

Building a Work Wardrobe (On a Budget)

1. *At first, aim for professional -- not stylish.*

When first building your work wardrobe, your aim is to have a small, solid collection of professional clothes that you can wear regularly. To that end, avoid trendy styles, eye-catching colors, or statement pieces when first building your wardrobe -- they'll draw too much attention and be old news before you know it!

Stick with classic styles that will stand the test of time... and won't draw attention to the fact that you have a limited wardrobe.

2. *Pick a few main colors -- and stick with them!*

Build a versatile, mix-and-match wardrobe that will last by choosing two neutral colors to form the foundation of your wardrobe -- classics include black, navy, brown, grey, and khaki. (Pro-tip: Dark colors last longer.)

Supplement with shirts, sweaters, and blazers in relatively neutral colors (with no pattern or subtle patterns) that will match both.

3. *Purchase responsibly.*

Know what you need and what's it's reasonable to pay. Some pieces -- such as your first interview suit and your first few pairs of work slacks -- you'll probably end up buying at full-price.

But whenever possible, buy at a bargain! Keep an eye out for sales, shop at stores like Marshalls, and don't be afraid to hit up thrift stores!

4. *Add color and personality as you go along!*

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