

Add Layers to Copy, Not Wardrobe

Clothes and accessories to wear at auditions

Your clothes don't audition, you do. But what you wear can help auditors better visualize you in the role.

For those who don't know you, you *are* what you wear. Auditors will see you as the person you present yourself to be. So, help the auditors along. If you're wearing a white lab coat with a stethoscope wrapped around your neck, you're a doctor. If you're wearing a suit and tie, you're as a businessman. If your hair is up and you're wearing white pearls around your neck with an upscale dress, chances are you're auditioning for something more formal.

No one knows what you really are or how you really dress. Nor does anyone really care. You may look out of character to your friends, but your auditors don't know how you dress in everyday life. So, help them see you as what you want them to see.

Dress the part so they can visualize you in the role. Don't make them think or visualize too much on their own. Why make them go the extra step? Chances are others will be dressed to look like the character in some way and so should you be. Blue color roles warrant a blue color dress code, a.k.a. jeans and flannel shirt.

However, never be deceived into thinking that if you look more like the part than any other, you'll get it. The audition will always be *about you* first and foremost.

Without acting skills, looking the part is meaningless. You have to be able to act and bring the character to life—and that comes from within you. If your read were not believable, whom would you take? I'd take the better actor who may not look the part as much as the next person and leave the magic to wardrobe and makeup.

The better actor will waste less time and be able to adjust to direction more easily, too. What you as an actor bring to the copy will always be more important than what you wear or how you look. So, don't be a nut and

overdo it. Audition wardrobe should be a hint to the auditor that you are what they are looking for, but you got to back it up.

The same rule holds true for accessories, jewelry and makeup. They care more about your acting ability, so easy does it on the cleavage, makeup, shirt design, or anything else that steals focus. Here's the rule: *Add more layers to your copy than your wardrobe.*

Here are a few general points to remember:

- **Don't Distract.** The focus is on you, your eyes and face. Don't wear busy or distracting logos or designs in the audition. It'll steal focus.
- **Wear Solid Colors That Pop.** Much of the time, colors show up differently on camera than they do in person. You're safe usually for commercials with warm, friendly colors like blues and greens. If the colors are rich and winter quality, they will pop on screen. Blacks and whites can blend into the backdrop. Reds and oranges are more fiery colors, so not as warm and friendly.
- **Callback Clothes.** If it was good enough to get the callback, it's good enough to get the booking. Wear *exactly* the same outfit you wore on the first audition. The second audition will be a first viewing for producers or directors to see you. If the Casting Director liked what they saw, chances are you look right for the second meeting.
- **Hint.** If you're auditioning for the Tin Man in "Oz," don't show up in head-to-toe armor. We're prodding them—not scaring them.
- **Jewelry and Makeup.** Like clothes, if it distracts from your face, don't do it. Diamond studs or no earrings at all are the rule. No big hoops, no heavy necklaces. Take out the nose ring and hide the tattoos (unless appropriate for the role). Light makeup.

On-camera auditions will always be about the actor and what the actor personally brings to the character. If you are dressed perfectly and don't have the training, most likely the actor that can bring more realism to the role will be given stronger consideration.

If you are a great actor and can bring layers of subtext and tone to your audition, even if minimally dressed, that's nice. Clothes are an aid, not the main attraction. So, help yourself and dress the part as best you can without making the audition about the clothes or accessories.

When the audition is over, put the nose ring back in and enjoy your life.