

How to Look Great at Work!

ISSUE: 26

In a world where "Business Casual" is the norm, we tend to get confused as to what is appropriate when it comes to donning attire for the work day. Now, obviously all of us have different work environments that may dictate the degree of casual-ness or dressiness that is required on a day-to-day basis, BUT, no matter how casual the environment, there is a certain degree of decorum that should be met no matter where your place of employment. Presenting yourself professionally is not only a good reflection on you, it is also a sign of respect for the position that you have. Dressing appropriately shows your boss and your clients/customers that you are serious about your job and want to represent yourself and your company well.

There are a few definite rules to adhere to when selecting your wardrobe every day:

Always be sure that your clothes are neatly pressed and stain free.

Always be sure that your clothing fits appropriately. Ladies—this means no mini skirts or skin-tight shirts, alternately, nothing too baggy. Gentleman, this means wear pants that sit on the waist secured with a belt.

Always neatly style hair. If your company is more conservative (think law firm) hair is best worn off the face.

Never wear over-the-top make-up, like glitter eyeliner or blue nailpolish—unless of course you work on stage or in the circus.

Never wear clothing that is torn or ripped.

Never wear tube tops, camisoles (without a jacket or sweater over), or midriff-bearing tops.

Since many of us adhere to business casual dress-codes, the following is a list of appropriate options for presenting a well-put together, business-savvy outfit—albeit casual. You *should* have the following in your wardrobe:

1. A couple of button down blouses (ladies)/shirts (guys) in a variety of neutral colors: white, black, light blue, pink.

2. A variety of cotton dress slacks—ladies you may find

bootcut styles are most flattering, guys, stick with classic styles that fit well. Stock up on colors

like: black, khaki, and navy.

3. Collect fine-gauge knit sweaters. Ladies—twinsets are great for mixing and matching, and of course turtlenecks are versatile as well. Guys stick with simple crew neck or mock turtle-neck styles.

4. Ladies and guys, invest in a fitted blazer or sport coat—polished, not stuffy.

5. Keep shoes simple. All women should have black and brown pumps that will go with anything from pants to mid-length skirts and men should also own both a black and brown pair of dress shoes to finish off the look.



For those of you who need some ideas on how to amp. it up a bit for a stricter dress code be sure to have everything listed above for the business casual sect, **PLUS...**

LADIES: You must have a formal suit. Purchasing a complete black (or other neutral colored) suit will be your best bet. Be



sure that you have: a pencil skirt (fitted and to the knee), slacks, and jacket—all in the same color. Don't be afraid to spend a bit more, as these pieces can be mixed and matched and will last a lifetime.

GUYS: You will need a suit as well, and a tie.

There are many suit styles to choose from. The most universally flattering and most professional ones, are those in solid colors, and nice fabrics like wool or silk-wool blends. Flat front trousers work for most and single button jackets are most current without looking trendy. Double breasted jackets are also a nice option and will present a polished look. Remember, while you may dress completely different on your own time, it's important to adhere to the dress code at the office. Just think of it as a day-to-day re-invention of your personal style. Who knows, you may grow to like it!

NEXT MONTH: INTERNET SHOPPING!

