

The Newcomers Guide

Welcome to the Society for Creative Anachronism,



The Shire of Colles Ardorum
(Illawarra Region)



The College of St Malachy!
(University of Wollongong)

The Newcomers Guide includes:

The Quick Guide to the SCA
Practical Worksheet for Tunic Construction
Female Surcoats and Underdresses
The Beginners Guide to Fabric
and The Rules of Nine Mens Morris

The Quick Guide to the SCA.

So you've just walked into your first SCA event and have started thinking "What the HELL do I do now?!?" Well I've been playing for over 2 years and still get the same feeling. So I thought I'd do something about it and find out essentially the cheats rules for being "medieval."

The "What?" words

First, let's combat some of the "What?" and "Huh?" moments and words you're likely to come across well, almost immediately.

SCA – Society of Creative Anachronism – tries to recreate the nice bits of Medieval and Renaissance Western Europe from the period prior to 1600 AD (or thereabouts). We assume everyone is of noble birth, no one is poor, and religion is an area we all acknowledge but remove from 'the game.'

Scadian or **SCAer** – Nick name for someone who participates in the SCA. Pronounced "Skay-de-an".

Known World – The SCA is an international organisation with Kingdoms across the globe. This phrase refers to the medieval world we create in these Kingdoms.

Mundane – Anything from real life, your day job, wrist watch, mobile phone, your Mundane name is your real name.

SCA Name – A plausible medieval name that you choose to be known by while at SCA events. Don't try and use a real Historical (or Fantasy) figure's name, it's not cool.

Kingdom – An area ruled by a King and Queen. Australia and New Zealand is one Kingdom while the USA has several Kingdoms covering the country.

Lochac – Australia and New Zealand's Medieval Kingdom name, pronounced "Lock-ark".

Barony – Kingdoms are divided into sections – kind of like states in the mundane world – Barony's are big groups that have a Baron and Baroness ruling, who report to the Crown (King and Queen).

Shire – Another area or group within the Kingdom that is not as large as a Barony, but is independent of Baronies and has no Baron or Baroness.

Event – Some do put on by an SCA group often there will be a feast, fighting a tournament or war is common as is dancing to live or pre-recorded music. If the King and Queen or Baron and Baroness (or both) are in attendance then there would probably be a court held – more about that later.

So you've walked into an event – what to say and do.

Some tips on what to expect mainly at a feast, but it applies to all other types of events too.

Period Clothing – you need to make an 'attempt' at clothing from the SCA period.

There is a general 5 meters by candle light rule that means if it looks right from 5 meters away in a room only lit by candles, then you're ok. Sounds scary? Ask the seneschal of the group before the event for some 'Hospit' – a loan of acceptable clothing for the night. Steer clear of white belts, they are for Knights.

'My Lord/ Lady' – as I said before, we're all noble so everyone is greeted using the phrase 'milord' or 'milady' as a general courtesy. It's odd at first but you will get used to it... plus you instantly know what to call everyone as even people with specific titles appreciate the simple courtesy of this form of address!

Lords, Ladies and other Titles – Sometimes you will hear people being referred to as Lord Such-n-such or Lady So-n-so, this is slightly different to Milord or Milady as it is an awarded Title. When you come to the SCA you are of noble birth but have not yet earned a Title. By helping out and becoming a part of things you will eventually be given an Award of Arms which comes with the title of Lord/Lady. See below for more on Fancy hats and other important people.

Bowing and Curtseying – this also feels really odd the first few times, you get used to it though. Easiest way to curtsey is to swing one foot out and around behind the other in a small semi circle. Once it's there bend your knees slightly so your torso sinks down and bow your head slightly. If you're wearing a large skirt and are nervous about getting curtseying right, if all else fails just bend both knees so your body sinks a bit and bow your head. Best to hold your skirt out on both sides slightly with your hands. If your skirt's not big enough to hold out, just hold your hands, palms to the front, where you would have held your skirt out. To bow is very similar, move one foot to behind the other, place one hand across your abdomen and gently bend your whole torso over slightly and bow your head. Essentially we're removing the opportunity for your butt to stick out while bowing or curtseying. Have a practice in the privacy of your own home, it'll feel silly but that's ok.

Feasting Gear – Think byo medieval table setting. You'll need to bring along a plate and/or bowl, cup and utensils. Check out an op shop for wooden, metal or pottery plates and cups that aren't too fancy and you should fit right in. Bring along a plain silver knife, fork and spoon to eat with. Strictly speaking forks weren't around but we can bend the rules here and there until you're more comfortable. Best to carry all these in a basket... no use dropping everything!

Candles – no electricity... candles are the main source of light in medieval times. It's a good idea to pick up a pack of Household candles before going to a feast (about 60 cents at your local supermarket). If the feast organiser hasn't provided candles, then you won't be left eating in the dark.

Remove – Fancy SCA word for course, probably wasn't even used in medieval times, but hey, it sounds cool. There is a gap between each remove. Pace yourself, don't eat loads of the first remove or you're likely to be too full to eat dessert which will be the last of multiple removes. Often servers are asked for, jump up and help out, all you have to do is bring the food to a couple of tables and return the empty platter for each remove, it's a great way to meet everyone!

High Table – if Royalty are present (think King and Queen or Baron and Baroness on a local scale) a special table will be placed in a prominent place and will be served food first. If you walk past the High Table (within about 5 meters in front of) stop for a brief moment and bow or curtsey – even if the Royalty are not at their seats.

Thrones – seats for the royalty, same rules apply as with the High Table.

Court – Sounds scary but it's a cinch! A loud voice will tell you to gather for court – that's the herald – they'll continue to let you know what you're supposed to do throughout the court. Gather close to the Thrones or Royalty leaving about a 3 to 4 metre semi circle in front of them. There'll be a lot of talking, people will be given awards, new information and laws for the Kingdom or Barony may be announced and generally a nice little piece of theatre will happen right in front of you. Sit quietly and observe, if you're lost or don't

understand quietly ask the person next to you. To congratulate or generally acknowledge someone receiving or accomplishing something in the court, the Herald (there's that loud voice again) will call for three cheers and will give the 'Hip Hip' before each cheer. Join in with "Huzzah!" for each cheer – not Hurrah. If you get called up during court, pause as you approach the royalty and bow or curtsy then kneel on the cushions in front to the King and Queen or Baron and Baroness. Note: if there is more than one set of royalty you should bow to each of them, starting with the most important or at least try to encompass them all in your bow. As you leave, take a few steps backwards, bow or curtsy then turn to walk back to your seat.

“What do I call the person with the fancy hat on?”

Well, there are plenty of fancy hats in the SCA, not all of them indicate an important person. You're looking for crowns and coronets. Anyone can wear a plain or jewelled metal band up to 2.5cm wide but once they look fancier than that (think points and flashy jewels), hedge your bets and imagine they're of a high rank in the SCA.

Here's a tip – if in doubt call the person “Your Excellency”, if you're wrong they'll let you know the right title to use.

Let's look at what you call the high-up people and where in the hierarchy they sit.

King or Queen – Call them “**Your Majesty**”. Give a small Bow or Curtsey if they walk past you. Lochac's crowns have slender crucifixes extending above the band.

Crown Prince or Princess – Call them “**Your Royal Highness**”. They will be the next King and Queen. Give a small Bow or Curtsey if they walk past you. Lochac's Coronet's have a large cross on the front of a broad band.

Baron or Baroness – Call them “**Your Excellency**”. They look after the Barony and are local representatives of the Crown. Give a small Bow or Curtsey if they walk past you. Their coronets have 6 points.

Duke or Duchess – Call them “**Your Grace**”. They've been King or Queen more than once. Their coronets have strawberry leaves.

Count or Countess – Call them “**Your Excellency**”. They've been King or Queen once. Their coronets have 8 points or raised sections.

Viscount or Viscountess – Call them “**Your Excellency**”. They've been Prince or Princess once or more. They were not King or Queen because Lochac at the time had not been a Kingdom and could therefore not have a King and Queen.

“They're not Royal but they're Special” - other important people

Court Baron or Baroness – are given the title as a great honour though they do not rule over a group of people or piece of land. Call them “**Your Excellency**”.

The peerage or “Peers” have been awarded the highest honour in their field so they get a title and we should try and address them correctly. You'll know them usually by the fact that they are wearing a large link or elaborate chain (this is a symbol of fealty to the Crown) or a medallion, pin or brooch representing the symbol of their peerage.

Knight – Heavy Fighter of a very high level. Call them “**Sir**”. Currently there are no female Knights in Lochac... but there's plenty on their way. They also wear a white belt.

Laurel – Arts and Sciences extraordinaire. Call them “**Mistress or Master**”. These people have skills as diverse as sewing, singing, cooking and even armouring. They will wear the symbol of a Laurel Wreath.

Pelicans – Provide Service to the Society. Call them “**Mistress or Master**”. These people are exceptionally helpful and can often help you out. They wear the symbol of a Pelican. While “Pelican” is a silly name, it comes from the story that in times of extreme hardship the bird will pluck feathers from its breast so that its young can feed from its blood.

The Honorable Lady/Lord – Between the Award of Arms and the Peerages (Patent of Arms) is an award, Grant of Arms, for those who have done great things for the Kingdom. They have no badge or easy way to tell who they are but if you get introduced to “The Honorable Lady/Lord Thingamy” call them “**Your Ladyship/Lordship**”.

Some general advice:

- Don't smoke inside feast halls or near entries or even fighting events, try and remove yourself a little downwind. Keeping an old film canister in your pocket or pouch is a good way to collect butts.
- Turn your mobile phone off or to silent. If you do need to use the phone go outside the hall or move away from the main festivities. Mobile phones 'don't exist' remember.
- Cover your watch or “time piece” with sleeves and your soft drink bottles and alcohol bottles should be out of sight, like under a table or in a cloth bag, they also 'don't exist'.
- When using a camera warn people if you are using a flash – they're bloody bright and a bit of a shock in low candle light, plus they again 'don't exist'.
- If someone is doing something that offends you or is not right, ask them nicely to stop or move away early on rather than getting all worked up about it.
- If in doubt – ASK! It's rare to find someone who won't help you out in the SCA

This guide was compiled in January 2006. Information was drawn from the Rowany Newcomers Handbook available online at <http://www.sca.org.au/rowany/newcomers/>. This hand book was originally written and put together by Mistress Rowan Perigrinne and Lady Yseult de Lacy. The introduction was loosely based on an article written by Mistress Siobhan Medhbh O'Roarke.

Many thanks to those who gave their time and effort in consulting with regarding this guide especially their excellencies the Baron and Baroness of Rowany and Master Baron Thaddeus Blayney.

I hope this guide is of use to you and that you go on from here to enjoy your time in the SCA.

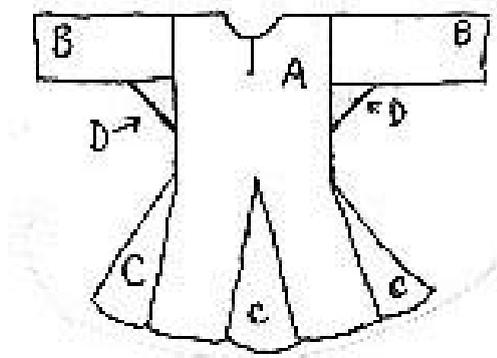
Yours in Service

Lady Mayela de la Rue

Practical Worksheet for Tunic Construction

Step One: What will it look like?

These are the pieces of your tunic. Think about how they go together in this drawing of the finished tunic.



A: The body piece forms the front and back of the main part of the tunic.

B: Sleeves

C: Gores: triangular pieces of fabric that give room to move in the "skirt" of the tunic. The more movement you want, the wider they should be at the bottom. 25-30cm is good for a knee-length tunic; twice that for floor length. These are the same fabric as the rest of the garment.

D: Gusset: square pieces of material that give ease at the underarm. These are the same

fabric as the rest of the garment.

Step Two: How much fabric do I need?

Once you take your measurements, you will be able to figure this out. If we assume 120cm wide fabric, (cotton broadcloth, for example,) and that you are not more than 100cm around your body, and your garment is not going to be longer than 150cm (this would be floor length on a shortish woman or knee length on a tall man), then 4 metres will be plenty, with room for gores, sleeves, etc.

The easy way to figure this is double the length that you want your garment to be, as long as * of your circumference leaves at least 50cm of fabric width. You can get this down to less fabric if you graph it out carefully. Note that the tunic should be made out of all the same fabric; gores, sleeves, etc, should match the body.

Step Three: Measurements

Take (and write down) the following measurements:

Column A	Column B
1. Head:	3a. Chest:
2. Neck:	3b. Tummy:
3. Use the largest of the three measurements in column B	3c. Hips:
4. Back of neck to wrist:	
5. Upper arm circumference:	
6. Hand circumference:	
7. Shoulder to level where you want the slit to end(The farthest point down your chest for the slit -- ie, no farther!):	
8. Shoulder to waist:	
9. Waist to hem (at side seam)	
10. Shoulder to hem:	

Note: Keep in mind that we are looking for your largest dimensions.

Tunics are not closely fitted garments; you need to be able to move. Thus, if your tummy is larger than where your belt goes around, measure the tummy, not the "waist."

Now we will adjust these numbers so that we can cut out the pieces easily. These assumptions are for adults; children's proportions for neck vs. head measurement will result in a very long slit; you might want to make a wider neck instead. These new figures include seam allowance (1.25cm) and "ease," i.e., "movement room."

Column A	Adjusted figures
1. Head: no change	
2. Neck becomes neck hole for close-fitting style: subtract 7.5cm from circumference for seam allowance and divide by 2 -- IF you are folding over neck seam allowance. If using bias tape, do not subtract the 7.5cm (see note below about this)	
3. This becomes short dimension of body piece - see note	
4. Back of neck to wrist becomes sleeve length. See note	
5. Upper arm becomes sleeve width: add 1" seam and 2" ease	
6. Hand diameter becomes cuff (only if sleeve is tapered) add 2.5cm seam and any desired ease	(optional)
7. Shoulder to slit end becomes slit length - see note.	
8. Shoulder to waist: no change	
9. Waist to hem becomes centre skirt slits: add desired hem fold over, if any.	
10: Shoulder to hem becomes long dimension of body piece - see note	

Notes:

2. This may seem counter-intuitive, so stick with me. The tunic neck should lie right at the neck -- not a wide opening, but more like the neck on a crew-neck sweater. In order to achieve this with fabric, the initial cut needs to be smaller than the neck, so that as you fold back the seam allowance, you approach the right circumference. A working neck circumference that is 7.5cm smaller than your real neck circumference is about the right amount for most people. If you're not doing some sort of folded over neck (seam or lining or facing) you don't need to make a neck opening that is smaller than your neck; make it right at your neck size.

3: This one is a little complex. It will be cut out as a long rectangle of fabric and needs ease.

Take #3 original measurements. Divide by two. Add 5cm for "ease" & 2.5cm for total seam allowance: This will be the "short" dimension of the body piece.

4: Neck-to-wrist: _____ Minus half of new #3: _____ Equals sleeve length:

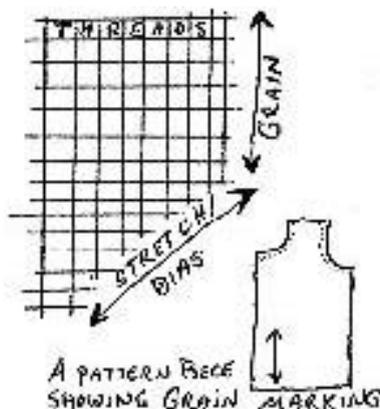
7: The combination of the neck hole and the slit must allow your head through!

Head: _____ Minus neck: _____ Equals: _____. Divide this by 2 for minimum: _____ Desired slit length (your call):

10: Long body piece: Shoulder to hem: _____ Plus hem fold over: _____ Multiply by 2: _____

Now that we have all the measurements for our pieces, let's cut them out!

Step Four: A digression: Two terms and a technique



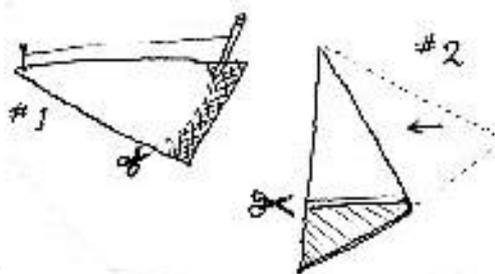
Fabric Grain and Bias:

This applies to woven fabrics, not knits. (Knit fabrics are not advised for SCA costuming.)

The grain of the fabric is the direction that the warp and weft threads run; they are perpendicular to each other. Fabric does not stretch much on the grain, but if you stretch it at a 45-degree angle to the grain, it stretches a lot. This angle is called the bias. When sewing these tunics, the goal is to attach bias edges of the gores to the straight-grain edges of the tunic. This prevents long-term stretching of the gores. Straight grain is often marked with a double-ended arrow.

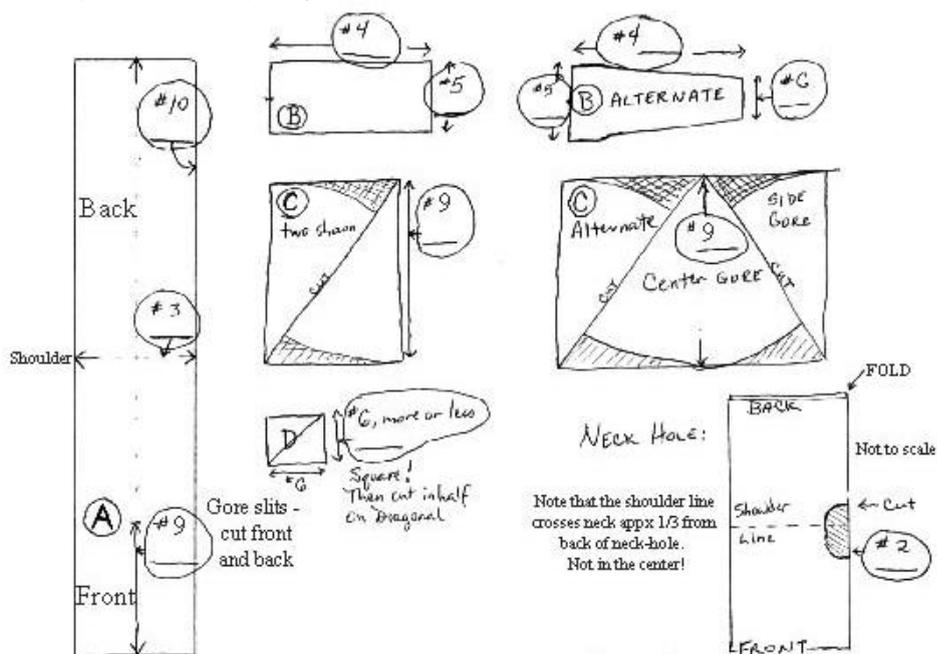
How to cut a gore:

If you cut a simple triangle, one edge will be longer than the other, or the edges will be longer. You need to make a "pie piece" or "circle-section" instead. This is actually very simple. Either (1) use a string and chalk to mark a curve with the top of the triangle as the pivot point, or (2) cut your triangle (see step five) and then fold the short edge along the long edge and cut off the remaining bit. Fold again to approximate a curve.



Step Five: Cutting

These are the separate pieces you need. Fill in the measurements from the second table (in the circles) so you know what to cut out.



1. Cut out the long body piece A first. Cut a very tiny slit (1/4") at the shoulder line on each side.
2. Cut two sleeves B. See alternate cutting diagram for sleeves if you want tapered sleeves. Cut a very tiny slit at the centre of the top of the sleeve
3. Cut gores C. Gores can be cheated on. The centre front (cf) and centre back (cb) gores can be cut as one triangle rather than two. See alternate cutting diagram for gores.
4. Then cut two gussets D from scraps. Cut each in half on the diagonal.
5. Cut out neck hole by folding body piece along centre line only. Mark using a pencil or chalk. Neck is an oval that is offset along the shoulder line. See diagram.
6. Cut neck slit. Be sure to make it straight! (You can check the fabric weave to assist in straightness.)
7. Cut centre front and centre back gore slits. You're done!

Step Six: Sewing it all together

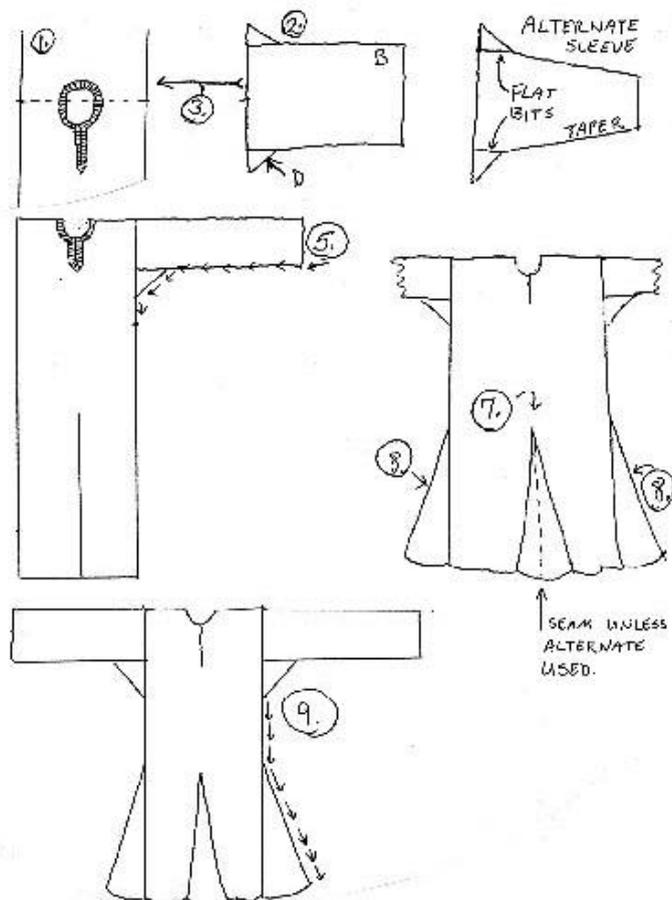
It is easiest to finish the edges or add trim to most of the tunic before it is sewn together. Trim was usually applied over seams (such as the upper arm) or at the neckline. Hems were also sometimes trimmed. Wrists were less commonly trimmed. Don't forget that all seams are sewn with garment inside out.

There are two ways that you can sew it together. My preferred method is first (it is more like "normal" clothing construction), but some folks think the second method makes more sense, because everything stays flat until the very last moment.

Method One:

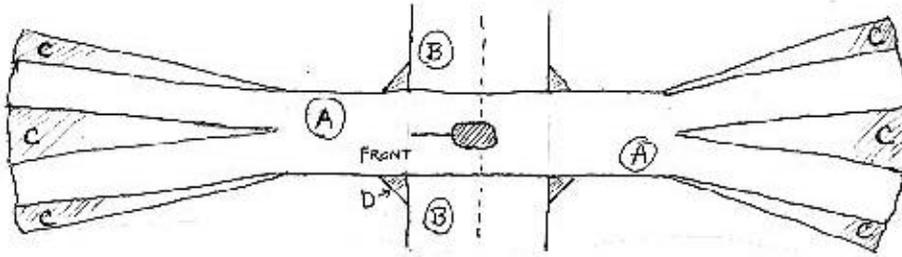
1. Run a line of straight stitching inside neck opening to prevent stretching. Finish neck opening.
2. Sew little gusset to each side of sleeve at upper arm.
3. Sew sleeves to long body piece, matching tiny slits. Add trim over sleeve seam (optional).
5. Sew underarm seams from wrist to gusset to two inches along long body piece side seams. Finish wrist hem.
7. Sew cf and cb gore into cf and cb slits. (May be easiest to sew the points in by hand.) NOTE: the idea here is that bias edges get sewn to grain edges.
8. Sew one gore each from hem to waist of long body piece.
9. Sew side seams from under arm to hem along side gores. Finish hem

Method One:



Method Two:

Same process, but do not do Step 5 or 9. Instead, at step 9, sew both side seams in two fell swoops. Your garment will look like the illustration below until Step 9.



You're done! Add a belt and some other accessories and you're set!

All material © 1999-2001 Cynthia Virtue

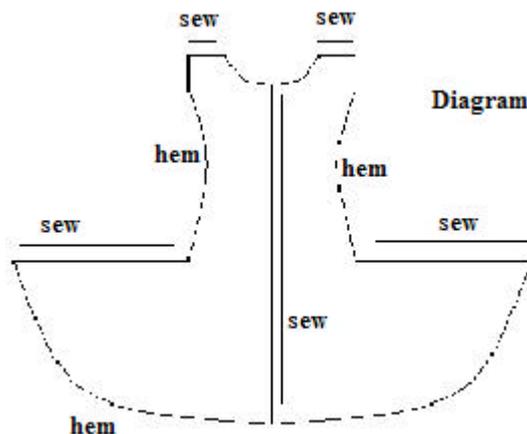
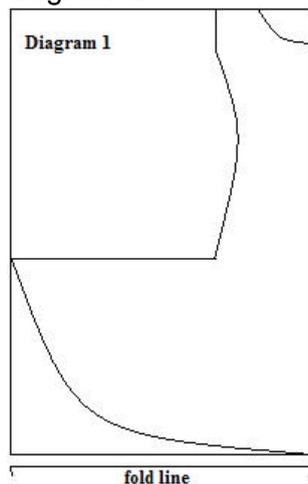
Female Surcoats and Underdresses

What you will need:

- 3 metres green fabric (drill or similar weight is best)
- 3 metres white or black fabric (drill or similar weight is best)
- 1 metre white fabric (lighter weight like bleached cotton, lawn or poplin)
- Matching thread

Making the Surcoat:

Fold your green fabric in half, right sides together. Cut out pattern as shown in diagram 1:

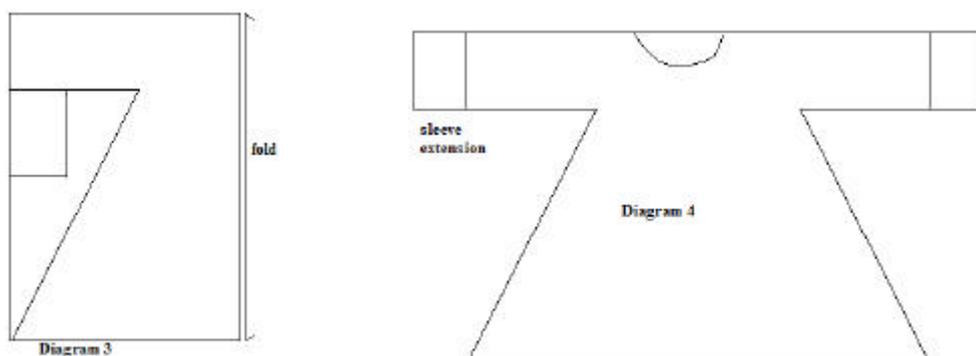


Note: The corner on the skirt should not be so sharp, follow the curve out to the edge of the material.

The green should be a on the front left of your garment when you are wearing it. Repeat the process with the white (or black) fabric, making sure to reverse the pattern. Take a green quarter and a white (or black) quarter and sew the centre seam. Repeat with remaining quarters. Sew the shoulder seams. Sew the side seams, but remember to leave the armholes open (see diagram 2). Hem the armholes, neck hole, and bottom of the surcoat. Your surcoat is now finished. If you are planning to wear it to festival it is advisable to scotchgard the bottom of the dress to prevent mud from staining it.

Making the Underdress:

Fold the white fabric in half and cut the pattern as shown in diagram 3. Use a well fitting tunic or shirt as a guide. The underdress should be close fitting rather than loose. Make up as you would a tunic and use the extra fabric as sleeve extensions (diagram 4).



Beginner's Guide to Fabric

When we make clothes in the SCA, we try and find fabrics appropriate to our period- it improves the look and feel of the garments, adds to their authenticity, and usually makes them more comfortable to wear. This means we try and stick to linens, silks, wools and cottons, all of which were known and used during period (pre 17th century).

Linen- Linen is spun from the flax plant, and creates a fabric that is soft, reasonably strong and very cool to wear. At some stores it will only come in modern summer colours (hot pinks, turquoise blue), but usually stores stock a good range. It is good for tunics, cotehardies, and general garb though in medieval times, linen was usually white and used only for undergarments (though that shouldn't stop you using it for other things). It can be rather expensive, so often it is good to start with cotton while you get the hang of things. Linen isn't as hard wearing as cotton either, which may be a consideration if you're making trews, or battle gear. Cotton/linen blends are also quite nice. One note, the name 'linen' can also be attached to fabric made of polyester and other synthetics. These aren't what you're looking for- just check the fibre content and make sure it has 'linen' fibre.

Some places to shop:

Spotlight: \$16/m pure linen, \$6/m cotton/linen blend, good range of colours.

Lincraft: rarely has good colours and often expensive- but can be good at end of season.

Fine Wools Direct: \$14- \$22/m for linen, \$13.75 for blends, but 50% off sales are held over several weeks throughout the year. I've picked up cotton/linen blends for \$2/m. Nice quality.

E&M Greenfield: linen and cotton/linen blends in a range of colours- similar prices as Spotlight (I think).

Silk- Silk is farmed from the silk worm, and just like in medieval times, is very expensive. It's hot to wear, not very durable, and frays easily. It does look pretty, but it's not recommended as a fabric to start with. Modern silk also has a very different feel from other natural fibres. If you are interested, try to look for silk that has an even, smooth weave- by this I mean without the imperfections characteristic of modern shot silk. One exception to the above is the use of silk organza for stiff translucent veils, or other silk in head wear and small accessories.

E&M Greenfield: the place to get pure silk organza- \$8.80/m + \$3 cutting fee.
Lucky Trieus: can order in a range of colours for standard silk- about \$20/m.
Fine Wools Direct: an interesting range- can find good buys.
Lincraft, Spotlight etc. will also have silk, about \$20/m.

Wool- We all know where wool comes from and it makes a wonderfully warm fabric. Wool comes in various weights, some being suitable for tunics, dresses or linings (to make things extra warm) and the thicker variety being used for cloaks and hoods. Pure wool is more expensive than wool blends, so you might prefer to go with a mix to start with (which aren't too bad as long as they're about half wool). However you do get what you pay for- if you can afford nice thick, good quality wool you won't regret it. You will definitely need a cloak if you intend to make it to festival, so start looking out for fabric now.

Lincraft: usually cloak weight wool goes for \$20-\$30/m, which given that you're buying at least 3m, turns out rather expensive. But sometimes out of season you can find good buys for under \$10/m- just keep your eyes out.

Fine Wools Direct: Is usually the place to go for wool. They stock a large range, but are usually quite expensive too, unless you go during one of the sales, in which case wool at \$15/m or less should be easy to find. Just try and go at the beginning of the sale, rather than the end- SCA people know how to clean out a store.

Cotton- Cotton is made from cotton, and is quite a versatile fabric for use in the SCA. It is a strong fibre, durable, and quite cool depending on the weight. In weight it ranges from cotton voile or lawn (used in chemises and shirts), to cotton poplin, to homespun or broadcloth (used for tunics, cotehardies, skirts, trews whatever really), to drill (good for hard wearing things like trews, gambessons or whatever you like), to cotton canvas (used for stiffening bodices, shield coverings, etc.). Every place you go to should have cotton, so if you like look around first. Unbleached calico (creamy coloured cotton) is everywhere too- often a cheap alternative and is good for patterning, or garments you intend to dye.

Lincraft: Sell broadcloth (about \$5/m), cotton poplin and drill. Generally more expensive than other places

Spotlight: Voile \$3/m, Lawn \$2.20/m, Homespun \$3.50/m, Drill \$4.00/m and a few others- my personal choice for this sort of stuff. Also sell quilter's homespun in a large range of colours (good for matching things).

E&M Greenfield: Good range of homespun, drill and others- works out similar prices to Spotlight- might be cheaper if you're buying a lot

Velvet (and velveteen)- Velvet is a fabric rather than a fibre. So you can have velvets made from synthetic fibres, or from natural fibres like silk or cotton. Velvets can be very expensive, or if you go for plain cotton velveteen, can be quite okay. I'd recommend using ones made from cotton fibre for any garments, since they are more hard wearing and aren't as difficult to sew (I think). More expensive velvet (like that really plush stuff found in the boutique section) might look a dream, but I'm told it's hell to sew, and crushes like anything. Also be aware that velvet has nap- if you turn the fabric around 180° it will look different. So you have to be careful when working out how much to buy.

E&M Greenfield: I'm told they're one of the best places for velveteen.

Spotlight: Cotton velvet about \$10/m, and some others.

Lincraft: probably have some too.

Brocades- Brocades are the name I give to upholstery or curtain-like patterned material when used in garments. They're often strong, heavy fabrics and usually very expensive- so good for smaller pieces, at least at first. I have a nice bodice made from curtain fabric. Have a look at some pictures and try to get an idea of what colours and patterns were appropriate before heading out. These fabrics are usually

kept in the curtains or home wears section of the store.

Spotlight, Lincraft: all about \$12-\$30/m. You may be able to buy remnants at cheaper prices too.

A note on patterns: Mostly I've mentioned plain fabrics above, plains being suitable for virtually all periods and places. But simple cheques and stripes were also not uncommon. A cheque T-tunic is quite okay, but beyond that you might want to check for a certain period with someone who knows more about it.

A note on colour: Medieval people could achieve with their dyes a huge range of colours. That being said, some things like a good black were downright difficult, and for that reason more reserved for the upper classes. Accounting for modern taste, usually either bright or moderately dark fabrics are good and practical to begin with.

A note on see-through-ness: White really is see-through. The same goes for quite a few light weight cottons. You have been warned- just think about what you're making, for a shirt its fine, for a T-tunic its not.

A note on dyeing: dyeing natural fabrics like cotton and wool is quite easy, and is great when you get sick of all the colours in stock but still want something cheap. Clothes dye can be found at places like K-mart, and it may cost \$5-\$10 to dye a simple garment like a tunic (check the weight). You'll achieve different colours depending on what colour you start with- I find it better to dye a light blue to a dark blue, say, than to begin with white and dye that dark blue.

Stores I've mentioned (locations are usually those closest to the inner west- check the yellow pages for more):

- Spotlight: check www.spotlight.com.au for your closest store
- Lincraft: Store in the City (Imperial Arcade, Pitt St), one at Chatswood. Generally overrated- things are usually cheaper and better elsewhere (with some exceptions).
- Fine Wools Direct: Once converted to the cult of wool and linen, you'll love this store. They're 4/32-60 Alice St Newtown, open 9:30-4:30 M-F and 10-4 Sat. Their range changes throughout the year- a lot of it is imported from Europe. Don't forget they have about 4 sales throughout the year (everything 50-66% off)- someone in the SCA will usually point them out, or you can asked to be put on the notification list. At other times remnants can be found quite cheaply- sometimes up to 5m amounts. Make sure you buy enough though- usually fabrics aren't restocked.
They also offer a 20% student/SCA discount- make sure you ask
- E&M Greenfield: A wholesaler in Surry Hills. You browse the store though folders of swatches out the front. They sell in normal amount, but they charge a price per metre, as well as a \$3 cutting fee (so if you're buying the same as someone else, buy together). Don't be put off though- a good place to learn about.
- Luck Trieu: Small store in Chinatown (Dixon St).

Do note there are a lot more fabric stores around I haven't even mentioned. It can't hurt to look, and you can often get good prices at smaller places.

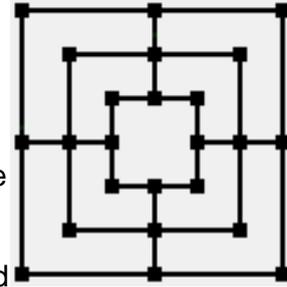
Ildaria.

Taken from the [St Ursula Pages](#) on 06/02/06. Last Updated: Friday 29th October, 2004, Maintained by [Morgant ap Rhys](#). http://www.sca.org.au/st_ursula/fabric.html

The Rules of Nine Mens Morris

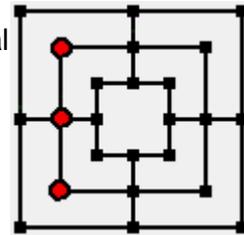
Equipment

The game of Nine Mens Morris or Mill is played on a board consisting of three concentric squares connected by lines from the middle of each of the inner square's sides to the middle of the corresponding outer square's side. Pieces are played on the corner points and on the points where lines intersect so there are 24 playable points. Accompanying the board, there should be 9 black pieces and 9 white pieces usually in the form of round counters.



Preparation and Objective

The basic aim of the game is to make "mills" - vertical or horizontal lines of three in a row. Every time this is achieved, an opponent's piece is removed, the overall objective being to reduce the number of opponent's pieces to less than three or to render them opponent unable to play. To begin with the board is empty.



Basic Play

Player's toss a coin to decide who will play white - white moves first and has a slight advantage as a result. Play is in two phases. To begin with, players take turns to play a piece of their own colour on any unoccupied point until all eighteen pieces have been played. After that, play continues alternately but each turn consists of a player moving one piece along a line to an adjacent point.

During both of these phases, whenever a player achieves a mill, that player immediately removes from the board one piece belonging to the opponent that does not form part of a mill. If all the opponents' pieces form mills then an exception is made and the player is allowed to remove any piece. It is only upon the formation of a mill that a piece is captured but a player will often break a mill by moving a piece out of it and then, in a subsequent turn, play the piece back again, thus forming a new mill and capturing another piece.

Captured pieces are never replayed onto the board and remain captured for the remainder of the game. The game is finished when a player loses either by being reduced to two pieces or by being unable to move.

References:

The game of merels <http://members.aol.com/farisles/guilds/merels.htm>

Master Games rules to Nine Mens Morris

<http://www.mastersgames.com/rules/morris-rules.htm>

Play Nine Men's Morris Online (Java applet)

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/pesullivan/merrelles/English.html>