

Your quick guide to:

Dressing for work and interviews

Whether consciously or not, our opinions of people are greatly influenced by how they present themselves. How you dress for interviews and for work matters – looking good makes you feel good, and can give you much-needed confidence. This guide will help get you started.

Dress your way to success

Research suggests that when we wear certain items of clothing, we adopt the behaviours we associate with them. In other words, when we wear a smart business suit, we mean business.

Dressing smartly can also improve our alertness. And then there's confidence – it's widely recognised that, in interviews or on our first day, we feel more confident if we're dressed smartly and appropriately.

The basics

More than 90% of the time, candidates are expected to wear a suit or smart business attire to interviews.

With the onset of flexible and casual working, and more casual tech businesses, this percentage may decrease. But unless explicitly informed otherwise, it's still best to assume that a classically smart outfit is the way to go.

Men

Suits never fail, and in truth, have never gone out of fashion. Even if you're headed to a creative start-up, a quirky, casual suit would work perfectly.

However, in most cases, keep it simple.

- Stick to dark, simple colours – avoid light browns or colourful shoes
- Wear cotton over linen – linen will crease on the way in
- Shoes should be brown or black – but brown will only work with a brown or blue suit
- Shoes should also be leather, and polished
- Your tie should match your suit and should not have complex patterns
- Your socks should generally be dark and simple

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Women

Essentially, it's a choice between trousers and a skirt, although in some situations a smart dress could be perfectly suitable.

- You can't go wrong with black – brown and navy trousers or skirts will usually be suitable too
- Avoid patterns on your blouse
- Add colour with a scarf instead
- Don't be too adventurous with shoes – avoid the temptation to wear exceptionally high heels

If unsure – dress up, rather than down

Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook, wears hoodies to board meetings. But it's safe to say that this approach doesn't work for everyone.

Fair or not, it's still very common for more smartly dressed interns and apprentices to get taken more seriously and offered better assignments. And the same often applies to any kind of employee.

Where to shop

We're spoilt for choice in the UK. If in doubt, department stores like House of Fraser, Debenhams and John Lewis stock a wide variety of brands, and tend to have large sections devoted to work-wear.

Brands like [Reiss](#), [Whistles](#) and [Cos](#) offer particularly trendy office-wear if you have the budget. Despite being relatively expensive, clothes here are of excellent quality and will last.

Shops like [Next](#), [Marks and Spencer](#) and [Topman/Topshop](#) offer modern office-wear too, but with much lower price tags. For suits, these shops are especially good as they offer options at £100 and under, and to fit every kind of build.

It may even be worth visiting an outlet centre, which specialise in heavily discounted designer clothes. There's a full list of them, and their location, [here](#).

Find the perfect fit

When you find a huge sale, it can be tempting to buy something even if it doesn't perfectly complement your build. Resist this temptation, and wait for the right outfit.

Or, if you find something you love that's slightly too long or baggy, get it tailored.

An outfit that fits perfectly not only looks good, but makes you feel confident.

Jazz up your look with quirky accessories

Although it's important not to dissuade your new colleagues or your interviewer with outlandish outfits, it's still important to have fun and show your personality through what you wear.

Colourful socks or scarves can work well, or even a bowtie at the right company. Pocket squares, available at shops like [TM Lewin](#), can add some elegance. Even braces can work well, especially if you're joining a company full of hipsters.

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A little colour and invention can present you in a positive way without making you seem any less serious or committed.

For personal advice on dressing and preparing for interviews, speak to your local, friendly Tate consultant today.

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