

Dress to impress

By Rick Moorman

Because of this column, I get a lot of questions, especially about clothing maintenance, which I find difficult considering the fact that I obviously advise people about style with the ambition of sales in mind. Maintenance enhances the lifespan of clothing, and if I start telling people how to make their business attire last longer, it creates a conflict of interest.

However, a few tips would be a nice thing to share and sharing would give me a good feeling.

Let's talk about the wrinkles. Always take your jacket off in the car, or your body heat will press wrinkles into the back. Use a pant hanger for your trousers to preserve the creases, and be aware that you can re-iron creases by using a moist press exactly between the seams. If you want sharp creases, you can rub dry soap into the inside of the leg. Men in the service used to do this with candle wax, but I advise against that. Do not press your pants overnight. Your suit was made from natural products and needs to 'breathe,'

so air it out regularly. It will increase life expectancy and keep the suit feeling fresh.

Make sure you sufficiently alternate your suits: wearing the same one for more than one day is hardly beneficial. Get suits steamed at least twice a season and be sure to choose a dry cleaner who will be careful with your expensive suits and pay special attention to the pressing.

Your tie also deserves some care. Make sure you always untie the knot and hang it up. If it gets wrinkled, try rolling it up tightly for a night and then hanging it up. As a rule, your tie should not be washed or ironed, but if it has to happen, you have two options. You can roll it up and put it in an empty jam pot with some benzene and shake it several times, which should remove any grease stains but means you will definitely have to air the tie out. Or, you can let it soak in warm, soapy water and lay it out to dry.

With this method, you need to use pins to secure the lining, or the tie you end up will not be the tie you bought. You can iron it, but at a low temperature and with a cloth between the iron and the tie. Many of the best ties are silk, which, unfortunately, absorbs. Make sure you air it out often.

As far as smaller tips go, be sure to always take the stiffener out of your shirt before you wash it to keep the collar straight, and always wash clothes inside out. When you sit down, lift your trouser legs a little. It limits tension and wrinkles. Even if your suit has a lot of pockets, use them sparingly and do not overload them.

I hope this is helpful, and I hope you'll let me know.

Rick Moorman