

# MONEY MATTERS

There's no need to break the bank for clothes to wear to an interview.

## ASK THE EXPERTS

Many retailers have people on staff who help dress customers for free. "This is definitely worth looking into when picking stores," said menswear fashion expert Tom Julian. Tell them you're heading to a job interview, give them a sense of what you can spend and they will do the rest.

## LOOK FOR PERKS

Find programs that exclusively target the military or offer money-saving perks that apply to everyone:

■ JCPenney's "Welcome Heroes" program partners with Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America to outfit returning troops with \$200 certificates for certain brands. Visit [therucksack.org](http://therucksack.org) before Nov. 20 to register.

■ Men's Wearhouse promises that you won't pay a dime to look perfectly pressed. Their suits, sport-coats and trousers come with free lifetime pressing.

■ For women looking for a professional makeup update, cosmetic counters at stores such as Macy's and Sephora will give you a new look free. Most require appointments, so call ahead.

## SHOP FOR BARGAINS

### OFF-PRICE RETAILERS:

T.J. Maxx and Marshalls are solid options, for example. Also: K&G Superstore, which features discontinued items, is usually packed with suits and separates for men and women.

**BRAND OUTLETS:** Banana Republic, Brooks Brothers and Ralph Lauren, to name a few, have them.

**STORE OUTLETS:** Nordstrom Rack often carries sale merchandise from its flagship stores. Last Call by Neiman-Marcus and Off 5th Saks Fifth Avenue have discounted designer lines for men and women.

**STORE BRANDS:** Many department stores carry exclusive brands — Kohl's has Marc Anthony and Chaps — that offer value for job hunters. Others have their own lines. Nordstrom's Smartcare dress shirts have a magic finish that keeps them from wrinkling. L.L.Bean's pinpoint oxford shirts for women can be machine-washed.

**DEPARTMENT STORES:** You'd have to work hard to pay full price at any store these days, with sales, promotions, in-store coupons, store credit account discounts and cash-back deals.

**ALTERNATIVES:** You can score interview clothing from consignment, resale and thrift stores. Prices make the hunt worthwhile.

**ONLINE:** Go to your favorite website and you'll likely find the same discount offers — and often, free shipping.

[croleyt@stripes.osd.mil](mailto:croleyt@stripes.osd.mil)  
Twitter: @tbcroley

# DRESS THE PART

OK, we get it. You've had more on your mind than choosing between checks and stripes on a dress shirt: war, the enemy, getting home alive.

But those days are over, and it's time to turn your attention to getting hired. The basics for most any interview include a blazer, well-pressed shirt, a tie and dress pants, said Tom Julian, trend expert and author of "Nordstrom Guide to Men's Style." If you're looking to stand out, choose a suit. "It's the uniform to impress, express and define your stature, ability and professionalism," he said. The keys to interviewing in style are quality, proper fit and a modern look — "a mix of George Clooney meets Tom Brady." Here is more advice from Julian, with veterans in mind:

## DRESS SHIRTS IN STRIPES

"Look for a fitted or tapered cotton check or stripe dress shirt. Base colors include white, powder blue or soft pink."



Not sure about your knot? Go to: <http://bit.ly/ckpY1s>

## NO MILITARY WATCHES

"Keep it simple. Invest in a classic silver tank style watch from Timex to Fossil." KIA bracelets and survivor bands? "Only a wedding band and/or watch is acceptable."



## FLAT-FRONT PANTS

"Choose flat-front trousers, in casual cotton as well as wool." It's a simple, modern style, and most men are comfortable in chinos. Ditch the triple pleats.



## DRESS BELT, PLEASE



## LACE-UP SHOES

"Vibram or rubber soles are still acceptable and help for comfort." No loafers and no more square toes.



BY TINA CROLEY/ Stars and Stripes

Photos courtesy of Kohl's, Nordstrom, Banana Republic and Brooks Brothers. Tom Julian's book is available through Amazon.com.



←←←←← THE MODERN CLASSIC LOOK: Suit separates that fit athletic builds, a tie, a solid-color shirt and lace-up shoes.

"The benefit of being fit and in shape? That men can now buy suit separates that allow for ease of fit as well as enhancement of shape. From Banana Republic to Kohl's, from designers like Calvin Klein to Michael Kors, separates are the way to go."

THE LOOK THAT WORKS FOR A LESS FORMAL INTERVIEW: >>>>>>> Two-button blazer, shirt, chinos, no tie. "You can't go wrong. It shows you're put together." If you feel overdressed? "Take off your jacket and put it on the back of your chair." Find out what's appropriate for the industry in which you are interviewing.



## JUST FOR WOMEN

Trading in the fatigues for the freedom of fashion, you should embrace the opportunity to express your femininity, but for a job interview keep the overall look "clean, crisp and simple," according to Celia Strauss, a consultant on employment issues for veterans organizations, including the women-focused Fatigues to Fabulous. (@F2B, [www.fatiguestofabulous.com](http://www.fatiguestofabulous.com))

### DO:

- Wear low-heeled, closed-toe shoes.
- Wear minimal makeup and jewelry.
- Keep the hairstyle you wore in the military; it's a professional look.
- Take out facial or multiple ear piercings.
- Have a little fun with it. A scarf or a brooch is a low-key way to show off your personality.

### DON'T:

- Wear perfume.
- Bring a backpack or casual tote. A tailored handbag is more professional.
- Wear flashy colors. Stick to navy, black, white and other neutrals.
- Show off cleavage or too much leg; no revealing tops and no short skirts.