

CHECKLIST: HOW TO BUY YOUR FIRST SUIT

_____ **Step 1: Measure Yourself**

_____ Write down the following, to the nearest 1/4"

Neck size _____

Shoulder width _____

Chest circumference (widest point) _____

Sleeve length _____

Waist size _____

Inseam _____

Note: If you are buying bespoke clothing, you may want a more detailed [measurement guide like A Tailored Suit's](#).

_____ **Step 2: Identify the Kind of Suit You Want**

_____ Select a basic, business-dress color:

- o Charcoal gray (most versatile)
- o Navy blue (appropriate but a touch more unique)
- o Black (harder to match and less versatile, but very formal)
- o Medium gray (not appropriate for highest levels of business formality)
- o Dark brown ((not appropriate for highest levels of business formality)

_____ Select a business-appropriate pattern:

- o Solid (most common)
- o Pinstripe (thin white stripes only)
- o Visible texture (herringbone, birdseye, etc. — less formal than plain solid)

_____ Select a style of jacket

- o Single-breasted, two button (most common and simplest)
- o Single-breasted, three button (good for tall men)
- o Double-breasted (elegant but less versatile)
- o Three-piece (single-breasted with matching waistcoat)

_____ Select a fabric

- o Basic worsted or flannel wool (fineness in the 70-100 range, if listed)
- o Superfine wool (100+ fineness)
- o Textured weaves (tweeds, birdseye, barleycorn, etc. — more casual)
- o Cotton twill (affordable but less flattering than wool)
- o Linen (lightweight and prone to wrinkling; meant for summer wear)

Combined, these four things give you a very specific target for shopping. Ask a salesperson for “a plain charcoal gray suit, single-breasted with two buttons, in worsted wool” and you’ve already eliminated 90% of most stores’ inventories.

_____ **Step 3: Choose Your Store or Stores**

_____ Identify the kind of tailoring and construction you want:

- o Bespoke (completely custom made — most expensive option)
- o Made-to-measure (a pre-made pattern sized specifically to you)
- o Ready-to-wear (pre-sized off the rack; some stores do in-house adjustments)

_____ Select a type of store:

- o Department stores (Sears, Macy’s, etc. — low prices, but limited selection/quality)
- o Menswear chains (Men’s Wearhouse, Jos. A. Banks, etc. — wider selection and better in-house service/fitting)
- o Independent boutiques (unique selections; tend to have better service and quality)
- o Bespoke tailors (custom design and construction)
- o Online (you send your measurements and payment; they ship you a suit — can require several back-and-forth shipments to get fit right)

_____ **Step 4: Go Shopping**

_____ Head to your target store or stores (see step 3)

_____ Identify the suits that fit your selected description (see step 2)

_____ Within that selection, find the suits that fit your measurements (step 1)

These are the suits you have to select from. Take your pick, and don’t be shy to ask about alterations as needed! If you can’t get exactly the suit you want, move on...there are other stores out there, and with this checklist completed, shopping is quick and easy.