



## LEVELS OF PROFESSIONAL DRESS & BUSINESS CASUAL

Remember, you want an image that exudes you are: Credible, Trustworthy and Professional. Fashion and Image are not always in sync. Professionalism is the key. Use this information as a guideline when dressing for your career.

- **Top Drawer Casual-** Always Has A Jacket. It is the CEO of your wardrobe and therefore should be your big ticket purchase. Examples:
  - Men:** Slacks, long sleeve dress shirt with sport jacket or blazer; tie can be optional. Pivotal piece is sport jacket/blazer
  - Women:** Pantsuits are acceptable, skirts or slacks with blouse and jacket
  
- **Basic Business Casual-** Always has a collar for both men and women. A twin set is acceptable for women at this level. This level does NOT include denim unless it is authorized by the company. Denim should be of premium quality without tatters or tears and appropriate fit is essential. Examples:
  - Men:** Slacks and long sleeve shirts, slacks with company issued polo shirt. No tee shirts allowed.
  - Women:** Skirts or slacks with sweaters sets or blouses that have sleeves. Sleeveless tops can lower your credibility.
  
- **Shoes-** Shoes for both Top Drawer Casual is generally a classic slip on for men and a closed toe for women. Fashion permits the showing of some toe for women, but remember always for the side of professionalism and credibility, closed toed is best. Flip flops or beach shoes are NEVER acceptable for business.
  
- **Weekend Casual-** If you'll wear it on the weekend, simply DON'T wear it to work.

### Business Casual No-no's

- T-shirts and jeans worn together
- Dirty sneakers
- Flip Flops
- Shirt tail out
- Active Wear
- Leggings or stirrups
- No hosiery or socks

### **Image Breakers for Women:**

- Short Skirts
- Tight fitting clothes
- Exposure of body piercings
- Too much cleavage
- Over use of make-up
- Heavy perfumes or lotions
- Bows, excessive florals in garments

### **Image Breakers for Men:**

- Heavy Colognes
- Overstuffed pant pockets
- Scuffed shoes
- Un-tidy facial hair
- Dirty fingernails
- Out dated eyewear

Retailers that fulfill the professional wardrobe rather just beginning or developing a wardrobe that represents who you are on a day to day basis.

Brooks Brothers

Dillard's

Ann Taylor, Ann Taylor Loft

Belk's

Banana Republic

For more information, please visit our website at [www.harris-barnes.com](http://www.harris-barnes.com) or contact us for a private consultation at 704-540-0989.



1. The All-Time, Best Ever, Never-Fail, Number one Do is:  
Learn to LOVE your body....Flaws and all!
2. Do; under ALL circumstances invest in a great suit! Remember FIT, FABRIC and Cut. No matter where you are in your career at some time or another you will need one that gives you instant credibility
3. Don't be a slave to fashion trends and purchase items just because they're On Sale! Think of all the things you have hanging in your closet with tags still on them! This is not smart shopping. Think investment no matter how much money you make.
4. If you think your outfit is too tight for work.....most likely it is!
5. Do adhere to basic grooming. Keep hair neat, make-up professional and nails manicured
6. Overstuffed shirt and pant pockets will make you appear disorganized
7. Clothes like blue jeans, flip flops, sweat pants or leisure wear worn to work show you do not take your job seriously.
8. Very trendy clothing worn in a conservative profession, will give the appearance of someone who cares more about clothes and fashion than their work.
9. Poor grooming (bad breath, body odor, dirty fingernails, poorly applied make-up) causes you to appear sloppy, careless and someone who lacks judgment of what is appropriate and/or self awareness
10. Avoid nails too long in length or distracting bright nail colors; this can be distracting and appear unprofessional
11. Keep bright lipsticks and dramatic make-up for evening and weekends
12. Please, Please do not expose your tattoo, midriff or body piercing in a professional setting if at all possible

13. Do invest in a good bag that will last you and is big enough for all your essentials bags too big or overstuffed gives a look of clutter and disorganization
14. Purchase a quality pair of classic pumps. Look for leather, heels no higher than two inches in a classic and neutral color such as black or navy
15. When wearing accessories; be aware that excessive may denote a look of clutter. Remember less is more!
16. Hairstyles should be appropriate for work and loud colors and/or styles that are distraction should be worn for weekend wear.
17. Facial hair if worn should be well trimmed and maintained.
18. “Just say no “ to see-through clothes, extremely high heels and clothes that are too frilly or have excessive floral print, these are more appropriate for church and weddings and when worn in the workplace may lower a females credibility
19. Sleeveless attire is a casual sabotage. Sleeveless tops are appropriate for a luncheon, date or shopping NOT for the workplace unless worn in your personal space.
20. Use perfume sparingly in the workplace. An overdone fragrance saturates you with un-professionalism. In addition, many people are allergic to perfumes.
21. Avoid extremely colorful clothing. Too many colors at one time lower your professionalism, confusing the eye and the effect can send a message of somewhat garish.
22. Make sure that your undergarments are appropriate for your clothing and body and cannot be seen as a distraction through your clothing.
23. Overstuffed shirt and pant pockets will make you appear disorganized
24. Wearing ties that are too short
25. Pants that are too short and belts worn too high or low
26. Men in long sleeved shirts rolled up above the elbow
27. Sport socks with a suit
28. See through business shirts
29. Poor attempts to hide baldness