

Metropolitan Police Academy



1.1 Uniform and Appearance

Introduction

A professional image must be maintained at all times. Recruit and other sworn officers (collectively “sworn members” or “officers”) are held strictly accountable to all regulations governing personal appearance. Sworn members are required to present a neat and tidy appearance at all times while on duty, whether in uniform or civilian attire. No on-duty (to include court, overtime, and/or other duty assignment) member shall wear any article of clothing visible to the public containing language of a social, economic, or political nature that might be considered an advocacy statement or that might create controversy. The Uniform and Appearance standards are outlined in full in GO-PER-110.11.

All sworn members of the department are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the following:

1.1.1 Adhere to the Academy cell phone policy for recruits

Cell Phones

No cell phones or other electronic devices are allowed to be carried by a recruit officer while on duty except in the following circumstances:

- Only the class leader and assistant class leader may be authorized to carry a cell phone on their person during specialized training. The class leader and assistant class leader’s cell phones shall be kept on vibrate/silent mode, concealed, and not used for personal business.
- In cases of emergency and with the permission of their class officer or class sergeant, a recruit officer may use the telephone at the customer service desk.
- In certain extraordinary circumstances, a cell phone exception for a recruit officer may be granted. All exceptions must be preapproved by the Director of Initial Training.
- While on details or special assignments, no recruit officer shall carry a cell phone unless authorized to do so by the Director of Initial Training.

Business Cards

- Sworn members shall carry a sufficient number of business cards and shall provide one when requested.
- When sworn members run out of cards, they must request more and carry a sufficient number of fillable cards until replacement cards arrive.
- Sworn members can purchase their own business cards but must adhere to the special requirements found in General Order 110.11.

1.1.2 Appreciate the policy on cleanliness and personal grooming

Hair

- The complete list of standards can be found in General Order 110.11.
- Sworn members must keep their hair clean, neat, and styled to permit the uniform hat to fit securely on the head.
- Hair must be arranged so that it does not extend below the mid-point of the shirt collar and it permits headgear to fit securely on the head.
- Wigs or hairpieces may be worn if they conform to the appearance standards for natural hair and must blend in with the natural hair color.
- Cornrows, braids, or dreadlocks may be worn if they do not interfere with the proper wearing of the uniform hat or other required headgear, conform to the above length requirements, are neat in appearance, and blend with the natural hair color.
- Items used to hold hair in place, such as hair bands or clips, may not be decorative, must be concealed as much as possible, and must be of a color that blends with the natural hair color.
- Sworn members who choose to wear sideburns shall ensure that they are neatly trimmed, do not extend more than three-quarters (3/4) of an inch beyond the lower edge of the ear, end with a clean-shaven horizontal line and, if flared, are no wider than one and one half (1 1/2) inches at the bottom.

Facial Hair

- For recruit officers, beards must be well-trimmed and shall not exceed one quarter (1/4) of an inch in length. The decision to wear a beard shall not be used to excuse sporadic shaving.
- Mustaches and goatees are permitted if they are well-trimmed. A well-trimmed mustache shall not extend more than one quarter (1/4) of an inch below or beyond the line of the individual's upper lip. Handlebar mustaches are prohibited. Goatees shall not exceed one quarter (1/4) of an inch in length.

Fingernails

- Fingernails must be kept clean and neatly trimmed.
- Fingernails may not extend more than one-quarter (1/4) of an inch beyond the tip of the finger.
- If nail polish is worn, it may only be a light color, skin color or clear.
- No objects may be affixed to the fingernail.

Make-up

- If make-up is worn, it must be subdued and natural looking.

Eyewear Standards

- Prescription eyeglasses that have a conservative design and color may be worn. No eyeglasses that are garish in color or have lenses or frames with initials or other adornments on them shall be worn.
- Sunglasses may be green, gray, brown or another neutral tint in color and, similarly, shall have undecorated frames. Mirrored and opaque sunglasses are prohibited while on duty. Sunglasses shall be removed when indoors.
- Recruit officers are not permitted to wear sunglasses, with the exception of transitioning prescription lenses, while inside the department building or while in formation.
- Sunglasses may never be attached to the uniform in any fashion.

Jewelry

- Pins, insignias, and/or buttons not specifically issued or authorized by the department are not to be worn on or attached to any part or portion of the uniform in a manner that they are, or may become, visible to the public. The full list of jewelry standards is outlined in General Order 110.11.
- Recruits may wear small, plain stud earrings that are gold, silver, or pearl in color not to exceed one-half (1/2) inch in diameter. The wearing of looped or dangling earrings or more than two earrings per ear is prohibited.
- Jewelry must not be worn on any other part of the face while on-duty or while in uniform.
- Sworn members shall not wear more than one bracelet or necklace. Attachments such as pendants, charms, and medallions shall be covered.
- Sworn members may not wear more than two rings per hand. Wedding and engagement ring combinations are considered to be one ring.
- Because the nature of police work and academy training can cause damage to jewelry items, the risk of damage should be considered when making the decision to wear any jewelry item.

Tattoos

- Tattoos shall be covered when in uniform whenever possible. Any tattoo that is visible must not contain language or characterizations that are derogatory or offensive.

1.1.3 Differentiate between the types of uniforms for sworn members

Each member of the department has a prescribed uniform or required type of clothing that is appropriate for their position. The uniforms found throughout the department are described below:

Uniform Guidelines Chart

	Lieutenant and Above		Sergeant and Below		All Ranks			
	Shirt and Blouse	Tie	Shirt and Blouse	Tie or Turtleneck	Jacket	Pants	Headgear	Guidelines
Class A dress uniform	White long sleeve shirt and blouse	Tie	White long sleeve shirt and blouse	Tie	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All-season trousers Sergeants and below may wear summer pants 	8-point hat	Worn on ceremonial occasions or for certain special events and details as designated by the Chief of Police
Class B service uniform	White long or short sleeve shirt	Tie with long sleeve shirt	Blue long or short sleeve shirt	No tie	Gore-Tex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All-season trousers Sergeants and below may wear summer pants 	8-point hat, baseball cap, skull cap, or trooper-style hat	Baseball caps restricted to members the rank of sergeant and below
BDU uniform	Not authorized	Not authorized	Not authorized	Not authorized	Gore-Tex (modified for civilian wear)	BDU trousers	BDU cap, baseball cap, or skull cap	Worn only by police recruits and civilian members in the following assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metropolitan Police Academy Cell Block Evidence Control Branch Motor Pool Equipment and Supply Branch Vehicle Maintenance
Specialized uniform	Only to be worn by members working in the following assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explosive Ordinance Disposal Section (special fabric) Harbor Patrol Unit (special uniform shorts) Horse Mounted Unit (special uniform pants and boots) Mountain Bike Officer (special uniform pants and shorts, black footwear, special high visibility jacket, and bike helmet) Metropolitan Police Academy Range (red shirt) Special Operations Division Motors Unit (special uniform pants and boots) 							

Alternate Authorized Uniform Items

- **Turtleneck** - In instances where a turtleneck may be worn, it must be navy blue in color and have no visible writing or logos, with the exception of the letters “MPD” in silver embroidered block lettering no larger than 1 inch in height. Recruit officers are not permitted to wear turtlenecks.
- **Sweater** – In instances where a sweater may be worn, the below descriptors and guidelines apply. Recruit officers are not permitted to wear sweaters.

Shirt Type	Sweater Type	Guidelines
White with a tie	V-neck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department patch on both shoulders Name plate, badge, and rank insignia displayed Worn indoors only
Blue without a tie	Crew neck	

Boots: When in uniform, plain black boots must be worn. The brand name, labels, or design logos may not be visible. Boot soles must be solid black and may not exceed three-quarters (3/4) of an inch in thickness. Heels may not be more than one-half (1/2) inch in height. Boots must be clean and in good condition. Boots must always be shined to a luster.

Recruit Officer BDU Uniform

- Nylon or high visibility jacket,
- Tan BDU-style long sleeve shirt,
- Plain white crew neck undershirt,
- Tan BDU-style pants,

- Tan BDU-style eight-point hat or navy blue trooper style hat,
- Navy blue or black socks, and
- Any approved boots that can be polished.

NOTE: The recruit Physical Training (PT) uniform will be discussed during the first day of PT. Please DO NOT buy any items for PT until instructed by your PT instructor. Please arrive to PT wearing your BDU uniform. All uniforms and accessories must be clean, pressed, and/or neatly polished as appropriate for the item. Recruit officers are prohibited from altering their uniform in any way, to include tapering the shirt or altering the sleeve length.

Recruit Officer Civilian Attire

- Recruit officers must wear business attire of a type that would be acceptable in a courthouse. Recruit officers must wear appropriate dress shirts, ties, slacks, skirts, and blouses as appropriate. All recruits shall wear a business suit or sports jacket to prepare them for concealing an issued firearm.
- Sportswear, jeans, tennis shoes, sandals, see-through clothing, and other casual attire shall not be worn. For functional and safety reasons, high heels may not be worn.

1.1.4 Adhere to MPD uniform and equipment requirements while a recruit

Uniform Condition

After issuance of the recruit BDU uniform, recruit officers are required to wear it daily. The uniform may become damaged or no longer serviceable as a result of police duties and/or training. In this situation, the department will reissue necessary uniform items. However, it is the responsibility of the wearer to safeguard the uniform from loss or damage as a result of neglect or mistreatment.

NOTE: The “Recruit Officer Training Program” handbook, commonly referred to as the “ROTP handbook,” states that, “If any part of the uniform is damaged or altered, rendering it unsuitable for reissue, the recruit officer is responsible for reimbursing the Department for its replacement cost. In such event, a “Report of Damage to or Loss of District Government Property” for (PD Form 43) shall be prepared and submitted through the chain-of-command.”

Uniform and Equipment Requirements

Recruit officers are required to maintain a complete uniform in their assigned locker at the Metropolitan Police Academy. Additionally, any department-issued items or equipment (*e.g. handcuffs, radio, Sam-brown belt, jacket/raincoat*) must be kept at the Academy in the recruit officer’s assigned locker. This practice will continue upon graduation once recruits are assigned to a district.

When responding to and from work, recruits are required to dress so they are unidentifiable as being associated with the Department. Civilian attire must conform to the “Recruit Officer Civilian Attire” standards discussed in section 1.1.3 above as well as the ROTP handbook.

1.1.5 Demonstrate maintaining and wearing a complete uniform

MAINTAINING THE UNIFORM

Pressing the Uniform

Ironing a uniform is something every officer must know how to do if the uniform is not dry cleaned. A uniform is required to be neatly pressed each day an officer reports to work. Additionally, the presence of sharp creases is a key detail of a professional appearance.

Polishing Boots

Brilliantly shined boots are a hallmark of police uniforms. They indicate devotion to duty and attention to the smallest detail. Each polished boot represents hours of patient work. During your time at the Academy you are required to maintain boots that are polished to a luster on the toe and heel. “Polished to a luster” means the toe and heel are shined so that they will reflect light. In the most exceptional cases, boots can be shined so that a person’s reflection may be seen in the finish.

There are many ways to achieve a lustrous shine. There are several steps that all methods must accomplish. The basic steps are:

- Create a workspace
- Prepare the boot
- Apply the base coat
- Apply the polish coat
- Shine
- Finish

Polishing Brass

When preparing to wear the new brass buckle of either the Garrison belt or the Sam Browne, it must be shined to a luster. When the buckle is new, it will have a clear coating that protects the finish during shipping. Recruits are required to remove this protective finish by placing the belt buckle in boiling water for a minimum of 10 minutes. Be careful after the buckle is boiled—it must be allowed to cool to room temperature before it is touched. Once the clear coating has been removed, the buckle will easily tarnish and must be polished each day.

ASSEMBLING THE UNIFORM

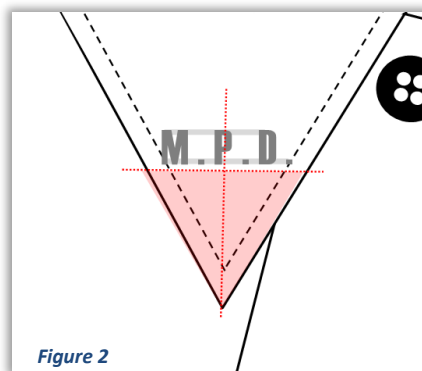
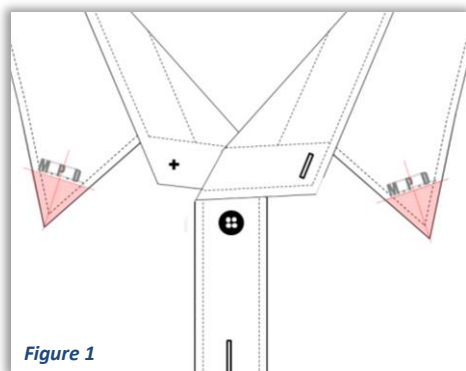
Collar Pins

The MPD collar pins are one of the most noticeable uniform accessories.

- Each day a recruit officer will be inspected, and one point of that inspection will be the placement of the collar pins.
- Sergeants and those in ranks above will wear gold MPD collar pins.
- Other sworn members will wear silver MPD collar pins.

The pin reads “M.P.D.” and is placed so that the lower left corner of the “M” and lower right corner of the last “.” fall at the stitching lines of the collar. If a line were drawn across the base of the pin, the space below the pin would create an isosceles triangle (See figure 1 & 2 below).

Definition: An *isosceles triangle* is a *triangle* that has two sides of equal length.



Nameplates

Nameplates are issued in two types, which are:

- **The Pin & Safety Catch Nameplate** (*pictured below*) - intended for use on the jacket, raincoat or visibility vest and should not be used on the shirt when wearing the recruit BDU uniform.

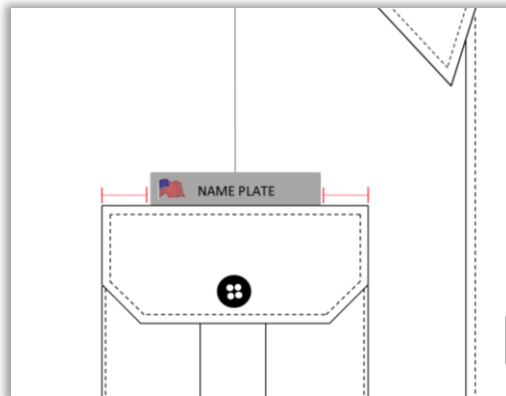


- **The Clutch Back Nameplate** (*pictured below*) - is intended for use on the uniform shirt. Additionally, the clutch back name plate is worn on the dress blouse when wearing the Class A Dress and Service uniforms.



NOTE: Sergeants and below may use a Velcro name tag when wearing a Class B uniform.

The nameplate must always be worn on the outermost garment so that it is visible. When placing the nameplate on the uniform shirt it will be centered above the right chest pocket. (*See figure 5*).



NOTE: Once recruit officers are issued their exterior vest carrier, certain items covered below will be transferred from their duty belt to their exterior vest carrier.

BELTS

Garrison Belt: According to D.C. Municipal Regulations Title 6A (601.6), members must wear "...plain black belts not less than one and one-fourth (1 1/4) inches but not more than one and three-fourths (1 3/4) inches in width, with a square, solid brass buckle."

Nylon Duty Belt (*pictured below*): The Nylon Duty Belt is required for officers working in the field. It must completely cover the waistband and the inner belt when worn. Additionally, the Nylon Duty Belt must contain the following items, in order, beginning from the support hand side of the belt, crossing the front of the body to the weapon hand side of the belt:



- 1. ASP
- 2. OC Spray
- 3. Magazines
- 4. Handcuffs
- 5. Service Pistol



Nylon Duty Belt – Sergeant



The nylon duty belt should be set up in the following order beginning at the belt buckle:

Weapon Side

1. Handcuff pouch
2. Holster

Reaction Side

1. Magazine Pouch
2. ECD
3. ASP
4. OC Spray
5. Radio (optional when wearing high-visibility jacket)

NOTE: Sergeants shall mount the ECD on the reaction side of their duty belt (opposite the pistol) in a cross-draw holster or on the reaction side of their outer vest carrier in a cross-draw holster.

Vest



Setting Up Your Vest:

BWC Mount – The BWC Mount attaches to the single web loop between the chest pockets of the outer vest carrier.

Flashlight Pouch – The flashlight pouch should be positioned on the reaction side nearest the zipper of the outer vest carrier (*the reaction side is the side opposite your pistol*).

Radio Pouch – The radio pouch should be positioned next to the flashlight pouch on the reaction side.

Utility Pouch – The utility pouch is optional for wear and if worn, must be positioned on the weapon side of the zipper.

NOTE: Only Department authorized pouches and equipment may be worn on the outer vest carrier unless approved by the Chief of Police.

Gig Line

The gig line is the alignment of the right edge of the shirt placket (the flap of the shirt with the buttonholes), the inner right edge of the belt buckle, and right edge of the pants placket (button fly) (See figure 6).

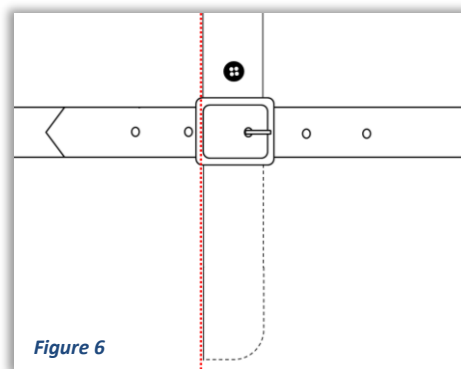


Figure 6

Wearing of the BDU Hat

The BDU hat is to be worn with the bottom edge of the hat parallel to the ground. The brim of the hat must face forward resting no more than two fingers' width above the bridge of the nose. The hat must fit the head securely, and under no circumstances are the ears allowed to be tucked inside the brim of the hat.

Summary

After today's lesson, you will have the necessary knowledge to present the professional appearance for which you are responsible. The department has set minimum standards for your appearance, and you will be held to those standards.

With the skills you have learned, you can exceed the standard. Spend the extra time shining your boots to a mirrored finish. Though starch is not required when pressing your uniform, consider using starch to make sure your creases are crisp. Ensure you have extra time each morning prior to formation to spend an extra minute polishing your brass and straightening your gig line. These few steps will make you stand out above those recruits who do not.

If you spend the extra effort and time here in the Academy to maintain an exceptional professional image, it will become second nature to you and a habit that will follow you throughout your career. Your appearance and uniform are the first thing a community member sees; therefore, you should look clean and professional.