Selecting Men's Slacks and Suit Trousers
SELECTING MENS SLACKS
AND SUIT TROUSERS

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Because of their fashionable look, slacks and trousers have an important place in a man's wardrobe. The great variety in fabrics, textures, colors and patterns express individuality and originality.

TYPES OF SLACKS

Slacks can be divided into three categories—those worn for dress, for casual and for work.

Dress. Dress slacks are designed like suit trousers and have similar tailoring. Depending on the current fashion, they may or may not have front pleats, cuffs and a belt. Designed to be worn with a sports jacket, dress slacks are made of wool, man-mades or blends and usually are sold unhemmed.

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**Casual.** Slacks for casual wear have a slimmer cut and are less expensive than dress slacks. Reflecting the latest fashion trends and fads, casual slacks may or may not have pleats and cuffs. Casual slacks are always hemmed and are made of polyester, rayon, cotton or blends.

**Work.** Slacks for work are recognized by their durable construction and serviceable fabrics. They also are known for their deep and roomy pockets, extra wide center back seam for adjustments, tacked cuffs which won't unroll and rustproof zippers and snaps. Fabrics used for workwear include cotton, polyester and blends. Some work slacks have fabric finishes to repel water and oily stains.

**CORRECT SIZE**

A good fit depends upon accurate sizing at the waist and the proper leg inseam length.

Waist sizes range from 28 to 42 inches. Inseam lengths vary from 28 to 34 inches and are measured from the crotch, along the inseam of the pant leg to the desired finished length. A size 31–31 1/2 has a 31-inch waist and a 31 1/2-inch inseam.

Rise is the measurement of the trouser front from the crotch to the top of the waistband.

Less expensive slacks are pre-cuffed, but better slacks usually are sold in unfinished lengths of 35, 37, 39 and 41 inches. Cuffs require 4 inches or more.

Extra tall slacks range in waist size from 28 to 50 inches with inseams of 34, 35 and 36 inches. Big men or portly-waist sizes range from 42 to 66 inches with inseams of 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34 inches. Prices are 10 to 25 percent higher for these extra large sizes.
FIT

Proper fit is important for comfort and a well-groomed appearance.

![Diagram of pants showing waist, hip, inseam, and trouser length]

Slacks that fit well look trim and hang straight. They are full enough in the crotch, seat and thigh areas for sitting comfort. The center front crease should be on a lengthwise grain.

Judge the crotch fit by sitting down and standing up. Avoid low crotches which may seem more comfortable but can cause trousers to bag at the knee.

Slacks that fit poorly create wrinkles. Slacks that are too tight hamper body movement, and those that are too loose drape around the body to cause discomfort.

Slacks which are too short look awkward; slacks which are too long give a sloppy appearance. No matter what slack length is decreed fashionable, the pants should never scrape the ground. Slacks should hang without a break in the front. Some men like an angled hemline, a minimum of 1-inch longer in back than in front. The front should be even with the top of shoe backs. Remember that shoe heel height influences slack length.

Some men have figure problems such as a full or protruding abdomen. Trousers not fitted properly look too short or too long unless adjusted correctly. Waistlines of trousers often look best when above the bulge because shirts stay in place and the total front line looks smoother.
WORKMANSHP

Check the garment to be sure it was cut with the true grain to prevent twisting around the leg.

Seams. Check to see that all side seams have been pressed open and have finished edges. Close, even stitching (such as double stitching or felled seams) in areas of the garment receiving great strain is desirable, especially in work slacks. The crotch seam should be reinforced with tape at the point where it joins the inseam. High quality dress slacks usually do not have a pieced crotch. Look for an adequate allowance for letting out the center back inseam if necessary.

Pockets. Deep and roomy pockets should be made of a cotton twill or other sturdy pocketing fabric; check for the Sanforized stamp on pocketing. The Sanforized label tells you that shrinkage conforms to the 1 percent limit. Pocket facings should be at least 1 inch deep into the pocket and bar-tacked at both top and bottom. Pocket linings should be double-stitched for added strength. The underside of pocket openings should be faced with pants fabric so that the pocketing is never visible.

Fly. A curtain (or extra flange under the zipper) and a canvas interlining for a smooth surface are marks of better slacks. The fly is simply folded back on cheaper slacks.

Waistbands. On washable slacks, check for the Sanforized stamp on the lining to assure freedom from uncomfortable waistline cinching due to shrinkage. Waistband linings usually are cut on the bias for better fit and meet at the center back for easy alteration and sleek fit.

Fabric. All designs (stripes, plaids and checks) should match at center front, center back, side seams and pocket areas.

STYLES

Fashion plays its part in different styles; variations in silhouette, construction and fabric produce styles in line with current fashion trends.
Styles fall into two classes: traditional and continental.

Traditional styles have a plain front, full-cut cuffs and belt loops.

Continental styles have a beltless extension waistband, optional concealed elastic tabs on each side, tapered tailoring and are cuffless and pleatless.

FABRIC

Look for a firm, smoothly woven or knitted fabric that will hold a sharp crease. Slacks are available in a variety of fibers and fiber blends. Select the fiber or blends to best suit your purpose. Polyester and cotton blends are popular because of their easy care. Polyester knit slacks are quite popular and have gained acceptance because of their easy care, wrinkle resistance and comfort.

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