



 Marla Tomazin

Marla's Style File

From Work to “Wow!”: Six Simple Ways to Turn Office Clothing into Evening Wear

By Marla Tomazin

It's a moment that every busy woman has experienced: It's 7:00 a.m., and you're standing in front of your closet at a loss for what to wear because you have a fancy event to attend after work—and you won't be able to come home and change.

I know that busy women want to look great for all occasions—but I also know that too often they don't have time to fuss, and want to keep things simple. Here's the good news: transitioning from the workplace to an evening event doesn't have to be as challenging as you think. Here are some simple tips that will help make the transition headache-free.

Stay classy (and classic!) in basic black. Let flattering, stylish black work for you! It's simple to wear a black suit to the office and then slip into a lacy camisole or great white shirt when 5:00 hits. You can even wear a sexy top to work (under your suit jacket, of course!) and simply shed your top layer for the evening.

Amp up your accessories. Depending on how dressy your event is, bring along some dangly earrings and a chic bracelet, for example, to liven up your outfit. Pearls are another option depending on the outfit you have chosen. Choose a pair that is a substantial statement at the ear or a style with length depending on your hairstyle. Eye-catching jewelry can serve as a focal point that takes an outfit from basic to brilliant!

Pull a Cinderella. ...by wearing unforgettable shoes! A pair of sassy peep-toe pumps or sophisticated strappy heels can instantly make your look evening-appropriate. Don't shy away from shiny, either: metallics are naturally elegant, and they coordinate with most colors.

Bring a brilliant bag. Don't forget to tuck your favorite evening bag into your briefcase. Clutches in particular lend an elegantly classic aura and convey an utterly feminine air. To make a subtle statement with a black outfit and shoes, carry a black leather or silk clutch. For more drama, choose an accent color like red or a metallic.

Wake up your make-up. A quick touch-up at your desk can make a world of difference. Use an under-eye highlighter to freshen your face and bring a dash of drama to your look with additional mascara and fresh eyeliner. Don't forget to use an eye brightener to take the red out of your eyes after working at the office. Alternatively, you can make your lips pop with bright or dark lipstick. But choose one or the other: bright lips *and* dramatic eyes can be too much when done together.

Let your hair down. They say that a woman's hair is her crowning glory, so work it! Let your locks fall softly around your face or pull them into an elegant French twist if length allows.

What *not* to wear to work!

While you might be tempted to incorporate as much of your eveningwear into your work outfit as possible, avoid the following looks in the office—no matter how great they are for going out!

- Short or tight skirts and dresses—Keep the fit and length of your dresses and skirts work-appropriate at all times. You don't want to send the wrong message!
- Sequin and jeweled clothing—Any type of bejeweled item is distracting and makes you look more into clubbing than climbing the corporate ladder.
- Lacy or fishnet stockings—Again, this trend is too sexy for nine-to-five. Keep stocking choices classic and simple and trade them out after hours if you must.
- Low-cut, revealing necklines—Keep the necklines of tops conservative. You want coworkers and clients to pay attention to what you are saying, not what you are revealing.
- Bare legs—In most offices, bare legs are simply too casual for the dress code. If you want to let your legs go bare for a night out, you can always stash your stockings in your purse when you leave!
- Rhinestones or flashy jewelry—Flashy jewelry can be a distraction in the workplace, even if it makes a great statement for going out. Keep your flashier accessories in your purse and trade your studs for more sparkly items later.
- Strappy sandals or evening shoes—It's hard for clients and coworkers to take you seriously when you are sporting a pair of sky-high stilettos or peep-toe pumps that scream "party" instead of "professional."

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About Marla Tomazin:

Marla Tomazin, Certified Image Consultant, established her image consulting business in 1990 with the goal of helping clients identify an authentic image and develop its effective expression. Through her successful career in the fashion and retail industries, Marla has gained invaluable expertise in retail buying, merchandising, sales, and marketing. She began with May Company in Denver after earning a B.S. in Marketing from the University of Denver. Marla moved to New York where she worked with several well-known Seventh Avenue design firms. As she developed her business skills, Marla made a serendipitous discovery—an innate sense of style and facility for working with fabrics and colors to maximum advantage.

The progression to Certified Image Consultant was a natural transition. Marla utilizes her abilities in evaluating body shape, movement, and coloring as well as synthesizing optimal cuts, lines, colors, and textures. This results in balance and proportion that accentuate attributes and conceal flaws. Her clients include women, men, and corporations seeking external revitalization that mirrors their internal development.

She has lectured at The Learning Annex on "How to Become an Image Consultant" and at The American Women's Economic Development Corporation on "What Does Your Image Say About You?"

For more information, please visit www.marlatomazin.com.