

A woman with dark hair styled in an updo, wearing a white historical dress with a large, ruffled collar and puffed sleeves. She is looking slightly to the right. The background is a blurred, light-colored wall.

# Historical Costuming

Let me ruin that movie for you

*Rose Goff Maidoff – Made Sewing Studio*  
*Madesewing.com*

# Topics



- ❖ Movies: What era is this anyway?
- ❖ Things to Consider when Costuming
  - Materials available at the time
  - Natural dye / color selection
  - Who am I? Where am I from?
  - The Silhouette of the garment
  
- ❖ So, how do I make it?
  - Resources

# Movies

# Labyrinth

*(Based on Kate Mosse novel)*

1209?.....not by looking at it.



13th century

High necklines

Loose fitting

No eyelet lace



# Labyrinth

Mid 1300's? Sure.



14th Century

Lower necklines

Tighter fit

Decorative sleeves





# Ever After

(15th-16th century)

Not too off...

...for Italian!





The queen, Marie, in Ever After is fictional.

Ever After  
(15th-16th century)

So what *did* it  
look like in  
France?



Queen Claude of France,  
wife of Francis I, mother  
of Henry

# Galavant: what are you doing?!?

1480's  
Italian,  
maybe?





# Galavant: what are you doing?!?



NO!

I'M SORRY...ARE  
THOSE METAL  
GROMMETS?



© Disney ABC Television Group

# Materials & Colors

# Fibers and Fabrics

- Wool
- Linen
- Silk
- Fur
- Leather



# Wool

*(as described in Tacuinum Sanitatis, 14th Century)*

***“Dangers: It causes skin irritation.***

***Neutralization of the Dangers:  
With thin linen clothing.”***

**Wear linen clothing under  
wool garments.**



# Linen

(as described in *Tacuinum Sanitatis*, 14th Century)

***“Dangers:*** It presses down on the skin and blocks transpiration.

***Neutralization of the Dangers:***  
By mixing it with silk.”

**Linen...mixed with silk?**



# Blended Materials? Chances are, they existed.

**In some religions blending materials was forbidden (so it probably happened)**

**“Do not wear clothes of wool and linen woven together.”** - *Deuteronomy 22:11*  
*New International Version*

**“You shall not [...] wear a garment upon you of two kinds of material mixed together.”** - *Leviticus 19:19*

# Colors: what are my options?

The middle ages were full of drab peasants right?



Not so much





“Do these colors go together?”

If they could dye it,  
you can wear it.

There was a fairly wide range of colors available in the middle ages and renaissance.

People like pretty things. Colors are pretty.



Who am I?

# What Is Our Story?

## The 5 W's

Who: Who are you?

What: What class are you?

When: What time period are you from?

Where: What country are you from and where do you live?

Why: What is the history of your character, why do their clothes look the way they do?

## The story I want to tell

**“I am an italian (where) merchant’s wife (who & what), living in the year 1435 (when). My clothes are simple and elegant but a few years out of style for we have fallen on hard times (why).”**

Silhouette

Mid 1200's  
13th century french

The Morgan Bible  
Illuminated Manuscript

(Maciejowski Bible)

Aka mispronounce-ki bible.



# Mid 1200's 13th Century French



Working peasants



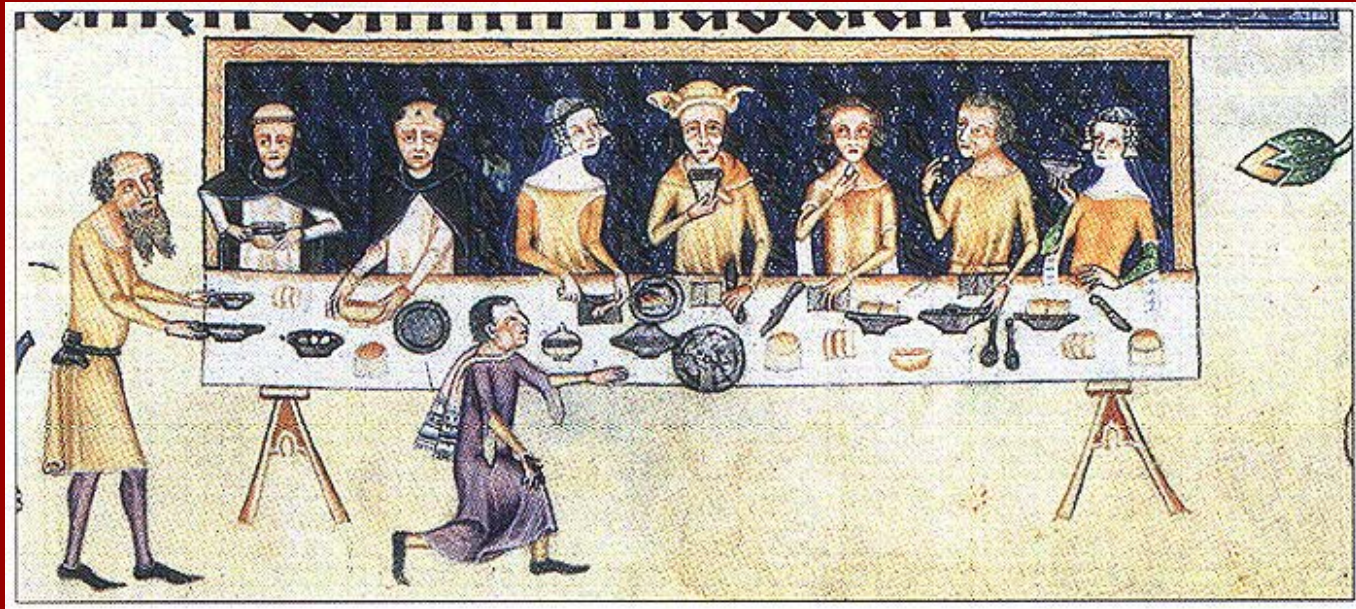
# Mid 1200's 13th Century French

- ❑ High necklines
- ❑ Loose fitting clothes
- ❑ Hair covered





The Luttrell Psalter  
Early 1300's - 14th Century  
British



# Mid 1200's 13th Century French

## Noble family

- ❑ Fitted garments
- ❑ Sleeves become more decorative



# The Luttrell Psalter Working Peasants



Très Riches Heures  
1412-1416 & 1485-1489  
15th Century Flemish



# Très Riches Heures 1412-1416 & 1485-1489

## Nobility:

Wealth was on display

Noticeable class distinction

Living the lifestyle: More, more, more.

- Length
- Trim
- Fabric



# Très Riches Heures 1412-1416 & 1485-1489

## Peasants

Not a lot has changed

- Open neckline
- Closer fitting
- Length has not changed



# Sumptuary Laws

\*what\* class you are representing is important

"no knight under the estate of a lord, esquire or gentleman, nor any other person, shall wear any shoes or boots having spikes or points which exceed the length of two inches, under the forfeiture of forty pence."



1450-1530

Different countries, different styles

Dutch / Flemish



Italian



Saxony / German





1450-1530

Different countries, different styles

Dutch / Flemish



Italian



Saxony / German



# Italian

Two contemporary Italian artists from opposite coasts.

Two very different styles of sleeve commonly seen in their art.

The \*where\* you are representing is more than country, but also region.



Marche



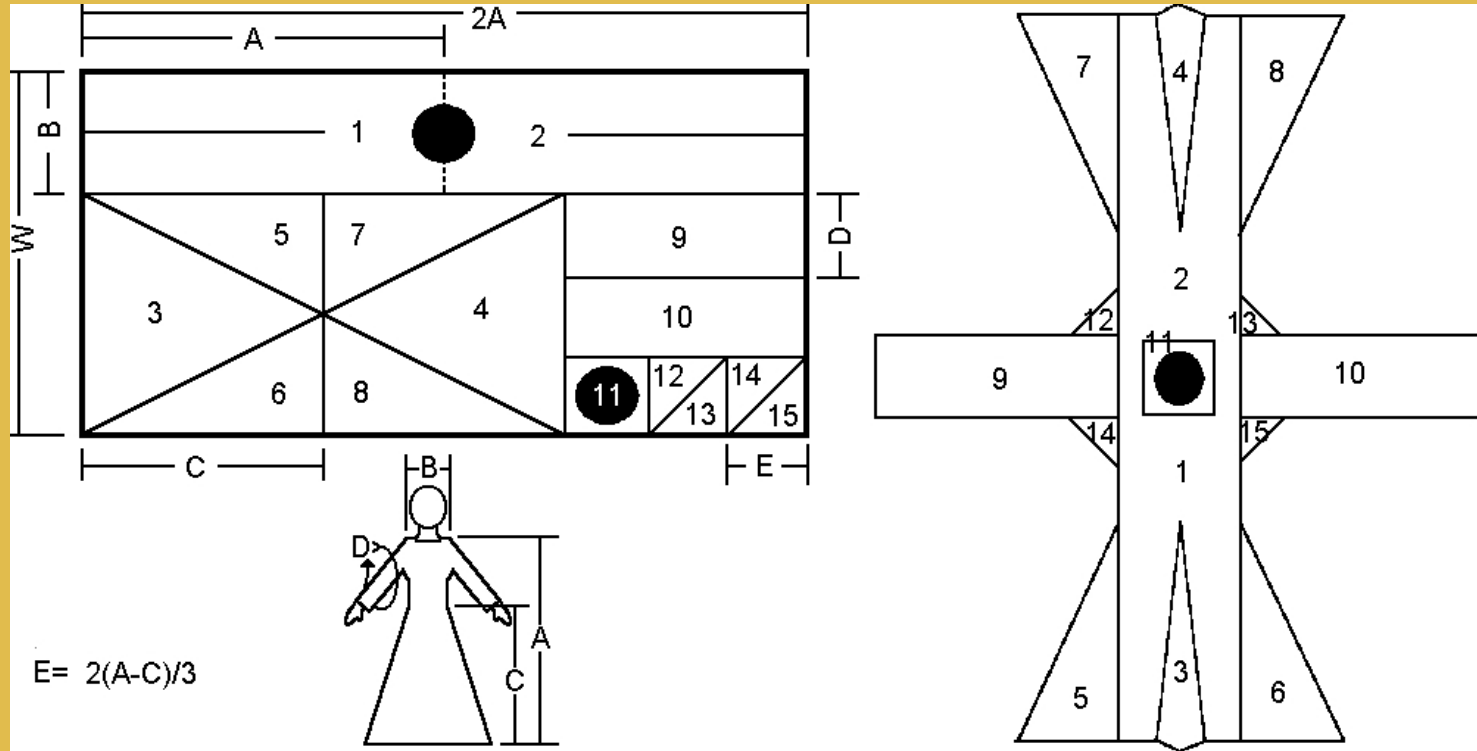
Florence

How Do I Make It?



# Pattern Drafting

## *Squares, Rectangles, and Triangles*



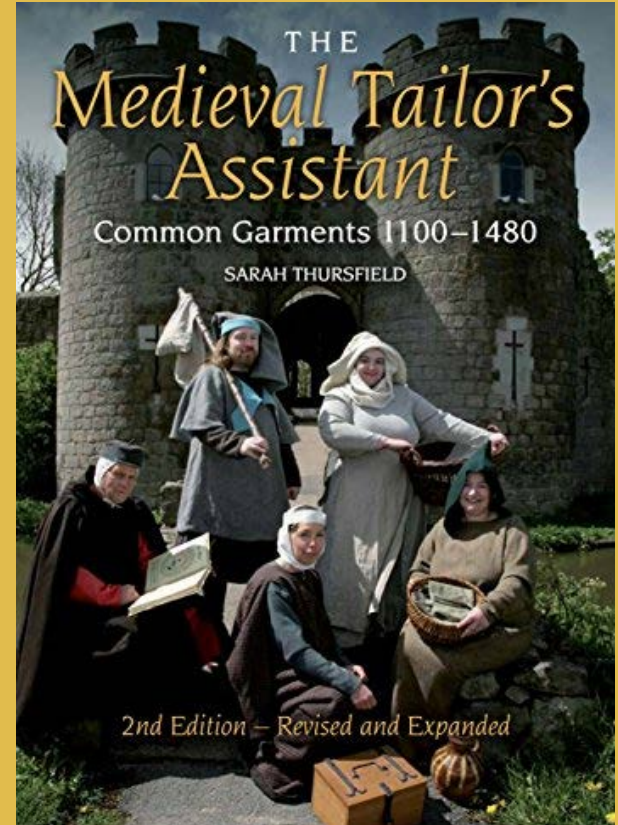
# 11th-15th Century Clothing



Burda 7977

This pattern is really basic, but a good starting point.

If you're interested in an in depth starting point for medieval reenactment this book is a great resource.

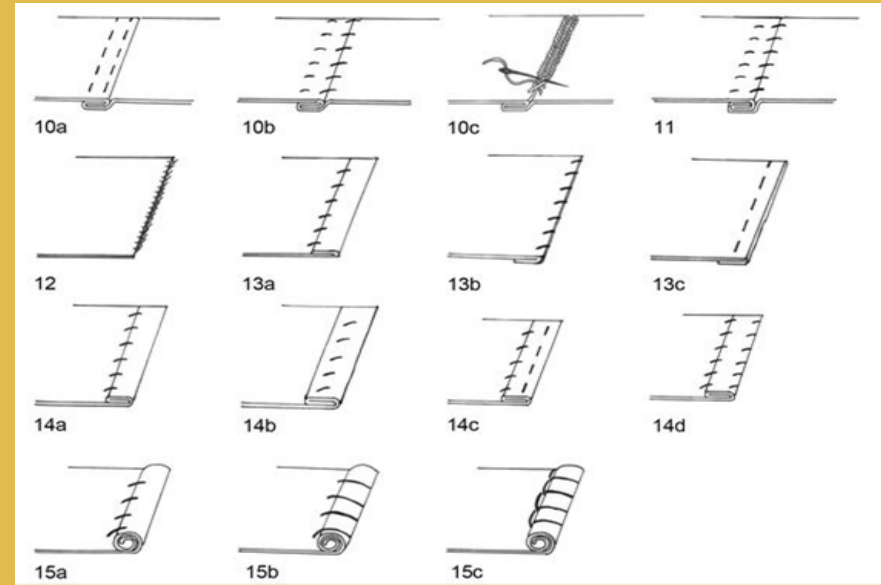
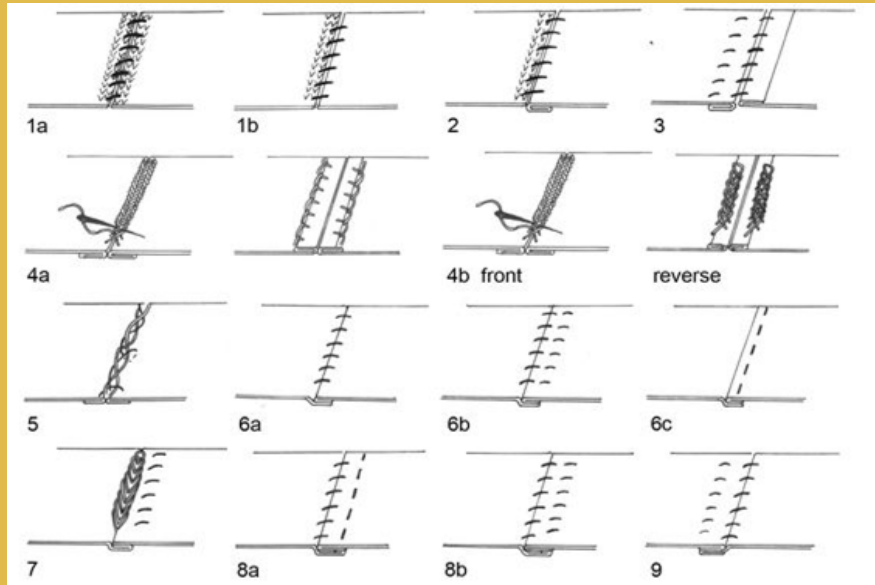


# Seam Finishing

Two commonly used stitches:

❖ Whipstitch

❖ Running stitch (*both decorative and functional*)



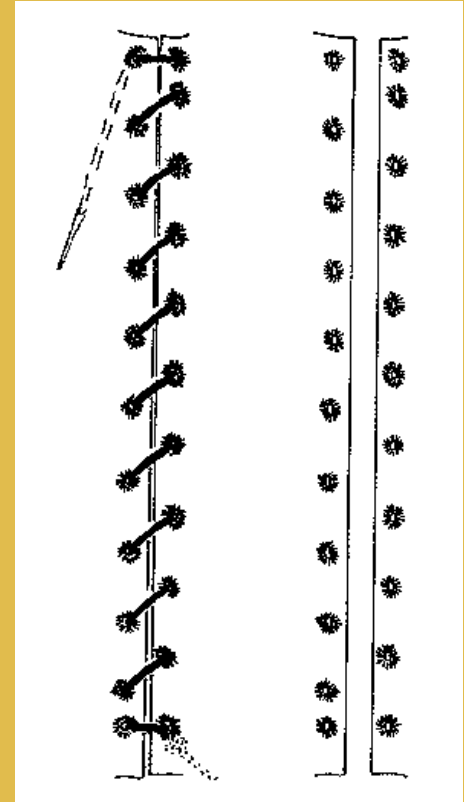
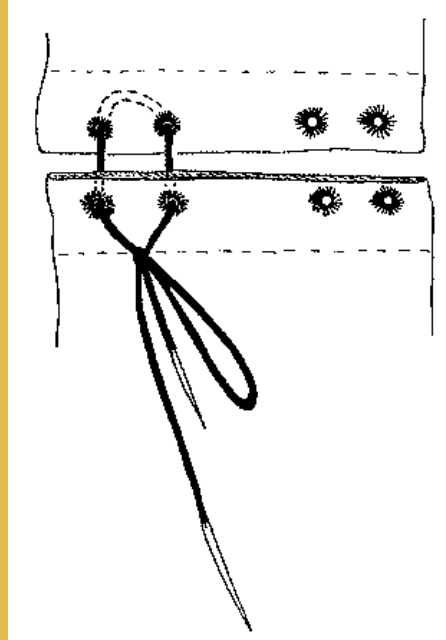
# Clasps and Closures

No Zippers! No Grommets!

The primary way to close garments was through lacing.

Eyelets were hand stitched, and often designed for spiral lacing.

Spiral lacing was preferred over crossed lacing because it was easier, and used less cord.





# Clasps and Closures

With that said, not all closures were thread and fiber.

Metal rings were sometimes used to create lacing loops instead of hand stitched eyelets.

Metal was expensive though, so they wouldn't use this technique for everything.

<http://www.elizabethancostume.net/index.html>





# Clasps and Closures

## Buttons!

### ❖ Cloth buttons

- Made with leftover fabric scraps, This was an inexpensive way to have buttons



### ❖ Metal buttons

- Metal buttons were expensive, one technique was to have one set of buttons that could be moved between garments.



# Resources

# Movies and TV: 13th- 17th century stories

- ❖ Galavant (how many eras can we fit in one scene?)
- ❖ Labyrinth based on Kate Mosse book. 1209...
- ❖ Princess bride
- ❖ Lion in Winter
- ❖ Ever After...15th-16th century france (um, prince Henry was born the year Leonardo da Vinci died. 1519... just saying.)
- ❖ The other Boleyn girl...1521-1536
- ❖ The Tudors
- ❖ Dangerous Beauty 1570-73
- ❖ Shakespeare in love ....1593..England

# Materials

Primary source: Tacuinum Sanitatis, 14th century

**“XLVI. Woolen Clothing (*Vestis Lanaea*)**

***Nature:*** Warm and dry.

***Optimum:*** The thin kind from Flanders.

***Usefulness:*** It protects the body from cold and holds warmth.

***Dangers:*** It causes skin irritation.

***Neutralization of the Dangers:*** With thin linen clothing.

***From the Theatrum of Casanatense”***

<http://www.godecookery.com/tacuin/tacuin.htm>



# Materials

Primary source: Tacuinum Sanitatis, 14th century

**“XLVII. Linen Clothing (*Vestis Linea*)**

***Nature:*** Cold and dry in the second degree.

***Optimum:*** The light, splendid, beautiful kind.

***Usefulness:*** It moderates the heat the body.

***Dangers:*** It presses down on the skin and blocks transpiration.

***Neutralization of the Dangers:*** By mixing it with silk.

***Effects:*** It dries up ulcerations. It is primarily good for hot temperaments, for the young, in Summer, and in the Southern regions.

*From the Tacuinum of Vienna”*

<http://www.godecookery.com/tacuin/tacuin.htm>

<http://www.fabrics-store.com/blog/2009/08/25/the-tacuinum-of-vienna/>



# Color Pallet Resources

Here is a source for naturally plant dyed yarns. This is also a useful resource for images of available colors.

<http://www.renaissance dyeing.com/en/>

Drea Leed is a scholar specializing in elizabethan costume, she has created a fantastic database of translated dye recipes, available to all:

<http://www.elizabethancostume.net/dyes/>

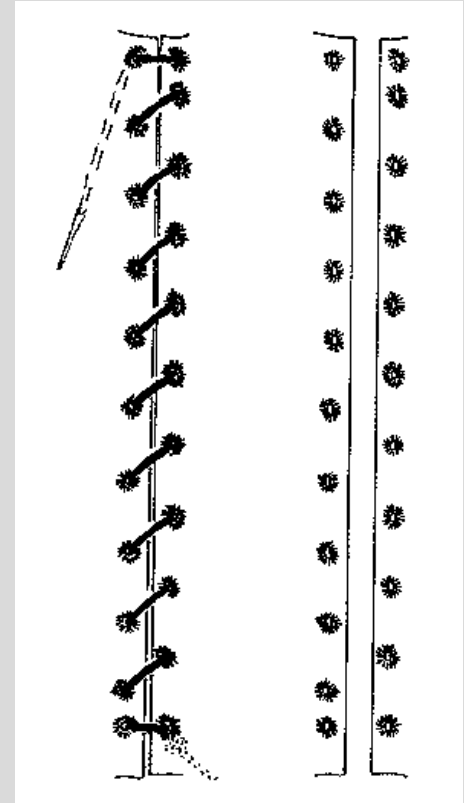
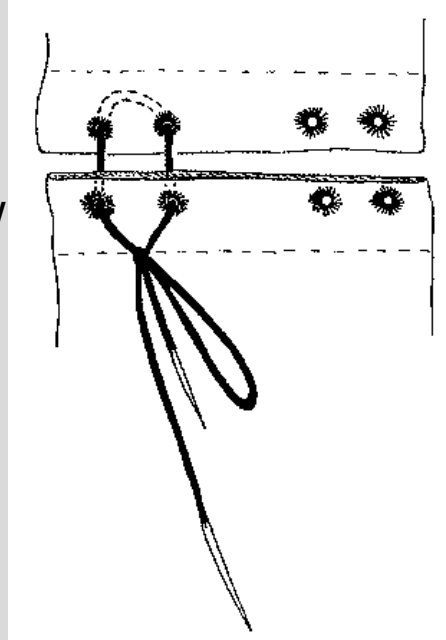


*Il y commence le viii<sup>e</sup> liure  
des proprietés des choses du  
quel est traitté des couleurs  
des odeurs et des saveurs  
Et premierement  
S'ensuiuent le prologue avec  
l'intention de l'auteur.*

# Clasps and Closures

Great Resource! This website talks about different types of lacing and how to create the aglets to finish off the ends of your laces.

<http://fingerloop.org/aglet.html>



# Historic Clothing Construction Resources

## Pattern Resources

<http://www.margospatterns.com/>

<https://reconstructinghistory.com/product-category/historic-patterns/>

<https://www.patternsoftime.com/products.php?cat=17>

<http://dpc.uba.uva.nl/cgi/t/text/get-pdf?idno=m0201a02;c=jalc>

## Blog resources

<http://www.morgandonner.com/2013/10/italian-partlet/>

<http://research.fibergeek.com/>

<http://rosaliegilbert.com/patterns.html>

<http://www.medievalists.net/2015/06/a-five-minute-guide-to-medieval-fabrics/>