

# MEN! Dress Up to Look the Part!

Your clothing says a lot about you at work. It can be the bridge or the barrier to reaching a prospective client. *Plus, clothing communicates your position and status in a company.*

**T**he past few articles, I have been addressing grooming for ladies. For this issue, I am addressing guys who want to dress for success. It may be your first job interview or you are just a few rungs from the top. You want to stand out positively among your competitors.

Whichever level you are at, you wish to create a certain presence that will win you the attention you want. Correct grooming and poise can create this. In this very competitive society, you are competing for approval and first impressions mean a lot.

## When a Bulging Wallet Works Against You!

Time and again, I have had guys telling me that as long as men have "money in their pockets to jingle," there is no need to

worry about their looks or how well they are groomed. There are also those who have money enough and wish to have an impressive look to reflect success and their wealth, but may not know where to start.

You may start with a long appraisal of your own silhouette. Check the following: Does your shirt pocket function like a holder for miscellaneous items like your ballpoints, cigarettes, name cards etc.

Is your wallet stuffed with banknotes, name cards, credit and ATM cards, bills and receipts etc?

You want to look sharp or smart. If your answer to the two questions above is "yes," you are not achieving this. Instead you are coming across as an untidy, disorganized and tardy person. Besides, where do you put your bulging wallet?

## QUICK TIPS FOR A PUT-TOGETHER BUSINESS LOOK

### Formal Business Look

- Long sleeve, light coloured business shirt
- Dark coloured tailored pants
- Bold coloured patterned tie to match pants
- Polished, black leather shoes
- Black leather belt
- Dark coloured socks

OR

- Long sleeve, chalk-stripped business shirts
- Dark coloured tailored pants
- Light coloured plain tie to match shirts
- Polished, black leather shoes
- Black leather belt
- Dark coloured socks



### Casual Business Look

- Long sleeve, light coloured or chalk-stripped business shirts
- Dark coloured tailored pants
- Polished black leather shoes
- Black leather belt
- Dark coloured socks

OR

- Short sleeve, light coloured shirts
- Dark or medium coloured, tailored pants
- Loofahs
- Dark or medium coloured socks to match pants

With these basic pieces to make an ensemble and a positive bounce in your stride, confident

eye contact, smiling expression plus courteous mannerisms, you will be on your way to forming a positive and lasting impression of yourself.

In the next issue, we will talk about men's most important accessory -- the tie and other men's accessories.



I can safely presume that it goes into your trouser pocket, usually the back one, because guys generally are averse to carrying a clutch bag, although it really is handy and elegant. If you have a flat derriere, you may get away with it. But if your buttocks are already prominent, the thick wallet certainly spoils your silhouette.

### Pocket Tips

Carry only one good pen (never a ball point please). That pen can be the symbol of your success. Discard leaky pens, an ink stain right on your chest is such an eye sore.

Wallets should always be thin. Carrying credit cards not only reduces the risk of losing cash, but also reflects that you keep up with the times. Also, if you have more than one credit card, rotate their use and leave the others at home. You should carry at most, two in your wallet. Also, remember to button up that pocket as the weight of the wallet will drag the pants down, giving you an overall, untidy look.

Unlike women, guys have a much smaller selection for their wardrobe. Their basics are the shirt and the trousers. Therefore, make the best use of these and choose what flatters you and avoid those that draw attention to your

physical flaws.

Different career paths have different wardrobe requirements. In law, banking, accounting, and other traditional fields, classic suits prevail. In retailing, education, real estate and sales positions, shirt and tie with coordinating trousers are worn, while jeans and shirts are better suited to construction and such professions. In glamour fields such as public relations, fashion, art, theatre, beauty, entertainment and interior design, contemporarily styled or unstructured suits may best express your expertise.

However, no matter what your job or position, your clothing must look its best. Do not wear torn jeans, a dirty or wrinkled shirt or suit, or worn looking shoes. If you wear a uniform, it must be clean and pressed crisply.

The following are the little details that go a long way to form a good impression.

### Shirt and trousers tips

- ▶ If you have a less-than-perfect physique, avoid tight-fitting shirts and trousers.
- ▶ Lean men look good in baggy shirts where the shoulder width is slightly (1-2 cm) broader than your actual measurements and pants with

pleats will give you a more empowered look.

- ▶ Men with a goodyear girth should definitely avoid tight fitting shirts. However, don't swing to the other extreme; a too baggy shirt can also look untidy. Try using a shirt with a box pleat at the back of the shirt.
- ▶ On the plump side? Choose shirts where the shoulder width fits just right while the shirt is still comfortably roomy around the waist.
- ▶ Fresh young graduates can get away with a polyester suit. But if you are in a well-established position and want to look impressive, my advice is to invest in a light, quality wool suit. Use them in separate pieces, so you can stretch your wardrobe with suitable sets for less formal functions. Whole suits (where the jacket and pants are of the same material) are formal but when you team the jacket with pants of other material or even colour, it becomes a semi formal outfit, or what is known as the "unmatched suit".
- ▶ Sleeves should not be rolled up when meeting people of importance or your superiors. It is Ok when you are in the privacy of your own office. H&B