

Style Rules for Men

Discover 20 guidelines males should follow to look their best at work and play

By Tina Koenig

Men do not have as many fashion choices as women. So that is why good styling for them is crucial.

Fashion trends may change with each season, like suit cuts, lapel widths or tie designs. A sense of style is individual, but certain rules for appearing stylish remain timeless. A man's garment choices should express his personality and taste, while considering proportion and camouflaging any flaws. Since you're probably the designated stylist in the family, you may have to show him the way through the shopping maze for clothes and accessories. Slip him these tips and his wardrobe will match his good looks:

1) Don't shop alone

Whether it's you, his mother, or sister, a second set of eyes provides a critical review and makes any shopping experience more enjoyable.

2) Buy a well-made suit

Basic business suits are made of worsted lightweight wool of varied grades. To avoid cheap, wrinkle-prone material give the fabric a squeeze. If it bounces back with little to no wrinkling you'll know it is well-made.

3) Get fit

Clothes must fit closely and comfortably to look one's best. Creases in a jacket's shoulders signal a poor fit. When buttoned, a hand should fit snugly under the jacket's lapel. Sleeves should hit where the base of the thumb meets the wrist. Knuckles should be even with the bottom hem.

4) Own a dress shirt

The mark of a dress shirt is collar stays—those pointed plastic or metal strips hidden under the collar that keep it from curling. Choose the correct neck size by slipping the index and middle fingers side-by-side snugly between the collar and neck.

5) Tie the knot

A tie should touch just above the waistband of trousers. The knot should sit high and snugly under the collar. Tie clips should hit at the middle of the sternum.

6) Blaze a trail

Blazers are a slimming silhouette for men and may hide flaws like belly fat and love handles. A classic blazer works with T-shirts, jeans and dress-down days at work.

7) Made in the shade

For outdoor activities, doctors suggest wraparound sunglasses that block harmful rays. For daily wear, find a style that compliments the shape of the face.

8) Suiting up for summer

Lined, boxer-length trunks are the rule of thumb. Styles should have a snug elastic or drawstring waist that prevents sagging. Pockets are a plus for holding vacation items like hotel room keys.

9) Tank tops

Tank tops should be worn as undershirts or during weight-lifting only.

10) Sole survival

Males only need a handful of shoes to take them from workday to weekend. Think thin soles for the office and thicker, spongy soles for play. Depending on the work environment, a pair of loafers or black Oxfords with a slightly rounded toe are perfect and also work for semi-formal events when polished shiny. On weekends, a less structured shoe is acceptable.

11) Athletic shoes and boots

Athletic shoes and trainers are a must for active men who exercise and enjoy outdoor sports. When hiking or trekking through rugged terrain, boots provide support and help to prevent foot and leg injuries.

12) Brief encounters

Men need to guard their goods and be comfortable. Boxer briefs are sexy and keep everything in place. Black, grey and navy are a classic alternative to keeping whites bright.

13) Don't overdo jewelry

Professional men are advised to keep jewelry simple: a dressy watch, wedding band and ID bracelet. A single earring might be the limit.

14) What is the perfect hairstyle?

Men need a look suitable for work and also fit in at a club. Other considerations are maintenance costs such as styling products and regular cuts (recommended every four weeks) to keep hair looking well-groomed.

15) Sherlock Combs: The Mystery of the Missing Hair

Bald is a popular look but some men want to fight nature. Consult a doctor about hair care products and medications that ward off thinning hair.

16) To shave or not?

Many men are rocking beards these days. Whether he chooses a manicured five o'clock shadow or goatee, neatness counts. Shaving equipment today makes this easy. If he can't maintain a beard, it's time to shave it off.

17) Odor control

He's worked hard to look good, don't spoil it with body odor. Choose unscented deodorants and antiperspirants that don't buildup on skin or clog pores. Strong cologne is not appropriate in the workplace.

18) Skin in the game

Men with skin conditions don't have the option of hiding flaws with makeup. Consult a medical professional about products to reduce acne breakouts and conditions like dandruff or flaky skin. Moisturizers with sunscreen, face washes and other skincare for men are available today.

19) Maximize height, minimize weight

Men don't need heeled boots to look tall. To look taller and slimmer simply wear dark clothes in matching shades. For added inches, choose a hairstyle that is cropped on the sides and fuller on top and practice good posture.

20) Cultivate Your Look

Updating a look every few years, from stylish clothing items to a new hairstyle, is worth the investment.

You might want to show him how to sew on a button or iron a shirt. That will keep his wardrobe in good shape and your relationship in good standing.