Proper Wedding Attire

People see weddings as an opportunity to dress up and look their very best. Guests' clothing should be appropriate to an occasion that is, at its heart, a serious ceremony and also often one that takes place in a house of worship.

Suitable for the Occasion

The wedding invitation and the time of the wedding will be your best guide to its formality. Other factors will influence your dress choice:

- The nature of the service: Is it secular or religious? Does the religion or the culture of the bridal couple require head coverings? Would bare shoulders and arms or open-toed shoes be offensive?
- Local custom: some parts of the country are more conservative than others.

Formal

Daytime

Evening

*Women**

Cocktail or dressy afternoon dress.

Depending on local customs, long evening dress or dressy cocktail dress; gloves optional.

Men

Dark suit; conservative shirt and tie.

Tuxedo (required if invitation states “Black tie”) or dark suit.

Semiformal

Daytime

Evening

*Women**

Dressy afternoon dress, suit or pantsuit.

Cocktail dress, dressy pantsuit.

Men

Dark suit; Blazer, grey flannels, tie.

Dark suit.

Informal

Daytime

Evening

*Women**

Afternoon dress; dressy skirt or pants and blouse.

Afternoon or cocktail dress.

Men

Sports jacket or blazer, slacks, tie (optional).

Blazer, grey flannel or slacks, tie optional.

*Hats or head coverings optional (unless required).

Guest Fashion Faux Pas

- Clothing that’s too skimpy or overtly provocative.
- Costumes, except when you’ve been expressly asked to dress to the wedding theme.
- Blue jeans and T-shirts.
- Any jewelry that calls attention to your own faith when attending a service of another faith.
- Baseball or sports caps; large fashion hats that block other guests’ view of the ceremony.
- Casual shoes or boots with formal or semiformal outfits.
- Sunglasses worn indoors (except for a legitimate medical reason).
- Boutonnieres or corsages unless supplied by the hosts.