



<http://www.shades-of-night.com/larp/simple.html>

## ***Super-Simple Costuming***

Not everyone has unlimited free time and hundreds of dollars to spend on making costumes for their LARP characters (Neither do I, come to think of it). So what do you do when you're in a rush and on a shoe-string budget?

Try some of these super-simple costuming suggestions:

### Cloaks

Probably the easiest and most versatile piece of costuming is a cloak. Grab any large sheet or blanket (hopefully a decent colored one, not lime green or pumpkin orange) and toss it over your shoulders. You can fasten it with a knot or a large kilt pin, or sew the top edge over to make a narrow pocket, run a drawstring through it, and use the string to both gather it and tie it at your neck.

Plain square-sheet cloaks don't look terribly authentic, unfortunately, and often don't fit very well - but they're reusable as sheets or blankets if you don't intend to reuse the costume. If you have the time, and have a sheet which can be cut up, try making a semi-circle cloak.

Lay the sheet flat, and cut a large semi-circle out of it (using the long side of the sheet as the flat edge). Make a small cutout in the center of the flat edge (for your neck), and attach two cords to either side (for ties). If you have some ribbon or trim, or even some cloth paints, try decorating the circular edge of the cloak.

### Tabards

Another easy costuming piece is the tabard. It's just a long piece of cloth with a hole for your head, which hangs over your shoulders. You can make it look a little more professional by sewing trim along the edges, or by adding some cross-lacing at the neckline. Wear it with a wide belt for a medieval effect.

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Omarshauntedtrail.com

## Leggings

It's difficult to make proper medieval leg wear without some time and a sewing machine. But you can always cheat: Scrounge up a pair of sweatpants (hopefully without any logos on them) and find some cords, leather strips, or even long shoelaces to wrap around them by the feet, in a criss-cross pattern.

Alternatively, buy a pair of brightly colored tights and wear them as hose. This works particularly well if you have a long flowing shirt to wear over top of them.

## Tunics & Gowns

This will involve some sewing - or if you don't plan to be professional about it, you can improvise with a glue-gun or extra-strength fabric glue (like *SpeedSew*). I've even heard of people using a stapler if they lacked access to a sewing machine...

Fold a large piece of cloth (1 meter by 2 meters minimum for tunics, 1.5m by 3m for gowns) in half. Lay out a t-shirt on it (one which fits you without stretching). Draw a pattern around the t-shirt, but make it wider and longer (medieval styles were looser fits). For a gown, make the sleeves extra wide and bring the pattern lines out from the waist right down to the bottom corners of the cloth (see illustration). Move the T-shirt out of the way and cut a hole for the head - if you make a slit or a v-shape at the front of the neck, you can also lace it up later for a more medieval look.

Sew the edges together, remembering to leave the armholes open. If you're making a long tunic, don't sew all the way down to the bottom - leave a slit up the sides, so you can walk easily.

## Accessories

The little details are usually what makes the costume. A wide brimmed hat, a cane, a headband, a sword at your side, leather gloves, a pocket watch - all can give your costume a special flavor. You can also do wonders for a costume by investing in some junk jewelry. Take a few bucks down to a second-hand shop and by the gaudiest things you can find - especially anything with fake gems in it.

## Make-up

People often overlook this bit, but some make up can also be just the perfect finishing touch to a costume. White face paint and black eyeliner do wonders for a vampire costume. Powder and blush were worn even by men during medieval times. If you want to look as poor as you feel, you could always go with a peasant costume - use a little bit of strategically placed mud on your face, or straw in your hair.