What to check before ordering corporate uniforms for your team

Getting the basics right on your first uniform order

Ordering corporate uniforms for the first time can feel like a leap into the unknown. You need shirts, polos, or outerwear that look professional, fit a range of body types, and arrive before the launch date. A clear checklist helps you avoid the common pitfalls that trip up new buyers. Below is a practical run-through of the points to verify before you commit to an order.

Know your order quantity and how it is split

The first question any corporate uniform supplier will ask is how many pieces you need. The answer is rarely a single number, because uniforms come in styles and sizes. Think about how many staff will wear each item. Do you need one polo per person, or two so they can rotate? What about jackets, aprons, or caps? Break the total down by garment type before you approach a supplier. This makes it easier to compare quotes and ensures you are not under-ordering a critical item.

Also consider future hires. Ordering a small buffer of extra stock, say five or ten percent above your current headcount, saves you from rushing a top-up order a month later. Many suppliers have a minimum order quantity, so adding a few extras now may be more cost-effective than placing a second, smaller order later.

Get a realistic size breakdown for your team

A size breakdown that works on paper may not work on people. If you simply order an equal number of small, medium, and large, you will almost certainly end up with sizes nobody wears. The best approach is to ask your team in advance. A simple internal survey or a sign-up sheet for sizes takes ten minutes and avoids a pile of uniforms that sit unused.

Keep in mind that sizing can vary between brands and countries. A medium from one factory may fit like a large from another. If you are ordering from a supplier based overseas, check their size chart carefully and consider ordering a sample garment first. That sample lets your staff try on the actual product and confirm the fit before the bulk order is placed.



Order a sample garment before the full run

This step alone can save you from a costly mistake. A sample garment gives you a chance to see the fabric quality, colour accuracy, and workmanship up close. It also lets you test the fit on a few people of different shapes. If the sample is off, you can request adjustments before the entire order is produced.

Some suppliers charge for samples, but that fee is often deducted from the final order. Even if it is not, the cost of a single shirt is trivial compared to the expense of replacing an entire batch that does not meet expectations. Insist on a physical sample, not just a digital mock-up. Colours on a screen can look very different in real light.

Confirm the delivery schedule and allow for delays

Uniforms are often needed by a specific date: a company launch, a trade show, or the start of a new contract. Ask your supplier for a written delivery schedule that includes production time,

shipping, and any customs clearance if the goods cross borders. Build in a buffer of at least a week or two. Delays happen, especially on first orders when the supplier is learning your specifications.

If the timeline is tight, check whether the supplier offers split shipments. You might receive a portion of the order early so you can distribute uniforms to key staff while the rest is still in transit. This is not always possible, but it is worth asking about.

Understand the minimum order and how it affects your choices

Most uniform suppliers have a minimum order quantity per style or per colour. If your team is small, this can limit your options. A supplier may require a minimum of 50 pieces per design, which means you cannot order 20 polos in one colour and 30 in another unless each colour meets that threshold.

Ask about the minimum upfront. If it is higher than your needs, you may have to choose a simpler range of styles or combine orders with another department. Some suppliers are flexible on minimums for first-time buyers, especially if you are ordering from a company like uni-cloth.com that handles corporate uniforms and custom printed apparel in Malaysia. Their team can often suggest practical ways to work within your budget without sacrificing quality.

Plan for purchase approval and internal sign-off

In many organisations, a uniform order requires approval from more than one person. The procurement team, the department head, and possibly HR all need to sign off on the design, cost, and quantity. If you skip this step early, you may find yourself with a signed contract and no internal budget to pay for it.



Get a clear approval process in writing before you approach the supplier. Know who has the authority to approve the final design and who holds the budget. This saves you from going back and forth with the supplier while the internal chain of command sorts itself out.

Plan for replacement stock from the start

Uniforms wear out, get lost, or are needed by new joiners. If you only order exactly what you need today, you will face a repeat order process that takes time and may not match the original dye lot. A smarter move is to order a small quantity of replacement stock at the same time as the main order. Ask the supplier to set aside the same fabric and colour batch so future additions match perfectly.

Some suppliers offer to hold a reserve of your uniform in their warehouse for a fee. Others will simply note your preference and produce extras on demand. Either way, having a plan for replacements prevents a situation where half your team is wearing faded shirts while the other half wears fresh ones.

Check the care instructions and fabric suitability

Uniforms that look great in the showroom may not hold up after a few washes. Check the fabric composition and care label. Cotton blends are comfortable but may shrink. Polyester blends resist wrinkles but can be less breathable. Think about how your staff will actually use the uniform: will it be worn in an air-conditioned office, outdoors, or in a workshop?

If you are unsure, ask for fabric swatches or a sample that you can wash a few times. This test tells you more than any product description. Also confirm whether the supplier offers embroidery or screen printing that stays vibrant after repeated washing. Faded logos reflect poorly on your brand.

Review the payment terms and what they cover

Payment terms vary widely. Some suppliers ask for a deposit upfront, with the balance due on delivery. Others require full payment before production begins. Clarify what happens if the order is delayed or if the goods are defective. A reputable corporate uniform supplier will have a clear policy on returns, exchanges, and reworks. Get this in writing before you pay anything.



If you are ordering from a supplier that is new to you, consider using a payment method that offers some protection, such as a credit card or a trade credit account. Avoid paying large sums by wire transfer unless you have a strong relationship with the supplier.

One final review before you place the order

Before you hit send on the purchase order, run through this short mental checklist. Does the order quantity match your headcount plus a buffer? Have you seen a physical sample and confirmed the fit? Is the delivery date realistic and written into the contract? Have you secured internal approval and budget? And do you have a plan for replacement stock?

Taking these steps may feel like extra work, but they are the difference between a smooth rollout and a headache that drags on for months. A supplier like uni-cloth.com that understands the needs of first-time buyers can guide you through each stage, but the responsibility for checking the details rests with you. A careful order now means uniforms that serve your team well and represent your company professionally every single day.