

How to Behave in a Courtroom

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At Wasatch Defense Attorneys, we know that ***preparing for an upcoming trial*** can make you anxious about the impending proceedings. When preparing for any court session, how you act at trial can be as important as what is said. To make sure you put your best foot forward, follow the tips below on how to act during your trial.

Dress Appropriately for Court

How you dress often makes the first impression, and that is true for the court as well. [During a trial](#), it is important to look clean, professional and neat. When considering your outfit, it is also important to choose something comfortable since you may be sitting for a long time. So, if a suit makes you uncomfortable, it is best to avoid it. When making your clothing selection avoid anything that may stand out or negatively draw attention and make sure to cover up tattoos as best as possible since many jurors associate a negative connotation with them.

Basic dress should include:

- Button down shirt or blouse
- A pair of slacks or skirt
- A suit or dress if you can wear them comfortably

Stay Calm Throughout the Entire Proceedings

During your trial, you may hear testimony that seems outrageous and you know is a lie. You may be tempted to speak out in your defense, but you must control your anger and remain as calm as possible. ***Any outbursts in court, even if they seem justified, will reflect negatively on you.*** You will also want to remember to remain calm while you are being questioned. Even if the prosecutor seems to be attacking you, you need to stay polite and reserved when answering your questions.

If you tend to be an anxious person and fidgety when your nerves get going, it is perfectly acceptable to ask for a pen and paper during court to be able to write, doodle, or draw to be able to release your anxiety. The jury will most likely assume you are taking notes or asking your attorney questions and this behavior will not seem out of the ordinary.

Always Have the Jury in Your Mind

During your trial, you need to be aware of the jury through every aspect of the proceedings. They are the ones there who have to process all the information they gain from the court and come up with a decision at the end. Your nonverbal interaction with them, as well as direct action with those in the court, will all factor into their decision of who you might be as a person, so it is important that you don't give them any reason to think negatively of you.

When the jury is in the courtroom:

- Never roll your eyes
- Don't laugh even if a joke is made
- Use manners when interacting with the court including "please" and "thank you."
- Don't interrupt or talk over someone
- Make eye contact
- Try not to look intimidated when questioned
- Don't show embarrassment
- Act as though you understand the gravity of the situation being presented at court

Follow Your Attorney's Advice When Testifying

Your defense attorney will walk you through the testimony [process](#) to prepare you for what may be asked and what to expect during questioning. At this point, they will also lay down rules that you should follow during your testimony. It is important to all advice they give you. They are the professionals, and they know what things can derail a testimony quickly.

When testifying, you should keep your answers to the point and only respond to the question asked. There is no need to embellish or give information that was not directly asked. Even though the prosecutor may come after you aggressively, do not get defensive and don't act sheepish as though you have something to hide. It is also important that when you speak, you speak slowly and clearly so that there is no confusion on your answer. Additionally, you always want to make sure to address the court as "Your Honor." Formalities are very important to follow in court.

If you need a **defense lawyer in Utah**, contact the criminal defense advocates at [Wasatch Defense Lawyers](#) for your free, confidential case review.