

Title:

Creating The Right Corporate Casual Wardrobe

Word Count:

850

Summary:

It has been a long time since casual clothes crept their way into the corporate world, with what fashion experts call corporate casual wear and the inception of casual Fridays at the workplace. And yet, a great many people are still stumped when it comes to wearing the appropriate casual clothes to the office.

Keywords:

corporate casual clothing

Article Body:

What is Not Corporate Casual?

There are casual clothes and there are corporate casual garments. Not all casual clothes can be worn to the office as part of a corporate casual dress code, even on casual Fridays. What anyone should remember when dressing for the office is that even on casual Fridays, one should look like a professional, a person with authority and a person who can be trusted to do the job well.

What does not count as corporate casual? Sneakers and sweatpants have no place in a corporate casual wardrobe. They are casual and very comfortable to wear, indeed, but they are too laidback to be worn to the office.

Counting jeans as a corporate casual garment depends on the dress code of the particular office. Some offices allow their employees to wear jeans while some do not. Some, however, do let their people wear them on casual Fridays.

Garments that are too tight, too short and too revealing should not be worn to the office either. So, very short mini-dresses, very short miniskirts and short pants cannot be counted as corporate casual garments. Tube tops, halter tops, spaghetti-strapped blouses and any top made out of sheer, see-through fabric cannot be worn to the office either, unless one has a jacket, a blazer or a cardigan to wear over the blouse.

Wearing flip-flops to the office should also be avoided, even on casual Fridays. It is acceptable to wear flip-flops at home, when going to the mall or when

going to the beach, but not when going to the office. It is far too laid-back and emits the wrong vibes at the office.

T-shirts and polo shirts are staples of casual Fridays, but even those have limits. One should avoid wearing faded T-shirts or T-shirts with big logos on the front to the office. They look too unprofessional.

Building a Corporate Casual Wardrobe

When shopping for garments that will be used for corporate casual or casual Friday outfits, the shopper should make her choice just the way she would when she is considering career outfits. Even if they are casual clothes, they should still show her as a competent, professional person who knows what to do and can be trusted to do what needs to be done.

For the sake of practicality, one should buy corporate casual clothes in the five basic colors that can be mixed and matched together. For those who do not know, the five basic colors used in corporate attire are navy blue, maroon, dark green, brown and black. One does not need to have a lot of corporate casual clothes as long as what she has are of good quality and can be mixed and matched.

Some staple garments in corporate casual attire are:

- * T-shirts or polo shirts. They can be plain or patterned. They can have subdued or bright colors. They could be of any style or sleeve length. The important thing about choosing the right T-shirt as part of a corporate casual get-up is that it does not have loud, attention-getting logos or messages, and that it does not have a hem that is short enough to bare the waist or bellybutton.

- * Jeans. Jeans are the ultimate in casual comfort and style. Bootleg cuts are the best because they never go out of style. One should check first if it is acceptable to wear jeans in the office.

- * Dresses. Some dresses are nice and fresh to wear at the office. However, if one is to wear a dress for casual Fridays, one should choose a dress that has sleeves, does not have a low neckline, is not made of sheer fabric, and has a hemline that is around an inch or two above the knee and not another inch more. If the dress is sleeveless, it should be paired with a flattering jacket or cardigan.

As for shoes, sneakers and flip-flops should be avoided at all costs. Flat

shoes or low-heeled shoes are great casual Friday footwear.

Accessorizing a Corporate Casual Outfit

The accessories one wears as part of corporate casual dressing or as part of a casual Friday outfit should match the intended overall look. For example, a sporty watch may look better with a casual Friday outfit rather than a dress watch. Sparkly baubles and expensive, eye-catching jewelry should also be worn minimally or left out totally.

Taking Care of Casual Clothes

It is natural to take care of career outfits because they are the clothes worn to work. But casual clothes need the proper care and maintenance as well. Shirts, jeans and other garments that are meant to be part of a corporate casual or casual Fridays get-up should be clean, mended and ironed properly before they are worn to work. Shoes should be clean; if they are made of leather, they should be given a polish.

Corporate casual clothes and casual Friday outfits may be a little more laidback than the usual career garments. Nonetheless, even when one is wearing casual clothes to work, one should still maintain a look that bespeaks of professionalism, capability and trust.