First Impressions Matter:

An interviewer is assessing every part of you. Therefore, what you wear is often as important as what you say and what you do.

Your interview attire should be appropriate to your industry. But, whether your job is corporate and conservative or casual and creative, you should look professional and put together.

You can use your clothing to express your personality, but your attire should be subtle. In other words, your skills and experience should stand out in an interview -- not your outfit.

Investigate the Dress Code:

A business suit is appropriate attire for most job interviews. If you're not certain whether you should wear a suit, ask the recruiter about the company's dress code, but, remember, an interview isn't just another day on the job. You need to dress to impress more than ever.

If the company attire is business casual, or even simply casual, you still should consider wearing a suit to the interview. You should also think about what other candidates might wear. You don't want to be remembered for being the only candidate who didn't dress up for the interview.

A good rule of thumb: If in doubt, wear a suit. It's generally better to be dressed too formally than too casually.
Fashion Do’s

Take the guesswork out of interview attire with some general fashion dos. These tips will help you make a good impression at your interview -- regardless of your industry.

Suits in conservative colors, such as black and navy, are a safe choice for both men and women. Wear them with a white or solid-colored shirt for a tasteful, professional look.

If you want to use your attire to express your individuality, do so in a small, subtle way. Women can wear a piece of tasteful jewelry, and men can sport an elegant tie.

Fashion Don'ts

Just as a few fashion dos apply to interviews in any industry, there are also some don'ts that all job seekers should avoid. These fashion faux pas can make you look unprofessional.

Women

For women, short skirts and open-toed shoes are not appropriate for interviews. Bare legs are also a no-no. Always wear skirts that come to or near the knee, closed-toed shoes and stockings. Avoid floral prints and brightly patterned blouses.

- Always wear a suit with a jacket; no dresses
- Shoes with conservative heels
- Conservative hosiery at or near skin color (and no runs!)
- No purses, small or large; carry a briefcase instead
- Shoes with conservative heels
- Conservative hosiery at or near skin color (and no runs!)
- If you wear nail polish (not required), use clear or a conservative color
- Minimal use of makeup (it should not be too noticeable)
- No more than one ring on each hand
- One set of earrings only
Men

For men, an ill-fitting suit sends the wrong message and can imply that you're not attentive to detail. A few dollars spent on tailoring is well worth the expense.

Men should also avoid eccentric or flashy ties, since they can look unprofessional or overly casual. Other items to steer clear of include casual shoes and turtleneck or polo shirts.

- Necktie should be silk with a conservative pattern
- Dark shoes (black lace-ups are best)
- Dark socks (black is best)
- Get a haircut; short hair always fares best in interviews
- No beards (unless you are interviewing for a job as a lumberjack!)
- Mustaches are a possible negative, but if you must, make sure it is neat and trimmed
- No rings other than wedding ring or college ring
- No earrings (if you normally wear one, take it out)

It's All in the Details:

Do you want to show an interviewer that you're detail-oriented? Use your interview attire to send the message.

Women should pay attention to their nail polish, makeup and purse. Keep your nails at a conservative length and avoid brightly colored polish. If you wear makeup, keep it subtle, and skip the perfume. Carry a simple handbag, and match it with your shoes or clothing.

Men should be sure that their nails are neat and clean. Match your shoes and socks with your suit, and be certain that your shoes are freshly shined. If you carry a briefcase or bag, it should be clean and well-kept.

Men and Women

- Conservative two-piece business suit (solid dark blue or grey is best)
- Conservative long-sleeved shirt/blouse (white is best, pastel is next best)
- Clean, polished conservative shoes
- Well-groomed hairstyle
- Clean, trimmed fingernails
- Minimal cologne or perfume
- Empty pockets--no bulges or tinkling coins
- No gum, candy or cigarettes
- Light briefcase or portfolio case
- No visible body piercing (nose rings, eyebrow rings, etc.)

Remember, you don't need to spend a lot of money to look professional. Choose your attire carefully and pay attention to small details. Be neat, clean and well groomed, and you'll make a good first impression.