

Dressing for a Job Fair or Interview

For most Job Fairs, the appropriate style of dress is “Business Casual”.

What is Business Casual?

Business Casual is crisp and neat, not overly dressy, and more classic than trendy.



Basics of Business Casual:

Khaki pants, long-sleeved button-up shirt, polo/golf shirts. Pants and shirts should be clean and pressed. It is less formal than a full-suit and tie ensemble.

What if I want to wear a suit and tie or skirt-suit set?

That is perfectly fine. In fact, it is better to over-dress than to under-dress. If you do decide to wear a suit, just make sure it is up-to-date and not the one that has been hanging in your closet since your cousin got married 20 years ago!

Specifics for Men:

Ties: Generally not necessary for business casual, but if you are in doubt, you can wear a tie. It never hurts to slightly over-dress.

Shirts: Long-sleeved shirts are considered dressier than short-sleeved, and are appropriate even in summer. Choosing white, light blue, solid, or conservative stripes are your safest bet. Polo shirts, (tucked in, of course) are acceptable in more casual situations.

Sweaters: A nice sweater worn over a shirt is acceptable, but it should not have a “loud” pattern to it. Solid, neutral colors are preferred. Make sure your sweater is not old and worn.

Shoes: Leather dress shoes are preferred. No sandals or tennis shoes should be worn.

Accessories: Jewelry should be minimal; such as a simple, conservative watch. A nice leather belt is a detail you should include. Note: It is generally considered poor manners to wear a hat indoors. Your hat and coat should be removed prior to speaking with an employer.

Specifics for Women:

Pants/Skirts: Women can wear casual dress pants, khakis, or skirts. None of which should be tight. Fabrics should be crisp; colors should generally be solid; navy, black, gray, brown, and khaki are always safe bets. For the most business-like appearance, pants should be creased and tailored; neither extremely tight nor flowing.

Skirt Length: Skirt should come to at least your knees while standing. If you choose to wear a slip under your skirt, make sure it does not show.

Shirt/Sweaters: In addition to tailored shirts or blouses, tailored knit sweaters and sweater sets are appropriate business casual for women. Cotton, silk, and blends are appropriate. Velvets and shimmery fabrics suitable for parties are not appropriate. Fit should not be tight. Cleavage is not appropriate for business and job search occasions.

Jewelry/Accessories: Keep it simple and to a minimum. Nothing flashy, but do include a nice watch. Avoid extremes of style or color.

Shoes: Preferably leather, with appropriate colors being black, navy, and brown, depending on your attire and accessories. Dress sandals may be appropriate, depending on the season, but make sure your toe-nails are clean and trimmed. Make sure you can walk comfortably and naturally in whatever shoes you choose. Extreme high heels or chunky sandals would not be appropriate.

Hose: Recommended for skirts knee-length. Trouser socks should be worn with pants.

DON'TS

T-shirts, Sweatshirts, Sweatpants are not appropriate
Clothes with sayings, sports logos, or other advertisements
Clothes that are too tight, too revealing, or too loose and baggy
Dirty or torn clothing of any kind is NOT acceptable.
Hats and coats should be removed, if at all possible
It is not appropriate to walk around with at a Job Fair with coffee or other drinks in hand. If anything, you should be carrying résumés and/or a portfolio.



DO!

