

## CROFT Costume Basics

To participate in CROFT events you will need at least the basic costume. This can be put together without too much effort or expense by following these guidelines. Most CROFT members have considerable experience researching and making costume and are only too willing to help. The majority of CROFT demonstrations take place at or around Renaissance period events; so here are some basics for Celtic costume for the period 1400-1600 CE. First, are you going to be Irish or Scots? Here are the basic requirements for Irish and Scots men and women.

<p><b><u>Irish Man</u></b>  <b>Léine (shirt)</b>  <b>Trews</b>  <b>Shoes &amp; socks</b>  <b>Head covering</b>  <b>Belt</b>  <b>Pouch</b></p> 	<p><b><u>Irish Woman</u></b>  <b>Léine (Chemise)</b>  <b>Overdress</b>  <b>Underskirt</b>  <b>Shoes &amp; stockings</b>  <b>Head covering</b>  <b>Belt or girdle</b>  <b>Purse</b></p> 
<p><b><u>Scots Man</u></b>  <b>Léine (shirt)</b>  <b>Great Kilt or Trews</b>  <b>Shoes &amp; socks</b>  <b>Head covering</b>  <b>Belt</b>  <b>Pouch</b></p> 	<p><b><u>Scots woman</u></b>  <b>Léine (Chemise)</b>  <b>Bodice and overskirt</b>  <b>Underskirt</b>  <b>Shoes/Boots</b>  <b>Head covering</b>  <b>Belt or girdle</b>  <b>Purse</b></p> 

Remember that the look should be something that could pass for 500 year old clothing that might have been worn in a cool damp climate.

Fabrics: Natural fibers are the most acceptable. Wool and linen are most authentic for the period but heavy cotton or Osnaburg is acceptable; cotton flannelette is a good substitute for wool and much cooler! Choose muted colors that could have been produced by Medieval natural dyes – avoid bright colors. When in doubt ask a member of CROFT for help. Detailed information and patterns are available from CROFT resources.

There are a number of things that are not costume but you will want to have.

- \* Whatever you need for your chosen demonstration to the public; spinning wheel; quills and parchment; Inkle loom; hammer and anvil, copper and silver; saws, chisels, pole lathe; knife, awl, needle and thread, leather; etc.
- \* Baskets or boxes to carry or store your stuff in.
- \* Utensils: Wooden bowl or trencher, metal or pottery mug or cup, wooden spoon, small eating knife, napkins.
- \* Chair or bench. Small (folding) table if required. Pillows or cushions make sitting for hours more comfortable.
- \* Plaid: A 2-4 yard piece of wool for multipurpose function. (Covering modern chair or tools, wearing on a cold day or just for Celtic napping or picnicking.) Miscellaneous linen napkins can also be useful.

**These are the basic, minimum requirements for Celtic costume for a middle class person.**

## **MEN**

Shirt (Leine): IRISH: Saffron yellow. SCOTS: White or off-white. Cotton or linen-like fabric, rough to medium weight. Long, loose sleeved (IRISH: very bagged) and goes to about knee to mid-calf. A Sark (shirt similar to a Frontier shirt with a collar) can be acceptable as a first Leine.

Trews: (Pants): Wool(-look), coarse, medium weight fabric. Solid, checked, or plaid. Long or below the knee.

Kilt: (SCOTS): 6-7 yards of tartan/plaid/checked wool(-look) fabric 60" wide. Muted colors are best. (There were no family tartans at this time, only local preferences for colors and patterns).

Belt: Wide, leather (or IRISH: inkle braid), can be plain or decorated, with a simple buckle. For a kilt one should have an additional belt 4" wide. Belt pouch for personal items

Hat: Tam, flat cap, or beret of felt or wool. Dark colors, brown, black, and blue. Pin or brooch for decoration.

Shoes: Flat, leather or cloth. Brown or black.

Socks: Knee high hose, or athletic socks – solid color, gray, tan, or white. SCOTS: can be tartan.

## **WOMEN**

Blouse/Chemise/Leine: White, ecru, and yellows. Cotton or medium weight linen-like fabric. Mid-calf to ankle length.

IRISH: Bog Dress: An all-in-one bodice and full or gored skirt that all opens completely up the front. The bodice portion laces up the front, but the skirt portion is open to reveal a different colored underskirt. Solid colors preferred. Ankle length. Use light weight wool or linen-like material. These can get heavy.

SCOTS: Scottish Bodice: Natural colors, plaid checks, tweed in wool or twill weave. Rough to medium weight fabrics. No darts, lace up the front is most common. Boning for support and flattening effect. Usually worn with two skirts.

Skirts: Heavier weight cottons, linen, or light weight wool. Should be full at the bottom. Skirts can be gathered, circle, or gored, and with a waistband buttoned at the side or back. Solid colors preferred.

Hat: Also called a coif, cap, or biggins. White or off white cotton or linen square or stitched cap. All married women had their heads covered. Young girls and unmarried maidens can go bare-headed, except for a snood. A wide brim straw hat is a great idea for relief from the sun or in lieu of sunglasses.

Belt: Leather with a simple buckle. Pouch: Leather or cloth.

Shoes: Flat, leather or cloth, clogs, espadrilles.

Stockings: Cotton or wool tights, or knee high stocking in natural colors.

**These are the basics.** You may add personal items such as a brooch, shears and sewing stuff, etc.

In addition there are items of costume that can add to your character but are not essential. For example:

### **IRISH MAN:**

Ionar (Jacket): a very short jacket with narrow sleeves open at the underside for the wide Leine sleeves.

Brat (Cloak): a heavy, fringed woollen cloak, rectangular or semi-circular.

### **SCOTS WOMAN:**

Airisaid (Cloak): A plaid, worn belted at the waist, pulled over the shoulders and pinned at the neck.