

TOPIC: CLOTHES & FASHION

Sample answers, useful vocabulary and resources for IELTS speaking exam

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References to teaching and authentic materials related to this topic: IELTS blogs, podcasts, videos and articles.

1. SAMPLE ANSWERS

PART 1

1. What type of clothes do you like to wear?

- Even though I prefer casual clothes – simple and comfortable – I still try to stay **fashionable**. A pair of jeans and **a clean white shirt** can be a **perfect match** if styled appropriately. Of course, I also tend to dress up for special occasions.

2. What kind of clothes do people in your country usually wear?

- Climate definitely affects people's clothing. I live in a Northern region, so people here normally wear something **on a warmer side**. It can be a large fur **jacket** in winter or a light **trench** in spring. Underneath, we opt for a pair of good-quality trousers or a skirt and a beautifully colored shirt.

3. How important is fashion to you?

- I think fashion plays a huge role in culture. Even if I don't necessarily follow all its latest trends, I do try **to stay on top of it** to make my style more presentable.

4. What kind of clothes do you dislike?

-Well, I don't really go for too **bright colours** that are difficult to style with other pieces of clothing. I prefer my **garments** to match each other perfectly, so that I don't have to be worried about my **looks** every day.

5. Do you think people behave differently in different kinds of clothes?

-Yes, I am of the opinion that clothes can significantly change how we feel about ourselves, and consequently – our behaviour. For example, one who wears formal clothes may portray an image of being professional and confident. Wearing casual clothes, on the other hand, makes us feel and look more comfortable and relaxed.

6. What kind of clothes do people wear to work in your country?

- People usually go for smart casual or formal attire on a regular workday. Some employees have **uniforms**, and other workers are allowed to wear **random clothes** to work.

PART 2

Describe someone you know who dresses well. You should say

- **who they are**
- **how you know them**
- **what kind of clothes they wear**

and say why you like the way they dress.

Let me talk about a friend who dresses very well. Her name is Tina. She is a little bit older than me, and she is currently a professor in a prestigious university in my country. Although she is not involved the fashion industry, I find her attire quite **fashionable**. She is tall, slim and very **attractive**.

She has been my friend since high school. I get to see her from time to time as she lives in my neighborhood. We also spend time together with friends, especially on weekends.

Actually, Tina doesn't have a specific **dressing preference** or **style**. I think she bases her attire on the weather as well as on what is appropriate to wear to occasions and events she is invited to. I usually see her wearing **light colored dresses** and **high-heeled shoes** when she goes to work. She also wears **formal clothes**. Tina's choice of simple but stylish **accessories** adds to the look as well. I think she has a huge collection of clothes, shoes and bags as I rarely see her wearing the same outfit. Of course, I do notice her wearing **casual clothes** too, but they don't look **plain or boring** on her at all.

I think Tina can carry herself very well in any kind of garments. She **looks comfortable** no matter what her attire is. I like her style because she doesn't **dress extravagant** or offensive. She always looks professional and presentable.

PART 3

1. How important are clothes and fashion to you? [Why/Why not?]

Since I am sure that the first impression builds a whole image of a person in front of us for a long time, clothes they choose to wear play a huge role in determining this image (**idea**). Thus, I think that fashion is quite important in my life, because I always try to look presentable and smart, and there is nothing worse than an outdated look that doesn't match the occasion (**explain**). However, I make sure not to be too carried away when it comes to the latest crazy fashion trends – they are more suitable for celebrities (**alternative**).

2. How different are the clothes you wear now from those you wore 10 years ago?

Well, interestingly, the style of clothes has not changed much (**idea**), because I have always opted for something more formal and presentable – at school and at work (**explain**). But the fashion trends have altered significantly, and that's why my old photos from a decade ago make me laugh right now. I still prefer to wear nice dresses, high-quality shirts and skirts with high heels when I want to look smart, and skinny jeans with a clean t-shirt or a jumper for more relaxed days (**example**).

3. What do you think the clothes we wear say about us?

At times, I think the clothes we wear may show off a significant part of our personality or status (**idea**). For example, clothing may frequently give away what kind of job a person has. For others, clothes may be a tool for self-expression (**example**). I have heard many stories of people who fixed their low self-esteem by dressing bolder and more fashionable. So, the way we dress definitely speaks a lot about the way we show ourselves to the public. And the ability to correctly match one's clothing with their status or inner world can be considered a real psychological skill (**explain**).

2. KEY VOCABULARY

casual clothes/attire

informal, everyday dress

Every last Friday of the month council staff donate a pound to wear **casual clothes** to work.

fashionable

popular or in fashion at a particular time

People can spend small fortunes on themselves, go out to all the trendy places and stand around admiring themselves in their **fashionable** clothes.

dress up

to dress in smart or formal clothes

I am not really a fashionable person. But of course, I like to **dress up** for special occasions.

light fabrics

relatively low in density cloth, typically produced by weaving or knitting textile fiber

I live in the tropics, so people in my country usually wear clothes made of **light fabrics**.

pair of jeans

hard-wearing trousers made of denim for informal wear

She was wearing blue denim **pair of jeans** and a jacket.

short pants

trousers

There is nothing more comfortable than a new pair of **short pants** and a brand-new shirt.

shirt

a light piece of clothing covering the torso and arms, with buttons down the front and usual collar

Jeff had changed into a clean **shirt** and trousers.

blouse

a shirt-like article of women's cloth

For casual attire, a pair of jeans or short pants and a shirt for men or **blouse** for women are common

presentable

looking reasonably tidy and smart

As long as you're tidy, clean and **presentable**, you should be good.

untidy clothes

not arranged neatly and in order

Her whole dress was very **untidy**, looking dirty and slatternly.

eccentric clothes

strange and unconventional clothes

I dislike wearing **eccentric** clothes, they don't fit me.

formal clothes

clothes worn in accordance with rules of convention or etiquette; suitable for or constituting an official or important occasion

Students dress in rather **formal clothes** when attending a business school.

smart casual

neat, conventional, yet relatively informal in style, especially as worn to conform to a particular dress code

Think of a smart **casual** outfit as one that you'd wear for a movie or dinner date.

business/formal attire

not casual, suitable for official or important occasions clothes

Everyone must wear **business attire** for meetings at our company.

high-heeled shoes

women's shoes with tall, thin heels

A large number of Manhattan women are also reportedly trading **high-heeled shoes** for trainers.

accessories

things that can be added to something else in order to make it more useful, versatile, or

Women's **accessories**, such as scarves and purses, sell especially well, the company said.

footwear

attractive

outer coverings for the feet, such as shoes, boots, and sandals

They are the timeless sneakers: relaxed **footwear** that is effortlessly stylish.

to match

to fit the overall style or another piece of clothing in colour or other properties

Men may be seen dressed in formal, well-**matched** suits or sports coats.

plain

simply designed or decorated

Her dress was very **plain**: a straw bonnet of the best material and shape, decorated with some white ribbon.

boring

tedious, uninteresting

Overall, I find your new dress quite **boring**.

dress extravagant

to dress using a lot of clothes and accessories in a wasteful or excessive way

I like her style because her style is never **extravagant** or offensive.

apparel

clothing, when it is being sold in shops

Stores selling modern **apparel** and accessories, however, saw receipts fall 0.9 percent.

girly

appropriate to a girl or young woman

Men aren't afraid to be soft, **girly**, and foppish.

skirt

a piece of outerwear for a woman or girl that hangs from the waist

She always wore a grey **skirt** and a jacket.

to follow trend

to dress in the way that is popular among other people, or suggested by fashion designers and magazines

People **follow** fashion **trends** due to various reasons depending on their lifestyle.

outfit

a set of clothes that are worn together, especially for a specific occasion or purpose

She even bought a new **outfit** for the occasion to help make herself feel good.

hipster

a fashionable person

Moscow **hipsters** imitate Tarantino's nerdy, owl-eyed look.

polo

a close-fitting jumper with a high, turnover neck

I arrived ten minutes later and was scowled at for wearing jeans and a **polo** neck under the stipulated T-shirt.

stylish

displaying good taste, a sense of style, or the latest fashions

One science teacher tried to convince me that his suit was **stylish** and expensive.

to dress classic-sharp

to dress fashionably in a simple timeless way

There are **classic-sharp** business shirts and suits.

well-fitted

being of the right shape and size for someone

Finally, I found **well-fitted** jeans in the local store.

brightly-colored

with bright colors

I bought this because I wanted something **brightly-colored** for winter.

conservative outfit

dressing in a way that is traditional and familiar; cautious about change

Because Egypt is a Muslim country, the dress should be **conservative** and women should not wear revealing clothes.

sloppy

casual and loose-fitting

All boys here are in jeans, **sloppy** T-shirts and the usual expensive trainers.

loose shirt

not tight

It is already warm, and I am wearing shorts and a loose **shirt**.

see-through

translucent

This shirt's a bit **see-through** when it's wet, which is embarrassing.

3. WORD FORMATION

style

noun

I like almost everything in fashion and I don't limit myself to one style **only**.

stylish

adjective

She was wearing a **stylish** modern dress.

pair

noun

A **pair** of jeans and a shirt would be perfect for this occasion.

to pair

verb

The dress looked wonderful when **paired** with a long leather coat.

fit

noun

The boutique assistants will want to give you their full attention, to offer advice on the **fit**.

fitted

adjective

The blouse has a **fitted** bodice.

to fit

verb

I really liked these jeans. They **fitted** well and were extremely comfortable.

4. COLLOCATIONS

clean
dirty
dry
wet
casual
everyday
ordinary

adjective+

clothes

work
school
wedding
winter, summer

noun+

clothes

put (back) on
remove
change

verb+

clothes

full-length
long
short
tight
tight-fitting
loose-fitting
shapeless

adjective+

dress (noun)

zip (up), unzip
hitch up
lift

verb+

dress

pull up

complete
new
summer
winter
interview
party
wedding

complete
new
summer
winter
interview
party

be
look
become, remain
make stmh
consider stmh

extremely
highly
very

designer, elegant
immaculate, smart,
well-cut, best, good

adjective+

adjective+

verb+

adverb+

adjective+

dress

outfit

fashionable

fashionable

suit

5. USEFUL RESOURCES

THIS TOPIC ON IELTS BLOGS

- [IELTS Speaking Part 1: clothes \[ielts-simon.com\]](#) [IELTS Speaking Part 1: Clothes \[ieltsliz.com\]](#)
- [IELTS Clothes & Fashion Vocabulary \[ieltsspeaking.co.uk\]](#)
- [IELTS Cue Card Sample 116 - Describe your favourite item of clothing \[ielts-mentor.com\]](#)

PODCASTS

- [The 30 Days Of Discipline Podcast: Dress Your Best Everyday \[30daysofdisciplinejourney.com\]](#)
- [Podcast 77 – What Australians Wear \[slowenglish.info\]](#)

ARTICLES

- [I am a 28 year old female. How do I dress my age? \[quora.com\]](#)
- [How To Dress For Your Age | Appropriate Styles For Men Of Different Ages \[realmenrealstyle.com\]](#)

VIDEOS

- [Cameron Russel: Looks aren't everything. Believe me, I'm a model \[ted.com\]](#)
- [12 Phrasal Verbs about CLOTHES: dress up, try on, take off... \[engVid\]](#)

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