

Conference to Cocktails

So you don't have time to go home and change before happy hour? Don't fret. Here are six easy ways to go from conference to cocktails without missing a step.

Switch your hairstyle. Taking out that bun or ponytail and letting your locks flow loosely is a simple way to get into a flirty mood for the night ahead. If you have short hair, run your fingers through it a little to give yourself a little bit of a messy, and sexier, look.



Change your shoes. Instead of those trusty loafers you wear to shuffle to and from your office, put on a pair of metallic stiletto heels—perfect for evening events. Of course, you know these shoes are not for standing around and chatting, so when you get to the bar of choice, have a seat, cross your legs at the ankles like mom taught you and observe the action from your favorite hot spot. The guys can come to you.

Loosen up. That's right, instead of having your super-conservative shirt closed up to your neck, relax and undo a few buttons. Just be careful not to undo too many, or you'll have an excessive number of admirers trying to get an eyeful while you unwind with your martini.

Say hello to accessories. Layering long, bold-colored necklaces with a basic black outfit or putting on bangle bracelets or dangly earrings can put you in a lighthearted mood. Think about how you loved playing dress-up as a kid because it was so exciting—adding a few great pieces of jewelry can give you the same fun feeling now.

Add a bag. Yes, this is technically an accessory but so important that it needs its own category. Don't make the mistake of lugging your big carry-all bag to your favorite restaurant after work. First, it will just be in your way as you enjoy your drinks and laugh with friends. Second, it's just not cute or conducive to the atmosphere to have a huge, battered briefcase impeding the view of people sitting at your cozy corner table. Before you arrive at your destination, just grab the essentials from your everyday bag—lip gloss, cell phone, ID and a credit card or cash. Then slip these items into a cute clutch—and make sure to coordinate with those stilettos.

Update your makeup. Speaking of essentials, a quick change of lip color and extra swipes of mascara can do the trick to take you from day to evening. If you don't have time to go full out and create a radically different smoky look with your eye makeup, applying two coats of mascara and a darker shade of lip gloss or lipstick (whichever you prefer, as long as it can stand up to a few drinks) can take you from an everyday office girl to a chic and polished patron.

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