

Both men and women can wear capes and cloaks. These are useful garments -- they cover up many sins in your other clothing....

Men can wear a tunic-type shirt over brown pants, with a belt at the waist. Modern collars are Right Out. Add decorative wrappings of colored ribbon around your lower legs; here is a place for color. Wear moccasins or slippers rather than modern shoes or boots, if possible.

Women should wear a long, flowing dress, plain-colored except perhaps for decorative trim at neck, sleeves, and hem. A shawl fastened in front with a brooch makes a nice decorative touch.

You haven't decided on a persona yet, and want something simple until you find out what era's dress you'll need. You've just been invited to a SCA wedding, and want to dress appropriately -- but will have no further use for medieval clothes....

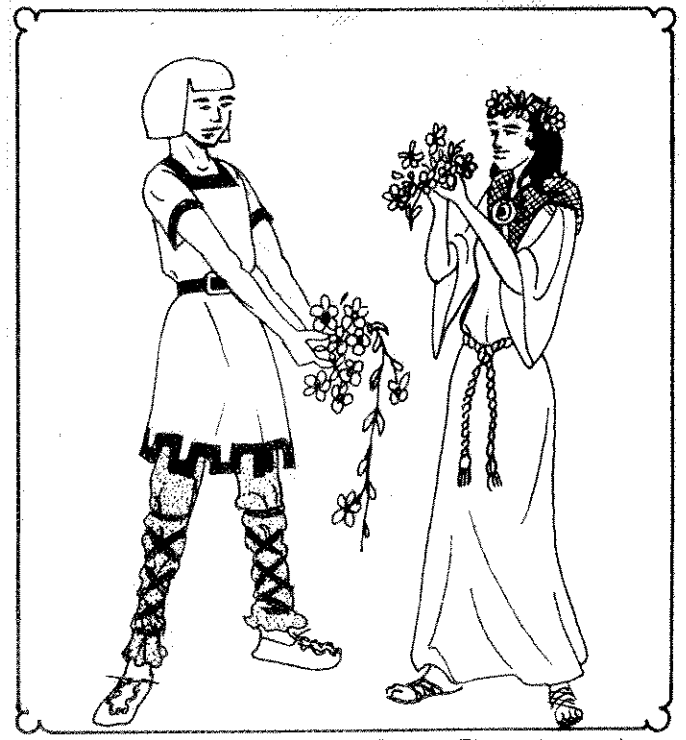
Then you want something simple and basic. Forget about embroidery; time, money, and work. You want to be a yeoman, a peasant, a simple goodwife.

You will wear clothes that are plain of cut, and rather coarse of weave. Colors should be earth colors: greens and browns. The brighter colors were more expensive -- use them for trim and decoration rather than as material for the outfit itself. And avoid prints.

So there you are:

You're going to your first tournament, and you want to fit in....

medieval garb for the Compleat Beginner



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MEN can pin two towels at the shoulder, and belt them at the waist, to get an approximation of a tabard. Bind the lower pants-legs with coloured ribbon.

WOMEN can wear two towels Viking-style with ribbons over the shoulder and large brooches at the corners of the front towel. Wear over a flowing dress, with a kerchief.

towels, ribbons, &c.

A Cap to top it All off:

Cut two triangles of contrasting cloth; sew right-side together, turn right side out thru opening

fold & sew shut; trim excess

fold up brim...

So you want to join us?

For further information, check out:

Medieval Theatre Costume, by Iris Brooke

The Evolution of Fashion, Pattern and Cut from 1066 to 1930, by Margaret Hamilton Hill and Peter Bucknell

Both of these books are filled with patterns for clothing both elegant and simple.

The Illustrated Hassle-Free Make Your Own Clothes Book and Son of Hassle-Free Sewing by Sharon Rosenberg and Joan Wiener. These books got quite a reputation during the Flower Child era -- mostly for freeing clothesmakers from the tyranny of the pattern. A lot of what they do is medieval; they get a lot of mileage out of the T-tunic, and they give a lot of details I haven't room for. Experienced clothiers can make it with just the first two books; beginners should pick up Hassle-Free for basics.

Einar