

## On the day of your hearing

It is important that you dress to fit both the occasion and appropriate to the argument that is being presented for you in the court room. Wearing something out of line with your presentation to the court will both send different signals and distract from your argument.

Our best advice is to make sure you are clean, tidy and leaning towards conservative as appropriate for a business occasion. You do not have to wear a suit but we suggest you do if you have one. The ideal would be a suit with a jacket; trousers or a knee length skirt for women; and clean closed toe shoes.

If you don't have these clothes, choose something as close as you can to the business casual examples on the back of this brochure.

Choose clothes that are of a conservative or subdued colour eg navy, black or grey.

### Definitely avoid wearing:

- Sleeveless, strapless or see-through tops
- Tops with slogans or images
- Jeans, miniskirts or shorts
- Thongs
- Excessive jewellery, gold chain etc

**Don't wear Sunglasses, hats or caps as you will be asked to remove them.**

## Before your hearing

Contact our lawyer to clarify the time, date, court and courtroom where you are to appear. Plan to arrive well before your hearing time. It is best to be calm and ready for your hearing. Being late and unprepared or having the court waiting for you will not convey reliability nor respect for the court.

## Entering the Court

Before entering the court totally switch off your phone, pager or alarms.

- When you enter the courtroom if the Judge or Magistrate is on the bench, it is customary to show respect by pausing briefly at the door and bowing your head towards the Coat of Arms located behind the Judicial Officer.



- Wait quietly in the public seating area until your matter is called.

## During your hearing

- talking, drinking, smoking and chewing are not permitted in the court
- Stand quietly and bow when the Judicial Officer enters or leaves the Courtroom and stay standing until they are seated or have left the court.
- Stand whenever the Judge or Magistrate is talking to you or you are talking to them.
- Do not talk unless asked to do so.
- Address a Judge or Magistrate as 'Your Honour' or 'Sir/Madam'
- Listen carefully and follow directions.

**NEVER** react in a hostile manner. It is very important to be aware of your body language so that you do not appear to be hostile, disrespectful or impatient in **ANY** way. This will undo anything your lawyer is doing on your behalf

## Leaving the court

- As you leave the courtroom show your respect by pausing briefly at the door and bow your head towards the Coat of Arms
- If the Judicial Officer leaves before you do stand and bow and remain standing until they have left the court.
- Do not celebrate, complain or comment in any way as you leave the court.
- Collect the form from the Sherriff's Officer advising of next court date if there is a further hearing.

# Creating the best impression

The importance of creating a positive first impression cannot be underestimated. It is very hard to change a first impression.

When it comes to appearing in court, creating the right impression just might give you an important advantage if the judge or magistrate has discretionary powers over sentencing and consequences.

Whether you are attending court for a criminal, traffic or family matter the way in which you present will send important signals about your respect for the decision of the court and how seriously you intend to follow its directions. It is more likely that a lenient decision will go your way if you appear trustworthy, genuine and ready to take positive steps forward.

What you wear may also mean others will gain an impression about your character, values, work ethic and reliability. Think about what you wish to convey. For example, if you wish to convey professionalism, dress in a smart suit or shirt and jacket. Reliability can be conveyed with subdued colours.

Dressing in an over casual or intimidating way will also convey a message. The perception may be of disrespect to yourself and/or others including the court and the Judiciary.



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# GOING TO COURT?

## TIPS FOR CREATING THE BEST IMPRESSION

  
**WILLIAMS**  
BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS

