

Professional Appearance Checklist for Women

This checklist should serve as a guideline (not a requirement) for competing at convention. Follow these basic reminders to help you dress as professionally as possible. Please refer to the Convention Guidelines Apparel section in the handouts for our convention apparel expectations.

Before you leave for work or a social engagement, use a full-length mirror to examine the details of your appearance and overall picture you present from head to toe. Make sure your appearance, attire, accessories and grooming are impeccable. This daily exercise will take just a few minutes, but the confidence of being well dressed will be worth it.

Basics

- Choose simple, carefree hair styles
- For colored hair, avoid roots showing
- Avoid extreme fashion styles and colors
- Pull your hair back if longer than shoulder length
- Always wear makeup – at least light eye makeup and lipstick, gloss or color
- Keep makeup subtle and blended
- Keep fingernails short to medium length
- Avoid too bright nail polish colors (fuchsia, orange, neon)
- Avoid chipped nails
- Avoid dark lingerie with light clothing
- Avoid high split in skirt
- Avoid slip showing below hemline or between split in skirt
- Avoid heavy fragrance
- Keep clothes clean and well-pressed (no rips, stains or discolorations)
- Replace missing buttons missing or mend falling hems
- Remove stitching on backs of new skirts and blazers to open vent
- Cover all visible tattoos with makeup or clothing

Jacket/Blazer

- Does not wrinkle across the back or under the collar
- Buttons easily
- Does not pull across the back

Blouse/Top

- Buttons remain closed with at least one inch of fabric 1" on side of the bust-line
- Longer than the hip bone
- Neckline 2" above the cleavage
- No revealing neckline front or back
- No tight tops or sweaters
- Cardigan style should be able to button or zip comfortably

- No see-through or bare midriff

Skirt/Dress

- Pleats should not pull open
- No crease or pull across break of leg
- Skirt should easily turn around your body
- Straight skirts should hang from buttocks in a straight line and not curve under
- Not shorter than around the knee
- Loose enough for two fingers to be inserted in waistband
- No high slit
- No visible lines underneath
- No slip showing below hemline or between slit

Pants

- Pleats remain closed
- Zippers and closings must lie flat
- Long enough to break in front
- Do not wrinkle across the front
- Fall straight from buttocks; panty line must not show
- Waistband loose enough to allow two fingers to be inserted
- Worn with jacket for a professional look
- No shorts, dark jeans or leggings

Shoes & Hose

- Select neutral shades or colors
- No sandals or "strappy" shoes
- Avoid too high or narrow heels
- Keep heels in good condition and shiny shoes polished
- Avoid shoes that make noise, no clogs or flip-flops
- Hose color does not bring attention to leg area, no colored hose (red, blue, etc.)
- Hose color is nude, same shade as shoes or lighter, never darker
- Avoid patterned or textured hose
- No hose runs, snags or bagginess

Jewelry

- Small to medium earrings, simple styles
- Avoid dangling or large hooped earrings and noisy jewelry or pieces that move
- Avoid too many pieces
- No tinted glasses

Professional Appearance Checklist for Men

This checklist is a guideline, not a requirement, for competing at convention. We thought some basic reminders would be helpful for all of our contestants to be as professional as possible. Please refer to the Convention Guidelines Apparel section in the handouts for our convention apparel expectations.

Before you leave for work or a social engagement, examine with your best friend – a full-length mirror – the details of your appearance and overall picture you present from head to toe. Make the necessary changes, add or remove accessories, and be sure your appearance and grooming are impeccable. This daily exercise will take just a few minutes, but the confidence of being well dressed will be worth it. If you can check all the points, you are ready to face the world!

Basics

- Short and clean hair; should not touch shirt collar
- Hair in nose and ears are trimmed
- Avoid excessive gels, lotions and heavy fragrance
- Avoid facial ornaments
- Clothes are clean and well-pressed
- There are no buttons missing or falling hems
- Nothing is torn, stained, or discolored

Dress Shirt

- No wrinkles in collar, cuffs or facing
- Collar loose enough for one finger to fit in neckline
- Collar of shirt stands one-fourth to one-half inches above collar of suit
- Sleeve extends one-eighth to one-fourth inches below the jacket
- No short sleeves with suit jackets

Business Casual Shirt

- No wrinkles in collar, cuffs or facing, well-pressed
- If buttoned, leave only first button opened
- Short sleeves at elbow
- Keep colors and patterns subtle

Jacket

- Does not wrinkle across the back
- Length must cover buttocks – measure from collar seam to floor and divide it in half for length
- Collar lies flat against the shirt
- Sleeve length at wrist bone
- Top-stitching is even, no loose threads
- Leather or metal buttons on sport coat only

Tie

- Ends at top of the belt line
- Width matched to lapel width
- Pattern small to medium
- No tie tack or clip
- Tie not is balanced with shirt collar
- Four-in-hand knot with most collars

Pants

- Just breaking in the front, well-pressed
- If uncuffed, tapered toward the back
- Fall straight from buttocks
- Fit above stomach
- Pockets remain flat, no bulging

Shoes

- Highly polished (if leather)
- Oxfords and suede must be cleaned
- Dark color: black, cordovan or brown
- Thin or medium soles
- Tie or slip-on and tassel loafers for suits and sport coats
- Penny loafers or loafers with low vamp for business casual only
- Avoid boots, sandals or clogs

Socks

- Always wear socks
- Color blends with pants and shoes
- Subtle patterns that resemble solid from a distance
- Argyles for business casual only
- Long enough to cover calf; no skin showing

Jewelry

- No bracelets, chains, fancy rings or earrings
- No heavy sport watches or calculators
- Simple and elegant are best choices
- Gold, silver or leather strap
- Silver-toned cuff links with silver watch; gold toned with gold watch
- Simple, classic leather belt design
- No large or ornate belt buckles
- Belt color matches shoes and in good condition

Resource: www.professionalimagedress.com