep It Simple, Silly.

Don't replace your entire wardrobe at once. Begin with a basic start-up wardrobe and add to it, bit by bit, according to budget considerations.

HANG TOUGH: Go through your closet thoroughly and assess your wardrobe before you buy ANYTHING. Get down to the bones of it, the basics that you will build on. Anything stained, missing buttons, over-washed, faded, left over from high school or college or not worn within the last year **MUST GO!** Closets are valuable real estate. Once you've tossed out the old, you can gradually bring in some new.

SUITING UP: No matter what the job consideration, you should **ALWAYS** have at least one nice suit in navy or charcoal gray. Forget the details (two-button, three-button) and concentrate on getting a suit that is flattering and classic. Buy from a reliable source (from Value City to Men's Wearhouse to Dillard's) and let your tailor do the rest. You **CANNOT** buy a form-fitting suit off the rack and wear it. Inquire if they will do alterations on the premises. Bring the appropriate tie, shoe or

loafer when shopping for a suit (leave the running shoes and Birkenstocks at home). Use your sales person to garner the most information (best shirt color, collar style, tie suggestions). When you buy at a reliable source, you are paying for that service. If you opt for a pattern, keep it small; for a stripe, keep it simple and thin.



sar-to-ri-al *adj.* Of or relating to a tailor, tailoring or tailored clothing

BLAZER

MUSTS: Owning a few jackets keeps you looking sharp within an academic or administrative environment, a film viewing or a client meeting. Whether you wear the classic navy blazer, corduroy or a tweed or plaid, building it into your wardrobe is a must. Paired with trousers or jeans, you'll always look together. For a relaxed look, pair it with a mock turtle neck or polo shirt, denim or dress shirt or nice quality round neck tee shirt. Wear it with jeans, khakis or dress slack.

ACCESSORY MATCHUPS:

Tried and true tone on tone dressing always works. In other words, darks with darks, pastels with pastels will work when it comes to

matching up shirts and ties. In some work place contexts, a white or blue shirt may be the only option. In that case, let your tie pattern reflect your personality in a more neutral way. You can **NEVER** have too many tie options.

Socks worn with a suit will bridge the gap between the shoe and the pant. They should match the shoe and the shoe should compliment the pant (i.e. black suit, black sock, black shoe; navy suit, black sock, black shoe).

Choose a wire rim and an edgier plastic frame for eyewear options. Throw contacts into the mix for dressier occasions.

Growing up in the fashion industry, Kim Wadsworth, a national makeup artist based in Norfolk, VA since 1983, continues her lifelong relationship with beauty and style. Her two companies, Wadsworth Style and BridesMade, span the many aspects of makeup and fashion.

This seminar brought to you by the Center for Student Development, the Office of Alumni Relations and the Council of Graduate Students.

Grooming

HAIR APPARENT: If you've spent half your life at a local barber getting a \$6.00 haircut, it may be time to experience a hair salon. A modern cut and the use of good hair products makes all the difference. If you think no one is noticing nose and ear hairs and your unibrow, think again. That's what scissors and tweezers are for. Are you far sighted? Invest in a 3X or 5X mirror to see those hairs up close.

NAIL IT: You shake hands, make presentations, direct, dine with clients... Check your nails often. If you're a biter, STOP! There are

products to kick that habit. Well-groomed hands should go along with all the other details of your image.

SHAVE BEHAVIOR: This is one ritual that can't be skipped and should NEVER be attempted with a 99 cent razor. Shower FIRST, and then shave (unless you use an electric razor). The warmth and moisture will soften your beard and open your hair



Good hygiene is essential for both men and women.

follicles. No time to bathe? Then hold a warm damp washcloth to your face for a minute. Shave in the direction of your hairs, downward. Get a razor with a movable head and at least two blades. Replace weekly. Use a moisturizer with a sunscreen.

10 Essential Things to Remember:

1. Shoes tell all. Keep them shined and check that heels and soles are not worn down. Nothing looks worse than scuffed unpolished shoes worn with a nice suit.
2. When traveling, hang your jacket up when in a plane, behind the seat when in a car. Nothing looks worse than a rumpled suit or blazer.
3. Dress the way you want to be treated.
4. Never wear short-sleeve "dress" shirts- they look dated and frumpy.
5. Suits need to be dry cleaned regularly- moths are attracted to body odors. Shirts should be laundered and pressed professionally. If you are

- on a budget, buy a good iron (Rowenta is an excellent brand) and ask a girlfriend or your mother to teach you HOW to iron a shirt. Beware of too much starch- it also attracts moths. If your job requires travel, learn how to fold a shirt.
6. Own clothes that make sense for the life you lead. Don't let others steer you in a direction that is trendy and unflattering.
7. Clothes don't have to cost a fortune to be stylish.
8. Do not buy everything on sale. Sometimes it's on the sale rack for a reason.

"Clothes don't have to cost a fortune to be stylish."

9. Beware of over-doing your cologne....you want them to remember you, not your scent.
10. The time to care for your skin is now- sunscreen is the best preventative for aging.



Recommended Reading:

"Men's Wardrobe" By Chic Simple; Alfred A. Knopf \$30.00

**Fashion and Grooming
Suggestions**

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KISS: Keep It Simple, Sister. Don't replace your entire wardrobe at once. Begin with a basic start-up wardrobe and add to it, piece by piece, according to budget considerations.

HANG TOUGH: Before you buy ANYTHING, go through your closet thoroughly and assess your wardrobe. Get down to the bones of it, the basics that you will build on. Anything stained, missing buttons, over-washed, too small, too big, left over from high school or college or not worn within the last year **MUST GO!** Closets are valuable real estate. Once you've tossed out the old, you can gradually bring in some new.

SUITING UP: Simple lines in neutral colors lend themselves to multiple style interpretations by remixing with other separates. Remember to still keep the look feminine and soft. The use of important accessories like purses, shoes, jewelry and scarves will add the punch. Add or subtract according to need. Suits and accessories should fit your work location, city or country, school or a law office. First and **BEST** wardrobe investment should be a three-piece black suit:

jacket, skirt and pant. With added separates like blouses and sweaters and accessories, this purchase will get you from day to night. Choose additional suits in a color and silhouette that will stand up to the test of more than one season. Consider your work environment when choosing fabrics- some can be hot (wools and synthetics that don't breathe) or impossible to keep looking fresh (avoid linen at all costs- too high maintenance). Consider a suit alternative, the coat dress, which can be worn with matching dress or paired with other separates for a varied look.

FILLING THE GAPS: If a casual look is more in demand for your workplace, consider **SEPARATES**. These are individual pieces that can be mixed and matched for an attractive look that is less formal than a suit. These should be purchases that have multiple uses (think sweater set, for example). When in doubt, layering garments in different ways offers different options and adds color to your wardrobe.



sar-to-ri-al *adj.* Of or relating to a tailor, tailoring or tailored clothing

Layering is also helpful if there are temperature swings in an office or classroom.

Dresses, skirts and trousers should mix and match to offer multiple combinations. These basic items will lend themselves to various looks for both work and play. Choose garments that can go beyond one season. For skirts, an A-line to the knee will survive the tests of time. For trousers, something with a slight flair will balance out hips.

THE LITTLE BLACK...

Dress, pant or skirt are closet staples that **ANYONE** can wear for **EVERY** occasion. Black hides dirt and wrinkles and is

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Sartorial Skills (continued)

slimming. Black can take a fashion look up or down. No matter what they say, black is here to stay.

ACCESSORY MATCHUPS:

Are you a high key (bright colors) or low key person (natural earth tones)? Pink is the "IT" color today, but it could be blue tomorrow. Let your fashion accents tell the story of you. Purses, shoes, belts, scarves and jewelry all play a key role in creating your look. Invest in one or two trendier pieces to integrate into your tried-and-true staples.

GROOMING: HAIR: Re-assess your

hair style and color. How long has it been that style? It may be time for a change. Look through magazines to find a cut that appeals to you and then check with your stylist to be certain you have the face and lifestyle for it.

Be mindful of basics like shaving legs and underarms. Tweeze brows and remove unwanted facial hair regularly with tweezing or waxing. Invest in a 3X or 5X mirror for this as



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well as makeup application.

10 MINUTE MAKEUP AND SKIN CARE: If your personal skincare and makeup is properly organized, it should take you only 10 minutes to do your face. Be certain that skincare has built in sunscreen. Learn to apply makeup for a professional appearance. Visit counter professionals at major department stores for updates. Keep your work makeup professional and appropriate. Save wild eye shadow colors, high gloss bright lip shades and false eyelashes for after hours.

10 Essential Things to Remember:

1. A trend is only relevant for you if it has a shape that fits and flatters your body.
2. Black pants + anything = STYLE
3. Propriety dictates wearing stockings to work or evening events after Labor Day.
4. Shoes tell all. Keep them shined and check that heels and soles are not worn down. Nothing looks worse than scuffed unpolished shoes worn with a nice outfit.
5. Dress the way you want to be treated.
6. Avoid purchasing garments made of linen or all cotton unless you're a big fan of ironing.
7. Own clothes that make sense for the life you lead. Don't let others steer you in a direction that is trendy and unflattering.
8. Clothes don't have to cost a fortune to be stylish.
9. Do not buy everything on sale. Sometimes it's on the sale

"Clothes don't have to cost a fortune to be stylish."

rack for a reason.

10. Beware of over-doing your perfume...you want them to remember you, not your scent.

Recommended Reading:

1. "What Not to Wear" by Trinny Woodall and Susannah Constantine; Riverhead Books, NY \$15.00
2. "What Should I Wear"? by Chic Simple; Alfred A. Knopf \$30.00
3. "Women's Wardrobe" by Chic Simple; Alfred A. Knopf \$30.00
4. "The Pocket Stylist" by Kendall Farr; Gotham Books \$20.00





YOU NEVER GET A SECOND CHANCE TO MAKE A FIRST IMPRESSION

COLOR:

- Your first interview suit should be a dark suit, such as charcoal gray, navy blue or black. Whether pinstriped or solid, dark suits always represent a professional look.

FABRIC:

- Look for suits made of 100% “worsted” wool. The worsting process involves selecting long wool fibers and twisting them into tight and resilient yarns. Worsted wool yarns create year-round, easy care, and durable fabrics. Wool is a natural fiber that breathes which means you will feel more comfortable, you’ll perspire less, and the fabric will travel well.
- Look for suit jackets that are fully lined and pants that are lined to the knee. Lining increases comfort and durability while reducing wrinkles in your garment.

STYLE:

- A single-breasted suit is appropriate for all fields of employment. Single-breasted jackets come in a variety of styles, including modern three and four-button styles, as well as the classic two-button style. Always leave the button on all single-breasted jackets unbuttoned.
- When wearing a single-breasted suit with more than two buttons, you may button just the top, just the middle or all of the buttons—except, of course, the bottom button.
- Four-button suits may work in a creative environment but are, in our opinion, too fashion-forward for interviews.
- Most suits come with pants that are either double or triple-pleated. A cuffed hem is traditional and preferable. Suit trousers fit differently than jeans and casual pants. They should feel fuller through the thigh and should be worn right at your waist.

Tip

Eye contact is essential.

Show the interviewer that you're confident, engaged, and genuinely happy to be there.

Chemistry is the key to a hire.

SUITE CARE

- Jacket pockets are sewn shut to prevent the wearer from using them and potentially disfiguring the drape of the jacket. However should you choose to have open and functional pockets, just ask your Wardrobe Consultant to remove the tack stitching.
- Always use curved hangers for your suits, with the curve going forward, and leave space between garments in your closet. Cedar hangers will absorb moisture, retain the shape of your jacket, and repel moths.
- When sitting, pull your slacks up at the thigh to reduce stress on the fabric and seams. Make sure to pull up your socks; no skin should show when you cross your legs.
- Always unbutton your suit coat when sitting; and when you're in car, make sure you hang it up rather than wear it.



- If you must put your garment bag in an overhead bin when flying, wait until others have put their items in first and lay yours on top.
- Of course, there will be times your suit will get wrinkled. Men's Wearhouse will press your suit free of charge-forever-at any location. This not only saves you money on dry cleaning; it also increases the life of your suit.
- You only need to dry clean your suit then it is dirty. Suits worn regularly usually only need to be dry cleaned a few times per year. Natural fibers become brittle when dry cleaned too often, and brittle fibers break. So if your suit is just wrinkled-but not soiled-have it pressed. It'll last must longer.

Tip

Consider your chosen field when selecting interview attire.

A traditional dark suit is appropriate for all professions, but if you're certain your prospective employer has a less conservative dress code (typically found in more creative fields), you may choose a broader selection of colors, textures and suit styles.

DON'T BUY SIZE, BUY FIT

- No matter how beautiful or costly your suit, if it doesn't fit well, you're not going to look good. That's why we carry four different styles (cuts) of suits to fit most every physique: European, Traditional, Athletic, and Executive. Additionally, we have master tailors in every store who will alter your clothing with precision.
- First rule: your suit should feel *comfortable*. You needn't sacrifice freedom of movement when wearing business attire.
- The jacket collar should closely follow the silhouette of the neck-with no gaping.
- Your suit jacket should lie smoothly over your shoulders and across your back.
- The length of your suit jacket should be long enough to cover up your entire seat and look proportional to your physique.
- Your jacket sleeves should fall just at or below the break of your wrists. A traditional look is to show 1/4" to 1/2" inch of shirt cuff below your jacket sleeve, but it is really a matter of personal preference.
- The waist of your trousers should be just at or slightly below your navel and should fit snugly without feeling tight.
- If your weight changes, we'll re-alter-free of charge-any previously altered seam on your suit.

Tip

Pay attention to detail.

Shirts and suits should be neatly pressed.

Trim your fingernails.

Get a haircut a week (not a day) before your interview.

Send a note or thank you card the next day.

WHICH SHIRT ON YOUR BACK?

- White is best for your first interview. Observe other employees' shirts during your interview to judge the appropriateness of other colors for your second interview. When in doubt, wear white!
- One hundred percent cotton works best for shirts for the same reasons that wool works well for suits: it breathes. So you perspire less and feel more comfortable.
- A tee shirt worn underneath your dress shirt gives you added protection against noticeable perspiration and will help your shirt last longer.
- Point collar shirts work well with all styles of suits. Tip: Ask your Wardrobe Consultant for free collar stays for all your point collar shirts.
- Ask your dry cleaner to hang, rather than box, your laundered shirts so you won't have to press them again later. However, when traveling, ask to have your shirts boxed to prevent wrinkling.
- A shirt should look as good and fit as well as your suit. It should be smooth around the neck and allow for an index finger of breathing room in the collar.



- There is no such thing as a short-sleeved “dress” shirt. Always wear a long-sleeved dress shirt on your interview and for all business occasions.

*CLOTHING MIGHT MAKE THE MAN,
BUT ACCESSORIES MAKE THE CLOTHING.*

Tip

Be prepared.

It is expected that you will have gone through the company's web site.

Gather information about the company and the position you're applying for, before your interview.

- Your tie should make you appear businesslike and complete a professional-looking package.
- 100% silk ties are always recommended, as they assure the best knot. They can also be dry cleaned.
- Refer to our “How To Tie A Tie” brochure or check out our animated tie lesson on our web site, **menwearhouse.com**, to improve knotting techniques.
- If you're having trouble keeping your pants at your waist, try braces. They look like suspenders but are less damaging to your slacks because braces button inside your waistband.
- Never wear both braces and a belt!
- Keep accoutrements to a minimum. Braces or a well-chosen pocket silk will complement your look, but earrings and excessive jewelry detract from your professional appearance.
- Here are some additional items to have handy (in your care, perhaps): lint brush, extra shoelaces, collar stays, fingernail clippers with file, comb or a brush, and breath mints.

THE SHOE MUST FIT!

Tip

Be yourself. A good interviewer is looking to hire a person, not a resume.

Let your character show.

And don't be afraid to make your interviewer laugh.

- Comfort is key. If your feet hurt, you will be miserable!
- Lace-up shoes look professional and work especially well with suits. We suggest choosing either wing tip, cap toe or split toe styles.
- Black or burgundy shoes can be worn with navy blue or grey suits for a professional image.
- Brown shoes are a wardrobe must, but are not recommended for interviewing.
- Cedar shoetrees not only help keep the shape of your shoes, they also absorb perspiration and keep the leather supple.
- Be sure your shoes are shined, that the edging is not fading (a magic marker can sometimes work wonders) and that laces are not broken or frayed.
- You can remove water stains from the leather shoes with a bit of leather lotion on a clean cloth.
- If you have any loose threads, don't pull or cut them-use a match or lighter to burn them off. Be careful not to burn the leather!
- Never wear a penny loafer or a casual loafer with a suit.
- When trying on new shoes, they should feel slightly stiff. Leather needs time and body heat to conform to your feet, so be sure to allow about 6-8 hours of “break-in” time before your interview.