

**COSTUMING FOR  
THE LOWER AND MIDDLE CLASSES  
Elizabethan England 1570-1580**



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Second Edition

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The first edition of these guidelines were assembled somewhat hastily to provide the participants at Much Ado About Sebastopol the lead-time they needed to assure that their costumes would be up to our standards for the event. We knew at the time the document would require updating and refinement, and solicited the opinions and advice of our knowledgeable colleagues in the world of historical costuming.

While the standards remain more or less unchanged, we have clarified some points, eradicated some blatant conflicts, and corrected a few cases in which we were just plain wrong. We have better organized and expanded our “Ready to Wear” section, provided a gallery of patterns we think may be of use, and have included more images.

It is with pride that we mention that reenactment guilds and troupes from beyond MAAS have taken notice of these guidelines and have begun to adopt them. We hope that our readers will encourage all of their friends who share their love of living history to do the same.

Advanced costume historians will find these standards vastly simplistic, and in some cases arbitrary. They are not intended to be a scholarly work, but a practical guide to achieving a consistent, generally period appearance and silhouette for use in a theatrical production. It is a living document which will continue to be updated and corrected, and we welcome further suggestions.

A special thanks to those who provided their input and expertise in expanding and perfecting these guidelines, especially Shelley Monson for her keen editorial eye, and Daniel Rosen.

Many thanks (and apologies) to the countless photographers whose works we have shamelessly neglected to credit (due to not having any memory of where they came from), and museums and art collectors whose priceless possessions we have exploited. Rest assured we aren't growing any richer for it. If you'd like credit, or would prefer that your work or image not be used, we will gladly satisfy you.

Rydell Downward  
Claudia Laughter  
The Guild of St. George, Inc.  
Much Ado About Sebastopol

## INTRODUCTION

Picture yourself settling into a dark theatre, waiting for the play to begin. Let's say it's the popular musical "Guys and Dolls," which takes place in 1940's New York. The curtain rises and the play begins. Before long you notice that among our bustling New Yorkers are a handful of actors in medieval clothing. Then two more enter the scene in 1970's leisure suits. Then Sky Masterson enters wearing a WWI German flying ace uniform and Adelaide is dressed in an 18th century court gown, complete with a towering wig. By this point, the sense of the place and time in the play is overshadowed by the extremes and inconsistencies in costuming and the illusion is lost.

This is an example of what is typically seen in historically themed events around the country; a hodge-podge of costuming; some historical, some whimsical, some fantastical, but much of it is questionable at best. Our event is a theatrical production - admittedly an unusual one which takes place outdoors, with no script and a transient audience, but it is no less a "play" than the aforementioned musical - one which seeks to convince our audience that they are immersed in the world of the 16th century.

The way we look is one of the chief ways we help transport our audience to our place and time. In order for us to present a consistent and convincing look, it is necessary that all participants adhere to a consistent costume standard that is based on current historical research rather than the whims of faire fashion and fancy. While the audience might not be well-versed in the details of the clothing of our era, they will notice inconsistencies and anachronisms as cracks in the illusion that we are trying to create.

The faire audience loves to dress up and become part of the fantasy, and in some cases their costumes are quite good. But if we construct our costumes in the spirit of authenticity, paying attention to period color, fit, fabric, and accessories, we will stand out from the crowd of costumed visitors and appear as true Elizabethans wearing our everyday clothes.

Those who have been faire participants before may not be familiar with some aspects of these standards, and in some cases they are a departure from what has been previously understood as "correct." We understand that costuming can be an expensive and time-consuming activity and that asking everyone to acquire new costumes more in line with historical fact may be unrealistic. However, new participants or those constructing new costumes should make themselves familiar with these standards and design accordingly.

This is not intended to be a detailed, scholarly treatise on the clothing of the period; it is highly generalized and in some cases arbitrary. It is meant to be a practical guide to achieving a homogenous and distinctly Elizabethan look for the purpose of interactive themed events. It is also a "living document" which will continue to develop - if there are resources or vendors you would like to see featured, or additions or corrections to be made, please let us know and we'll be happy to consider them for future revisions.

## OUR VISUAL THEME

Our visual theme is derived from the paintings of several 16th century painters, among them Pieter Brueghel the Elder known for his scenes of common folk at work and play. These painters are primarily Flemish, and generally depict people of Dutch origin, so there are some essential differences in clothing design, but there is much to be learned from them.

The Fete at Bermondsey by Joris Hoefnagel, 1569 (below) is a depiction of a wedding celebration near to our time in England. This is our “target” look.

A highly magnified version can be seen here:

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Joris\\_Hoefnagel\\_Fete\\_at\\_Bermondsey\\_c\\_1569.png](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Joris_Hoefnagel_Fete_at_Bermondsey_c_1569.png)

Note the colors, cuts, and silhouettes.



## THE ELIZABETHAN PALETTE



Yes, it's that varied. It isn't drab and bland, but quite rich. But it also doesn't mean that everyone should run out and wear pink or purple. Your event may have specific guidelines in regards to color. When in doubt, have your fabric color swatches approved by your costume department and/or your Artistic Director **BEFORE PURCHASING**. The yarn samples above have been made using Elizabethan dye techniques. The colors in the block below are found in Brueghel paintings and offer a rich variety of colors to choose from.



## SOME COSTUMING DETAILS WE'D LIKE TO ENCOURAGE:

### COSTUMES ARE CHARACTER-DRIVEN:

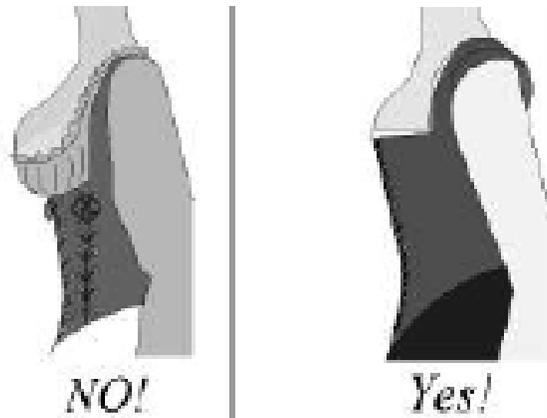
They should reflect the stations, incomes, occupations and personalities of the characters wearing them. Cut, color, fit, fabric choice and accessories can all tell a visual story that will intrigue the audience and draw them in. Is there some kind of “hook” or quirk that might say something unique about your character?

### CLOTHES REFLECT INCOME:

Find out how much somebody of your profession made and calibrate your costume to that. A person making twenty shillings per year cannot afford opulent jacquards, fancy Italian rapiers, or precious jewelry. On the other hand, we'd like to get away from the image of common laborers looking like ragged beggars. While the lower orders might not have fine fabrics and expensive dyes, their clothes fit, are clean and neatly mended, and they're proud of the way they look. They're not laboring on the farm or in the fields, but are attending the social event of the season and should be wearing their “Sunday best.”

### MODESTY:

Men wear a shirt and a doublet at all times. Only if they're hard at work they might strip down to a shirt or roll up their sleeves. Women, avoid excessive cleavage. Unmarried women might show more, but married women covered up with high-cut bodices or kerchiefs and partlets. The bust should not spill out over the top of your bodice unless your character is a prostitute.



### COIFS AND HEADCLOTHS FOR WOMEN:

While women did wear hats, most commonly they wore elaborately tucked and folded headcloths or linen caps called coifs. A hat might be worn on top. Going without any kind of head covering was unacceptable.

### SLEEVES:

We'd like to encourage everyone to wear sleeves at all times except where health and safety dictate their removal. For the most part, Elizabethan's sleeves were attached and not removable. Sometimes the fashionable had additional sets of sleeves they could change - but they'd always be seen wearing them in public. When hard at work in the fields, men might wear only a shirt, or a jerkin and shirt, and perhaps roll up their sleeves. If you choose to make your sleeves detachable, make sure that the attachments cannot be seen.

## **WAISTLINES:**

Men, in spite of 21st century fashion that dictates that you wear your pants down around or below your hips, Elizabethan trousers are worn up around your natural waist. The front should hit you above your navel, or an inch below your ribcage. Your belt should not ride any lower than that either.

## **RUFFS:**

Ruffs are the quintessential Elizabethan fashion statement and were worn by more than the nobility. In period sources, they're visible on people high to low. They may be either separate garments or attached to the shirts and shifts and are made of fine white linen (and no other colors). They may feature blackwork embroidery for wealthier people. Ruffs are essentially a gathered starched linen ruffle which is ironed into regular setts (usually figure eights). For a tutorial on making ruffs, see "How to Construct an Authentic Ruff" at <http://www.stgeorgenorth.org/resources>

## **PROPER HATS:**

Flat caps, woven straw hats, shaped felt hats, knit caps, biggins are all acceptable. Flat caps should have fairly narrow brims - two inches at most. Avoid hats that are so wide that the brim distorts and flops about.

Avoid wide-brimmed cavalier and tricorne "pirate" hats. Neither of these styles is popular in our time and "telegraph" later periods. Unless you're upper class, avoid the showy plumage often associated with these hats - try more common feathers such as cock, pheasant, or goose feathers, which should be less than 7" long.

## **PROPER FOOTWEAR:**

Many a fine costume is spoiled by a shoe that looks too modern or too medieval. We understand that some people require special shoes due to podiatric trouble, but any effort made to look as period as possible is appreciated.

Men's boots should fit closely to the leg, come up over the knee, and be supported by garters of some kind. Boots are generally worn only by people who are riding, though there are a few images of rustic fellows wearing somewhat rougher, cruder boots.

## **COATS AND JERKINS:**

Elizabethans wore a whole lot of garments. Coats, surcotes, cloaks, robes and jerkins over doublets make a very period statement.

## **HAND SEWING:**

While it is not expected that your garments be completely hand sewn, it is asked that all visible finishing seams be done this way. Much of our work is done up close, and details like this help maintain the illusion. If it can be hidden, then machine sewing is recommended for durability. Avoid top-stitching. Machine embroidery is rarely acceptable.

## **NO METAL GROMMETS:**

Do not use metal grommets in your clothing. If you do, they will need to be completely covered by stitching around them, obscuring them with thread. It is just as simple to create hand stitched eyelet holes in your clothing.

## ITEMS TO BE AVOIDED:

Over time some particularly egregious abuses of historical costuming have developed among Renaissance faire enthusiasts and they have no place among the cast at any event that claims to be a representation of history. Some faires may accept these without comment, but the following are items and styles which are to be avoided:

Horns

Animal tails

Bondage gear

Any garment made of upholstery tapestry

Body art such as henna designs, tattoos, facial and “primitive” piercings

Hair colors not found in nature

Mohawks and other obviously modern haircuts

Modern “slogan” and logo pins

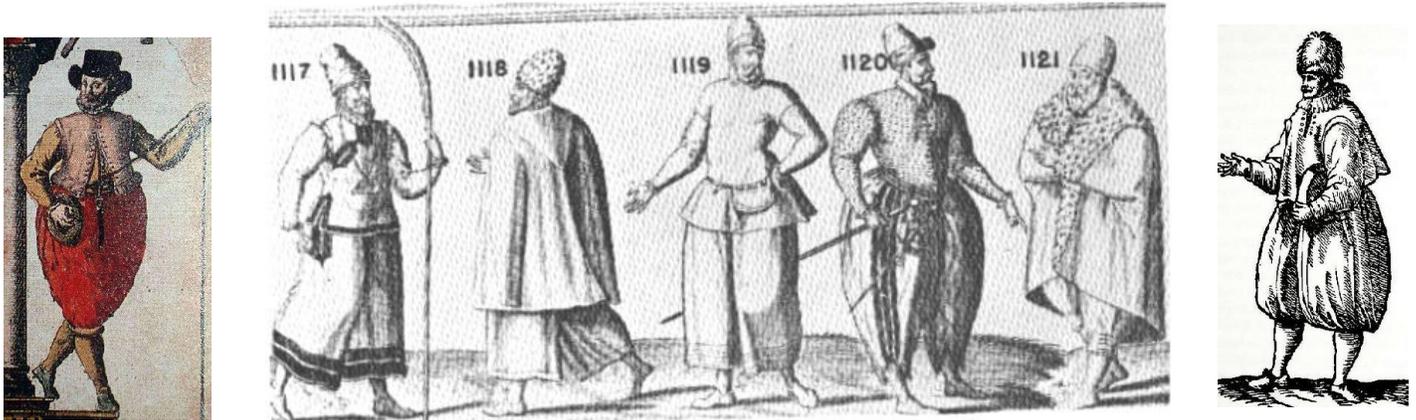
More than one or two “favors”

The triangular flap used instead of a codpiece

Bag hats on men – it’s a non-period women’s style

## ABOUT “PYRATE” COSTUMING:

In recent years, the pirate theme has grown very popular at Renaissance-themed events among both the patrons and the participants. While the oceans of the 16th century were certainly infested with corsairs and cutthroats, they did not resemble the classic Hollywood pirate of the 18th century. Seafaring men looked very different from landsmen as a glance at the following images will demonstrate.



Those wishing to portray amoral crewmembers for hire should ask themselves why their characters are attending a country faire in a landlocked region. If the intent is to portray a bravo “badass,” there are plenty of other options available. Out of work soldiers and masterless men were notorious layabouts, rioters and thieves, and they may be more suitable for the environment.

## A PROVISIO:

We’d also like to remind everyone that, just because you purchased something at a faire or on a website that says “Authentyk Tudor Garbe,” it doesn’t mean it’s appropriate. If one is careful, one may find some items that do work, but those are more the exception rather than the rule. There’s really no substitute for constructing the garment you need based on solid research.

## LOWER CLASS:

**Tenant farmers, artificers, laborers and all other honest hardworking folk**

According to Ninya Mikhaila (The Tudor Tailor) in their research from wills and other documentary sources, common folks might have two to three different versions of each garment type (three shirts, three doublets, etc). The “best” clothing would be the most recently made by the tailor or purchased from a secondhand clothing merchant (a large trade in Tudor/Elizabethan times). Best clothing would usually be worn for Sunday church, or when people wanted to impress others. “Middling” clothing would be about a year old, and “Worst” clothing would be two years old. She mentioned that about three years was the average life cycle of a person’s garment.



Period images of the lower/middle class by Pieter Bruegel. These common folks’ clothes are not threadbare, nor shabby, but colorful and tidy. If you had limited clothing, you would take great care of it. A faire was an infrequent special social occasion upon which everyone would want to look presentable, so they would be wearing their Sunday best.

**FABRICS:** Wool and linen are best. They are natural fibers, “breathe” quite well, and are durable. Cotton twill is a second best option as an inexpensive substitute for wool broadcloth.

**TRIMS:** Trims should be minimal at best. You will notice that in most paintings of the period, like the ones above, there are none. Trim would be unavailable or too expensive for most lower class people. If you must, use it sparingly. No metallic or ribbon trims at all - try narrow bias-cut strips of fabric instead. Strips of contrasting fabric (called “guards”) may be applied to the edges of garments such as skirts, coats, etc.

## LOWER CLASS, MEN - BASIC ITEMS:

**SHIRT** - For a man, the shirt was made up of simple rectangles, not very full in size. It was fitted closely to the body and arms, with gussets under the arms to allow movement, perhaps gussets at the neck for shaping, maybe a band collar, and side slits to allow movement below the natural waist. There may even be side gussets to allow more movement. Shirts should be made of white or “natural” colored linen, ranging from coarse to as fine as the character can afford. They should not be dyed any other color.

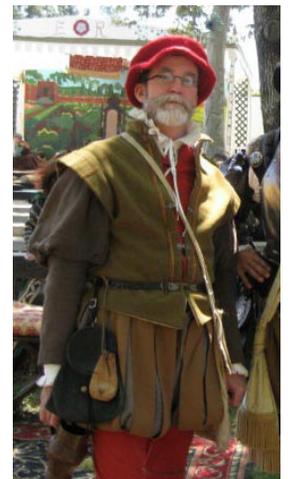
Avoid shirts with yokes, shirts that lace up the front, and the romantic billowy “poet” shirts commonly associated with the period.

**BREECHES/TRUNKHOSE** – Most common would be trunkhose (slops), a full mid-thigh length pant. Since these standards are for the 1570s, codpieces are going out of fashion. The fabric triangles often used are not period at all. Button fly closures with either wood, horn or cloth-covered buttons should be used. All trousers should be cut high, and worn at your natural waist, perhaps an inch below your rib cage. They should be made of wool or heavy linen. Venetians, the longer tapered pants, have not yet become widely worn, and would not be worn by lower-class men.

**DOUBLET (W/SLEEVES)** – Again made of wool, your doublet should have sleeves attached and very simple closures (ties, hooks and eyes or wood, horn or cloth-covered buttons). It may or may not have wings (epaulets) on the shoulders, but they should be minimal and continue the slope of the shoulder. It may have no peplum at all (the skirting at the waist), a short one or the skirt may go down to the hip joint. The doublet’s waist seam will be at the natural waist.

Going without a doublet in public is to be considered undressed, and hence uncivilized. Images in which the workers are not wearing doublets, depict them toiling in the fields – and since this is a faire and we’re all wearing our “Sunday best,” you should be wearing your doublet, with your sleeves.

**JERKIN** – A sleeveless doublet or jacket worn over your regular doublet; can be made of wool or occasionally, leather. It may or may not have closures or a collar. It may be plain or decoratively slashed.



**STOCKINGS** – Plain knit cotton or wool stockings that reach over the knee. They might be supported by garters, strips of cloth tied at the knee - Sewn fabric stockings are excellent. There should not be a gap between your breeches and your stockings – no knees showing!

**SHOES** – Leather, simple shape in only natural colored leather with round toes - not square or pointed. Latched shoes were common.

**COIF**– A simple white linen head covering. Optional for men.

**HAT** – A flat cap, a shaped wool tall hat with a rounded top, or a straw hat if your trade reflects that you work in the fields. If decorating it with feathers, avoid expensive, showy or long ones such as ostrich and pheasant. Think native British birds.

**BELT** – Narrow leather, no wider than one inch. Buckles should be somewhat small. Belts are worn over the doublet, up at the waistline, not down on the hips. The belt should follow the waist seam of the doublet. Use belt hooks to keep it in position.

**ACCESSORIES** – Leather aprons (smith, tanner, butcher), pouch, eating knife (small), cup (wood, horn, or pottery), and minimal trim and embroidery. No weapons (swords or daggers). Also, please limit the number of items hanging from your belt. We suggest a basket, shoulder or sling style bag or a sack if you have a great deal to carry. “Pilgrim” bottles can be used for carrying liquids.



## LOWER CLASS, WOMEN - BASIC ITEMS:

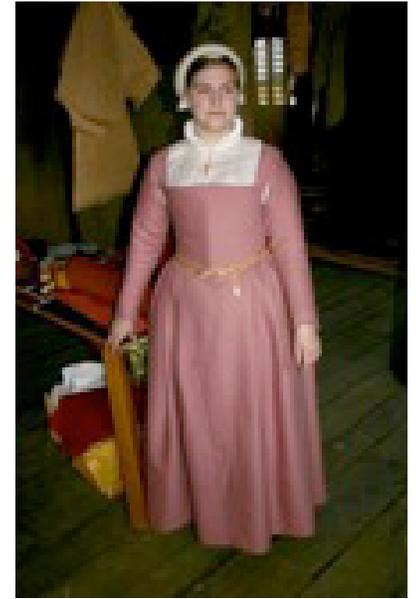
**SMOCK** – An Elizabethan smock is a more closely fitted, less billowy “chemise.” The neckline was generally square, sleeves fairly fitted but not tight, and it was approximately knee length. With the straight sleeve design, it was easier to roll the sleeves as well for working. Also, there were a few different styles used; some have a low square neck, while some are fuller (more of a V neckline to cover the chest with a simple collar or none). Shirts should be made of white or “natural” colored linen, ranging from coarse to as fine as the character can afford. They should not be dyed any other color. Draw-string or elasticized necklines and sleeve cuffs are not acceptable.



**WOMEN'S DRESS OR KIRTLE** – There are two options for women – a dress (with attached sleeves) or kirtle (usually with detachable sleeves). Either should be made out of wool lined in linen, or heavy weight linen for the entire garment (please remember that you'll need to increase the lining stiffness for the appropriate look and there is all that ironing to keep it looking tidy). Your dress should be a one-piece garment that can either have an open or closed skirt front. If open front, a simple underskirt will also need to be worn. The bodice can lace either up the front or back (including back side lacing). It should be lined with linen and the front either reinforced with boning, canvas, or simple Elizabethan stays worn underneath (see Middle Class section for the custom Elizabethan stays generator). These will give the overall shape and support needed for the Elizabethan silhouette. Skirt length can be below mid-calf to ankle. Dresses/Kirtles should have minimal to no trim. If you find you must use grommets for lacing eyelets – they should be covered. It is recommended to hand stitch the lacing holes. Sleeves may be constructed in contrasting or matching fabric, and should either be sewn in, or attached by ties or buttons.

**NOTE:** The neckline should be cut in such a way that the bustline does not spill over the top of the bodice, but is discreetly presented.





**PARTLET** – Made of linen most often white, black or off-white – this was worn over the smock and dress/kirtle for modesty and sun protection. Women of every class would have worn a partlet. They may be tied under the arms, attached with hooks and eyes, or pinned directly onto your dress.

**HEADCOVERINGS** - EVERY woman over the age of five should have their hair covered. If your hair is long enough, you can braid it with tapes which also makes a secure anchor for your coif or headwrap. (See YouTube for demo: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gjc4GJGUZBM&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gjc4GJGUZBM&feature=player_embedded)) Examples of headwear can be found here: <http://freespace.virgin.net/f.lea/coif.html>. For extra protection from the sun, it's also recommended that you wear a low-crowned, wide-brimmed straw hat.

**APRON** – A very simple rectangular design made from linen – all women would have had at least two – one for working which can be varying shades of natural linen from off white to beige, and one for their “Sunday best,” that can be either white, black, or a variety of colors.

**BELT** – Should be simple narrow leather (no wider than one inch) in natural colors with a small buckle. Avoid modern belts.





**OVERSLEEVES (Optional)** – Made of linen or knit wool. These were to keep the sleeves of your dress clean while you worked and would have been simply pinned on above the elbow.

**ACCESSORIES** - Basket (look for widely woven) for shopping and for holding your personal items such as an eating knife, wood or ceramic/clay drinking vessel, pouch for money (leather or cloth), and optional one or two keys to hang from your belt. Great personal accessories can be found at Historic Enterprises. They have a fine selection of everything you could need: eating knives, drinking vessels, buckles, table linens, hooks and eyes, pins for clothing pieces [http://historicenterprises.com/reenactment-goods-buckles-findings-c-102\\_184.html](http://historicenterprises.com/reenactment-goods-buckles-findings-c-102_184.html)



## MIDDLE CLASS:

### Burgesses, Gentry and Wealthy Merchants



The Middle Class were the people who drove the machine of the Elizabethan economy. They were generally well-to-do landowners and were very proud to possess their own heraldic arms. The regional authorities such as the Justices of the Peace and Burgesses were chosen from among their ranks. They were educated, cultured and were well-respected members of their communities. In many cases, they were as wealthy as,

if not wealthier than, the nobility, and they dressed to show it. Strict sumptuary laws were put in place to keep them from overstepping their bounds, but they pushed them when possible. <http://elizabethan.org/sumptuary/who-wears-what.html>

They wore richer, finer fabrics, and better-cut garments than the laboring folk, and were able to wear more trim and ornament. The colors they used would be deeper and richer. They would have some jewelry and other luxuries as well. They tended to imitate the fashions of the nobility, but in a humbler style.

**FABRICS:** Wool and linen are best. They are natural fibers, “breathe” quite well, and are durable. Cotton twill is a second best option as an inexpensive substitute for wool broadcloth. Much wealthier people might wear some silk, satin, damask, or brocade, but check any patterned fabric against period examples before using it.

**TRIMS:** Braids and velvets. If you're using ribbon, it should be grosgrain, not shiny or satin. Metallics should be reserved for the very wealthy and nobility.



## MIDDLE CLASS, MEN - BASIC ITEMS:

**SHIRT** - More sophisticated than your lower class counterparts. Standing ruffles on collars with or without blackwork (black geometric embroidery) that tie at the neck, fuller sleeves tied at the wrist with ruffles on the cuff. Shirts should be made of fine white linen. They should not be dyed any other color. They were worn with a starched linen ruff.

Avoid shirts with yokes or those that lace up the front and the romantic billowy “poet” shirts commonly associated with the period.



## BREECHES/TRUNKHOSE/VENETIAN HOSE

Middle Class breeches would be of a finer wool, have more trim and would resemble the upper class styles. They should be of deeper, richer, more expensive colors. They may be Venetian hose; trousers cut full and gathered or pleated at the waist and tapering towards the knees, or padded, paned trunkhose which may come down not much further than the thigh. Since these standards are for the 1570s, codpieces are going out of fashion so button fly closures should be used. All trousers should be cut high, and worn at your natural waist, perhaps an inch below your rib cage. They are suspended from the doublet by tying into holes on a band inside the waistband of the doublet.

**DOUBLET (W/SLEEVES)** – May have more trim, metal buttons and a more tailored cut than the lower class counterparts. Boning and padding are encouraged. Sleeves are still important and should be sewn into the doublet or, if detachable, the attachments should be hidden. Decorative slashing and embroidery are encouraged. Doublets may or may not have wings (epaulets) on the shoulders, but they should be minimal and in line with the shoulder. It may also have no peplum at all (the skirting at the waist), or a short one as long as three inches.





**JERKIN** – A sleeveless doublet or jacket worn over your regular doublet; can be made of wool or occasionally, leather. It may or may not have closures, a collar, or revers. It may be plain or decoratively slashed.

**COATS AND CAPES** – Long robes, knee-length gowns, with or without sleeves, capes and coats help make the impression of a respectable gentleman. should be richly colored. Fur collars and trim are a plus.

**STOCKINGS** – Fine knit cotton or wool stockings, or cut cloth hose made of light wool and form-fitted to the wearer's leg

**SHOES** – Simple slip-on shoes which may be pinked or slashed (decoratively cut), or latchet shoes. Boots should be close-fitting and come up above the knee. Toes should be round, not square or pointed, and be made of natural or colored leather.

**BELT** – Narrow leather, no wider than one inch. Buckles should be somewhat small. Belts are worn over the doublet, up at the waistline, not down on the hips. The belt should follow the waist seam of the doublet. Use belt hooks to keep it in position.



**HAT** – Flat cap, Italian bonnet or blocked felt tall hat with minimal trim and a few short feathers for decoration.

**RUFFS** - In white linen, with or without blackwork embroidery. Mandatory for the Middle Class on both the neck and the wrists. May be attached to the shirt or separate.

**ACCESSORIES** – Elaborate belt purses with metal fittings, keys, pomanders, metal or glass drinking vessels, leather gloves, garters, staffs, rings, chains, and pendants.

## MIDDLE CLASS, WOMEN - BASIC ITEMS:



**SMOCK** – Made of fine, white linen but still the same simple fitted shape. Might have detailed blackwork on collar and cuffs and could have the higher collar with a ruffle, that ties at the neck and cuffs. They should not be dyed any other color. Drawstring or elasticized necklines or cuffs are not acceptable.

**STAYS/ CORSETRY** – a simple Elizabethan corset or boned seams in the bodice to achieve the proper silhouette.

**WOMEN'S DRESS OR KIRTLE** – While your typical Middle Class Elizabethan woman would wear several layers of clothing (dress over kirtle), we understand that some climates make this impractical. Therefore, we recommend either a stiffly boned overdress to create the illusion of double layering that would be made of finer wool or linen and decoratively trimmed. The drawing above

shows both overdresses and a more basic kirtle-type gown. Farthingales may be stiffened with reed or hemp-cord. A small bumroll, a crescent-shaped pad tied around the waist to support the skirts, is also acceptable. Dresses and surcoats can be decorated with minimal metallic or bias-cut trim, with attached sleeves that may also be decoratively trimmed, or “pinked” or “slashed”.

**NOTE:** The neckline should be cut in such a way that the bustline does not spill over the top of the bodice, but is discreetly presented.



**PARTLET** – Made of linen most often white, black or off-white, – this was worn over the smock and under the dress/kirtle for modesty and sun protection. Women of every class would have worn a partlet. They may be tied under the arms, attached with hooks and eyes, or pinned directly onto your dress. They may be fitted or loosely shaped and pinned. (See image above).

**HEADCOVERINGS** - EVERY woman over the age of five should have their hair covered. Middle Class women should display their wealth by wearing elaborate hats such as Italian bonnets, tall pleated hats or shaped felt hats, moderately trimmed and sporting short decorative feathers (no peacock), and worn over a plain or blackworked caul.

**ACCESSORIES** - Basket (look for widely woven) for shopping and for holding your personal items such as an eating knife, metal or glass drinking vessel, pouch for money (leather or cloth) with metal fittings, pomanders, fans, mirrors, leather gloves, handkerchiefs. Some small jewelry including rings, chains and pendants. See period portraiture for examples.



1611.—Country Women with Muffins. (From Map of England.)



## READY TO WEAR OPTIONS:

### Men's Doublet & Breeches:

- Doublet and Breeches - [www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)
- 16th-17th Century Man's Shirt - [www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)

### Men's Breeches:

- Cuffed Breeches - remove cuff lacings and replace cuff strings with wood or horn buttons; order in wool - [www.verymerryseamstress.com](http://www.verymerryseamstress.com)

### Men's Shirts:

- St. Louis Undertunic - [www.verymerryseamstress.com](http://www.verymerryseamstress.com)
- 14th-15th Century Man's Shirt - [www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)
- Renaissance Shirt with Blackwork - [www.renstore.com](http://www.renstore.com)

### Woman's Chemise:

- Elizabethan Chemise - [www.verymerryseamstress.com](http://www.verymerryseamstress.com)
- Reconstructing History Woman's Shift - [www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)

### Ruffs:

- Renaissance Tailor - [www.renaissancetailor.com](http://www.renaissancetailor.com)

### Woman's Partlets:

- Historically Accurate Partlet - [www.verymerryseamstress.com](http://www.verymerryseamstress.com)

### Coif:

- Coif (only) - [www.verymerryseamstress.com/hats.htm#coif](http://www.verymerryseamstress.com/hats.htm#coif)
- Reconstructing History Woman's 16th Century Coif - [www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)

### Hats:

- Felt Hat Blanks - [www.blockaderunner.com](http://www.blockaderunner.com)
- Ladies' Straw Hat - [www.jas-townsend.com](http://www.jas-townsend.com)

### Stockings:

- Heavy Cotton Stockings (do not get striped variety!) - [www.jas-townsend.com](http://www.jas-townsend.com)
- Delp Stockings - [www.smoke-fire.com](http://www.smoke-fire.com)

### Shoes:

- Mary Rose Shoe by Bohemond - [www.nmia.com/~bohemond/Bootshop/shoe-page/maryrose.htm](http://www.nmia.com/~bohemond/Bootshop/shoe-page/maryrose.htm)
- Plantagenet Shoes - [www.plantagenetshoes.co.uk](http://www.plantagenetshoes.co.uk)
- Pilgrim Shoes - [www.pilgrimshoes.co.uk](http://www.pilgrimshoes.co.uk)
- Sarah Juniper Shoes - [www.sarahjuniper.co.uk](http://www.sarahjuniper.co.uk)

### Period Upper Class Jewelry:

- [www.dragonsjewels.com](http://www.dragonsjewels.com)
- [www.tudorjewels.com](http://www.tudorjewels.com)
- [www.sapphireandsage.com/replicas.html](http://www.sapphireandsage.com/replicas.html)
- [www.gemmeus.com](http://www.gemmeus.com)



Elizabethan Chemise  
[www.verymerryseamstress.com](http://www.verymerryseamstress.com)



Woman's Shift  
[www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)



Common Woman's Ensemble  
[www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)



Common Woman's Kirtle  
[www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)



Renaissance Tailor Ruffs



Historically Accurate Partlet  
[www.verymerryseamstress.com](http://www.verymerryseamstress.com)



Blockade Runner-Felt Hat forms



Cuffed Breeches  
Very Merry Seamstress



St. Louis Undertunic  
Very Merry Seamstress



Renaissance Shirt with Blackwork  
[www.renstore.com](http://www.renstore.com)



14th-15th-century-mans-shirt  
Reconstructing History



Latchet Shoes



[www.bootsbybohemond.com](http://www.bootsbybohemond.com)

Mary Rose Shoes



Pilgrim Shoes



# WOMEN - PATTERNS AND INSTRUCTIONS:

- Mikhaila, Ninya & Malcolm-Davies, Jane: The Tudor Tailor. Costume & Fashion Press, 2006.
- Kirtle instructions and details <http://freespace.virgin.net/f.lea/whattowear.html>
- Early Tudor Womens Gown, Tudor Kirtle - [www.tudortailor.com/patternshop](http://www.tudortailor.com/patternshop)
- Elizabethan Commonwoman's Outfit – RH208 - [www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)
- 1600s Shirts & Shifts – RH104 - [www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)
- Early Tudor Commonwoman's Outfit – RH603 - [www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)
- Cloth Hose – RH001 - [www.reconstructinghistory.com](http://www.reconstructinghistory.com)
- Guidelines to Creating a Lower Class Ensemble (modifications to Margo's Patterns Elizabethan Lady's Ensemble) - <http://www.margospatterns.com/wwadapt.pdf>
- Partlet Instructions - [www.renaissance tailor.com/demos\\_partlets](http://www.renaissance tailor.com/demos_partlets)
- Custom Elizabethan Corset Generator - [www.elizabethancostume.net/custompat/](http://www.elizabethancostume.net/custompat/)
- Custom Elizabethan Smock Generator - [www.elizabethancostume.net/smockpat/index.html](http://www.elizabethancostume.net/smockpat/index.html)

