

# Dress to Impress: Corporate Workwear Edition

Building a Foundation

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# About the Author

Mia Lupo is a content creator and the founder of New England Parisienne, a lifestyle and travel blog.

Mia Lupo is a sales and hospitality professional with over 10 years of experience in the wine, spirits, and luxury retail industries. She specializes in on-premise account management, relationship development, and driving revenue growth across New York City and the Northeast.

NEW ENGLAND  
PARISIENNE



# Introduction

The primary purpose of this presentation is to help undergraduate students and young professionals understand why professional work attire matters and recommendations on how to achieve the right look based on several key factors.

This presentation has been created to prepare for internships and entry-level positions.

This presentation may also be used as a tool for any supervisor/manager seeking to have a discussion with an employee to set expectations for dress code.

# DISCLAIMER

**The goal of this presentation is to provide guidance on how to build the foundation of a professional wardrobe.**

Although professional dress codes have shifted post-COVID to more casual attire, this presentation will suggest styles that are more formal and conservative.

Why?

When you learn to master the basics, it's much easier to figure out how to balance professionalism and personal style.

# DISCLAIMER

**Each workplace and industry has different attitudes about what is considered appropriate to wear to work.**

As you progress in your career, there will be plenty of opportunity for you to explore your personal style in the workplace.

Remember—what you wear to work as a professional may not be the same as what you wear outside of work.

Q: Why does professional attire matter?

## A: Dressing Appropriately Communicates Respect

Sometimes, it's not about what's comfortable for ourselves.

Sometimes, we need to look outside of ourselves and think about how we can integrate into a new environment with **decency and respect**.

How we chose to present ourselves—what we wear, how we speak, all of the choices we make—communicates who we are.

Choosing a **mindful** approach will go a *very* long way.

# Considerations Before Purchasing Professional Attire

## Geographical Location



US? New York City? Boston? Los Angeles? SoCal?

International? EU? London? Paris? Lucerne?

Elsewhere?

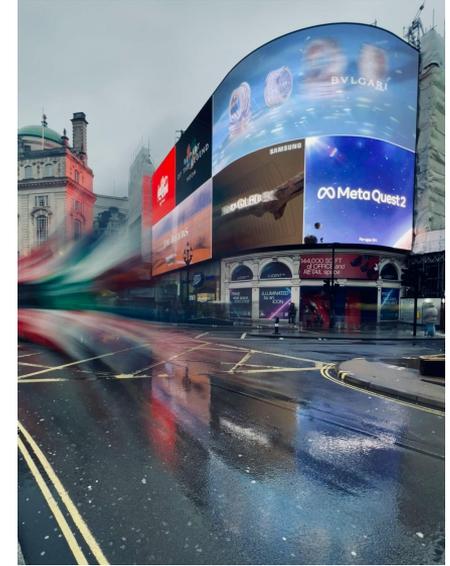
## Industry



Business? Finance? Accounting? Tech? Law?  
Sales? Marketing? PR? STEM?

A combination of two or more industries? (ex: tech sales; scientific sales; etc.)

## Company



Big Box and Corporate?

Small Business or Startup?

# Considerations Before Purchasing Professional Attire

## Place of Work



Remote/WFH

In-person

Hybrid

## Position

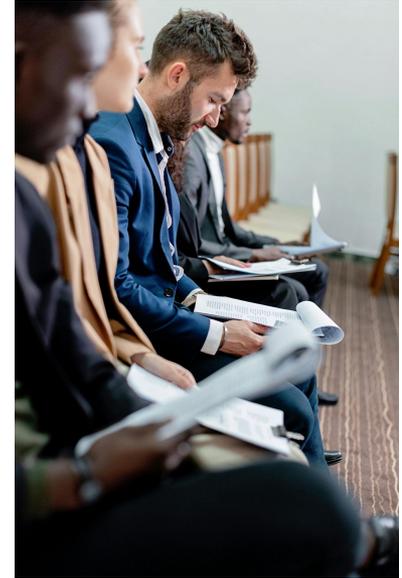


Entry-level

Associate/Management/VP

C-suite

## Occasion



Smart Casual

Business Casual

Business Formal

# Key Terms

Photo Credits: Brooks Brothers



Business Formal



Business Casual



Smart Casual

MENSWEAR

# 9 Items, 1 Week



Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday



1+4+6+8



2+5+6+7+9



3+4+6+8+9



1+4+6+7



5+6+8





**WOMENSWEAR**

# CEO

## Capsule Wardrobe

WWW.BYLISAFONDE.COM





# What You Need

## Foundation I

- Black suit (wool)
- White shirt (cotton) or White shell (silk)
- Black shoes (leather)
- Black belt (leather)

## Foundation II

- Dark navy suit (wool) or dress (wool or crepe)
- Dark grey suit (wool) or dress (wool or crepe)
- Blue shirt (cotton) or Black shell (silk)
- Dark brown shoes (leather) or Light Brown/nude shoes (leather)



# Tips for Buying Professional Attire

**Figure out your sizes.** For a variety of brands, visit a department store to determine brands that you like and pieces that fit well.

**Do your research—and save your money!** There is no reason to pay full-price if you don't have to. Certain brands may offer student discounts or promotions year-round or in the spring around graduation. Rakuten also offers cashback percentages for popular brands.

**Shop at well-curated consignment boutiques.** Not all secondhand shops are created equal! Linda's Stuff on eBay and Wish Newport are great examples for designer deals that are gently worn.

## LIST OF SUGGESTED BRANDS

Theory  
Brooks Brothers  
Ralph Lauren

Quince  
J. Crew  
Calvin Klein  
Banana Republic  
Aritzia (womenswear only)  
Modern Citizen (womenswear only)  
Bonobos (menswear only)

# Additional Considerations

**Alterations & Repairs** can go a long way to help you invest and maintain clothing and accessories over time.

- Dry cleaner
- Tailor (pants hems, sleeves, etc.)
- Cobbler (shoes and leather goods)

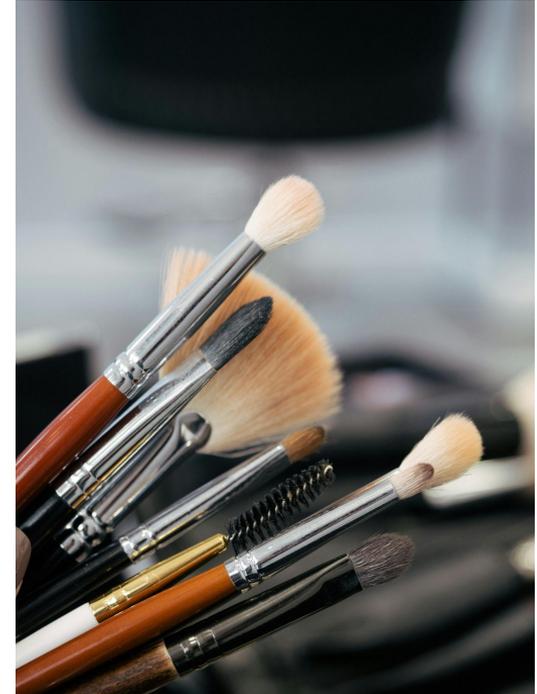
Footwear

Accessories

Skincare

Fragrance

Cosmetics



# Examples

# Example 1 | Entry-Level, PR/Marketing in Sports Industry

Sam was hired to work at a **boutique public relations and marketing agency in New York City** as a **Marketing Coordinator**.

The agency works with companies in the **sports industry**, including venue management, athletic apparel and accessories brands, and global events.

Sam's boss said that the dress code is fairly **casual most of the time**, but employees should level up and wear **business casual for client-facing appointments and events**.

Sam will be required to **work from the office** for her first year with the company, but may have flexibility to work from home in the future.

Sam plans on buying a few blazers, a dress, and a black pair of heels to prepare for client meetings.



## Example 2 | Entry-Level, Finance

Tyler was hired to work as an **Investment Banking Analyst** in **New York City** at a large corporate banking institution.

Tyler is expected to wear **business formal initially**, eventually shifting to business casual, and **work from the office** every day.

Tyler is concerned about how much he will have to spend on a professional wardrobe. He decides to go to SuitSupply and Joseph A. Bank to start, but keeps an eye out for sales at Theory and Ralph Lauren.





# Additional Resources

## Article

[Professional Attire and Image](#)

(The University of Kansas)

## Influencers (Menswear)

@shaunbirley

@rsimacourbe

@alexcosta

## Influencers (Womenswear)

@cocobeautea

@jeanwang

@leasy\_inparis

**DOWNLOAD PRESENTATION**



*bitly*

# Appendix

# HOW TO WEAR DENIM

FOR BUSINESS CASUAL +  
SMART CASUAL ONLY

- Straight Leg
- Dark Wash
- No Distressing, Extreme Fading or Extreme Signs of Wear (rips, holes)
- Waist at an appropriate height (wear belt if needed)
- Hemmed at an appropriate length
- Pair with blazer for business casual

