

Party Time

This is the time of the year when we have the pleasure to attend to many functions. It is the great joy of life to celebrate events such as prize giving's, end of the year award ceremonies, end of the year banquets and being the most popular time for weddings- a wedding!

This may also be stressful for you- And don't feel alone, as I like you know only too well... you will open your cupboard of clothing with a sigh and say "I have nothing to wear!"

Where to start

My best advice to you is to always have a 'go anywhere' stand by outfit in your wardrobe- this could be a beautiful tailored black suit, a beautiful calf length dress or wonderful full velvet skirt- these items never date and may be updated by adding a beautiful wrap or pashmina, a silk blouse and wonderful accessories, that do not necessarily have to be expensive and ...viola!

Best advice

My mother always gave me this advice - that a plain dress can be made remarkable if you have an excellent hair cut, your make up is carefully applied, you are wearing impeccable shoes and have spent the time to do a beautiful manicure- this is what makes the women stand out- not the dress but the woman!

The invitation

Your host is the person requesting your presence....and will therefore have the privilege of selecting the dress code for the event- and out of respect for your host, and the atmosphere of the celebration or event we need to dress accordingly!

What to wear

If terms like **formal wear**, **black tie optional**, or **fancy dress** are confusing because you don't attend such functions regularly, you might wonder what's appropriate.

You want to show appropriate respect for the occasion and/or the person being honored, AND you want to look good. Or if you'll be attending an event that puts you in the spotlight or impacts your career, like speaking for a group or attending a charity ball or a red carpet event, you simply can't afford to get it wrong.

So what should you wear?

Obviously, it depends on the event. Formal occasions call for *formal wear*. It's these little nuances that can make all the difference in getting things right. If you rarely attend such functions and these kinds of events pull you completely out of your comfort zone, you may be stressing over what's appropriate.

Casual occasions call for *casual wear*. But... you do need to consider for e.g.

- Is a wedding on the beach considered formal -- or casual?
- How about going for cocktails with co-workers -- or attending a cocktail party at the boss's house?
- What should you wear to the opera, is it different for opening night?

Dressing For a Formal Occasion

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gloves! But since the liberation of women, fashion changed. Nowadays your choice of dress will depend on your dress personality. 'Formal' wear includes traditional wear, a formal pants suit, and on occasion, gloves and shoes with hose. What a woman wears is her choice, but it should complement the formality of her partner's dress code.

Tip: A small clutch or evening bag is a must. It adds the finishing touch to the formality of an outfit!

Black Tie

A black tie event is a smart and formal occasion where a man's correct dress is imperative. It sets the tone of the formality, where he is expected to wear a tuxedo, formal black suit, military or government uniform. Traditional wear may be worn only if it is clearly indicated as a choice on the invitation.

'Formal Dress'

A man's outfit sets the tone of formality – formal means a dark suit, long sleeved lounge shirt and a tie – or a uniform, if appropriate.

Cocktail-

A cocktail function is usually 'formal', depending on the type of venue – an indoor function is usually more formal than outdoors. The invitation should indicate the level of formality....but the man should however always wear a lounge shirt and formal longs. Less Formal Functions.

A semi formal

The dress code calls for a man to wear a jacket or blazer instead of a suit – but will include longs and a long sleeved lounge shirt, with a tie or cravat. A woman should dress appropriately for the type of function, time of day and atmosphere.

Informal dress

It is important that the type of event be taken into consideration – you would wear a different outfit for day at rugby than a product launch. The same dress code rules go if you are invited to a 'casual' function.

In all cases when invited to attend any function or event at a public place, a man should wear longs. A woman, in all instances, looks better rather over dressed than under.

Tea Parties

High teas have become fashionable once again where women are encouraged to dress up in their finery and embrace the joy of being a woman.

Last word

With the world becoming smaller and smaller, because of increased technology and state of the art transportation, inter-cultural behavior has become part of an international 'code of etiquette.' When East meets west, although certain traditions are still inherent, the world players all adhere to a certain guideline of good manners and etiquette. And although we have become a lot more casual and dress codes have become more relaxed, and we no longer wear hats and gloves ... this is about the occasions in where we celebrate life- so why not make this special- dress up rather than down,,, and be the best you can be until e time!

Thought of the month

"The well-dressed man is he whose clothes you never notice.

--W. Somerset Maugham

Quote

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Ivy Welgemoed – my mother

