

# Formal Essentials

A black-tie invitation pares down your sartorial options, but you can still bring your personal style to bear. Here's how.

## TRADITIONAL

If you're a man who sticks to gray suits and unadorned oxfords, this ensemble is how you want to dress for a big night out. The sophistication is in the details: black patent-leather shoes buffed to a high shine, black shirt buttons, and a bow tie you knot yourself. But timeless doesn't mean out of touch: Ditch the cummerbund and leave the wing-tip collar to the maître d'.



**TOM FORD  
EXTREME**  
\$125; *Saks Fifth Avenue*

**BOSS BLACK  
VELVET COAT**  
\$895; *hugoboss.com*

**BURBERRY LONDON  
TUXEDO AND  
TUXEDO SHIRT**  
\$1,695 and \$185;  
*burberry.com*

**BURBERRY  
BOW TIE**  
\$150; *burberry.com*

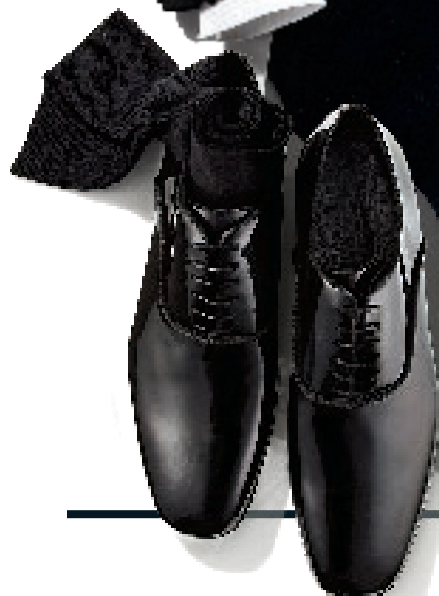
## THE UMBRELLA

You don't want to let the rain ruin your night. Of course, you also don't want that chintzy Totes umbrella to ruin your meticulously assembled outfit, so splurge on something subdued and upscale, like this one from Burberry.

**ERMENEGILDO  
ZEGNA SHOES**  
\$695; *zegna.com*

**FALKE SOCKS**  
\$34; *bergdorfgoodman.com*

**BURBERRY  
UMBRELLA**  
\$275; *burberry.com*



**THE HANGER**

Half the benefit of owning a tux (besides great fit) is being able to pull it off the hanger and go. Invest in a hanger sized to fit your penguin suit to keep it pristine (\$75; [hangerproject.com](http://hangerproject.com)).

**BROOKS BROTHERS  
SCARF**  
\$198; [brooksbrothers.com](http://brooksbrothers.com)

**RALPH LAUREN PUR-  
PLE LABEL TOPCOAT**  
\$7495;  
[ralphlauren.com](http://ralphlauren.com)

**CALVIN KLEIN  
COLLECTION TUXEDO**  
\$1,995; 877-256-7373

**BOSS BLACK  
WHITE SHIRT**  
\$125; [hugoboss.com](http://hugoboss.com)

**TALLIA ORANGE TIE**  
\$40; [talliaorange.com](http://talliaorange.com)

**MODERN**

Don't want to blend in with the crowd? Look smart but not inappropriate by trading black for charcoal. This Calvin Klein Collection tuxedo features a classic silhouette, but its pewter sheen affords an elegant flair. A white shirt with a little texture offers a similar sartorial tweak, as does the wool topcoat's cashmere collar — a nod to the standard overcoat of your more staid party-going pals.

**CHANEL BLEU  
DE CHANEL**  
\$59; [chanel.com](http://chanel.com)

**SALVATORE  
FERRAGAMO SHOES**  
\$480; 800-628-8916

**FALKE SOCKS**  
\$30; [bergdorfgoodman.com](http://bergdorfgoodman.com)



*photographs by*  
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PARLOW**

*text by*  
**JAMIE  
BECKMAN**



**PINK**  
 THOMAS PINK  
 JEWELL & TWEET LONDON  
 KillBar  
 SHIRT FIT

**THE BRACES**  
 A tux is a belt-free zone, so those who need help keeping pants up should turn to braces (the snooty word for suspenders). Clip-ons are verboten, so if your pants don't have the requisite buttons, have your tailor add them.

**SALVATORE FERRAGAMO CUFF LINKS**  
*price upon request; 212-759-3822*

**JAN LESLIE MOTHER-OF-PEARL STUD SET**  
*\$175; janleslie.com*

**TIFFANY & CO. MONEY CLIP**  
*\$135; tiffany.com*

THE LAUNDRESS  
 J.CREW  
 COLLARS & CUFFS  
 STAIN BAR

**THOMAS PINK DRESS SHIRT AND MOTHER-OF-PEARL COLLAR BONES**  
*\$185 and \$40; thomaspink.com*

**THE LAUNDRESS NEW YORK FOR J.CREW COLLARS & CUFFS STAIN BAR**  
*\$7; jcrew.com*

**TRAFALGAR REGAL FORMAL BRACES**  
*\$80; trafalgarstore.com*

**THE MONEY CLIP**  
 Shoving your Costanza-esque wallet into a tux's jacket pocket tends to ruin its lines. A clip like this sterling-silver Tiffany number exudes midcentury cool and holds everything you need: ID, credit card, and cash for a round of drinks.







**MONTBLANC  
STAR XL AUTOMATIC**  
\$1,980; [montblanc.com](http://montblanc.com)



**JAQUET DROZ  
GRANDE SECONDE**  
WHITE GOLD  
\$17,900; [jaquet-droz.com](http://jaquet-droz.com)



**BAUME & MERCIER  
CLASSIMA EXECUTIVES**  
WHITE GOLD  
\$3,590; [baume-et-mercier.com](http://baume-et-mercier.com)



**PATEK PHILIPPE  
CALATRAVA**  
WHITE GOLD  
\$18,900; [patek.com](http://patek.com)



**CARTIER  
RONDE SOLO**  
\$2,375; [cartier.com](http://cartier.com)

**THE WATCH**

At its most basic, a tux-worthy timepiece is slim, understated, and composed of only three colors — black and white with a silver case. Roman numerals at the indices aren't mandatory, but they sure do look posh.