

Brock University

Included in this tip sheet

- 1 **The Basics**
- 2 **What's Appropriate in What Situation?**
- 3 **Where to find examples**

When entering into a new work environment, it is a good idea to observe the way the current employees are dressed in order to ensure that you are following that company's policy. Remember: it is better to be a little over dressed than to be under dressed. Being overdressed will signal to an employer or a potential employer that you are professional and are taking the opportunity seriously, while being underdressed or too casual will send the opposite message.

It is VERY important to consider fit when finding appropriate pieces for employment. Women - ensure that blouses and button down shirts do not have gaps and fit smoothly. Men and Women - ensure that suits do not fit too loosely or too tight, ask a friend if you're unsure about fit. Many dry cleaners offer alterations if small details must be adjusted, and that is a very inexpensive way to ensure that you look well put together and groomed.

The Basics

	Men	Women
DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Always wear an undershirt. - Wear your suit jacket when you conduct business outside your office. Your authority travels with you. - Keep hair and nails clean and neat. - Wear appropriate jewelry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wear comfortable shoes and hosiery to complement your outfit. Avoid flip-flops. - Wear natural looking makeup. Keep it to a minimum. - Wear appropriate jewelry (no bangles or dangly earrings). Limit the number of rings you choose to put on. - Keep hair and nails clean and neat.
DO NOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wear both suspenders AND a belt. - Wear short-sleeve dress shirts with suits: showing a clean cuff is a must. - Overpower your appearance with heavy scents such as cologne or deodorant. - Wear ankle socks or light colored socks with a dark suit. Similarly, do not wear dark socks with a light coloured suit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wear loud or overpowering jewelry - Overpower your appearance with heavy scents such as perfume, scented body wash and lotions. - Wear elaborate hairstyles. - Wear trendy fashions. - Wear tank tops with spaghetti straps. - Wear dark undergarments with light coloured clothing.

What's Appropriate in What Situation?

Formal and Semi-Formal Attire

“Formal Attire required” is usually seen on invitations for awards dinners, political functions, galas, etc.

Men	Women
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dinner suit or tuxedo is most appropriate - Semi-Formal: Suit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gown or more elaborate dress - Semi-Formal: cocktail dress

Business Professional Attire

In most corporate offices, expect the attire to be business professional - it should be clearly stated in your contract. Make sure that you explicitly understand company policies and expectations regarding business professional attire.

Men	Women
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dark suit (black, navy) - Clean, pressed collared dress shirt - Pressed silk tie (that coordinates with shirt) - Shirt tucked in - Matching leather closed toe shoes and belt - Dark socks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dark pant or skirt suit (black, navy) - Clean, pressed, collared dress shirt - Shirt tucked in - Appropriate hosiery - Closed toe leather shoes

Would you like to see some examples?

Go to: goodman.brocku.ca/bcdo in the “Guides and Samples” Section, under “Resource Guides”.

Business Casual

Business Casual is becoming more popular in the workplace; however, it can vary drastically depending on the environment, so make sure you fully understand the company’s policies and guidelines surrounding business casual attire.

Men	Women
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean, pressed collared dress shirt or polo shirt tucked in - Dress pants (black, navy, grey, brown, khaki) - Socks that coordinate with pants - Matching closed toe leather shoes and belt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean, pressed pants or shirts (black, navy, grey, brown, khaki) - Tailored collared shirt, sweater sets, printed tops, cardigans - Leather closed toe shoes that coordinate with outfit and accessories

Smart Casual

Casual Fridays are becoming more popular in work environments, and it is important to respect the casual element - this does not mean “relaxed wear”.

Men	Women
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jeans (if allowed): dark wash, flat front, no holes, boot cut - Long sleeved button down shirt with sleeves rolled - Pants: well cut, flat front - Neat polo - Loafers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jeans (if allowed): dark wash, no holes, boot cut - Pants: flat front, well fitting - Printed top with cardigan - Sweater sets - Tailored button downs - Shift dress - Closed toe pumps - Accessorize with silk scarf