

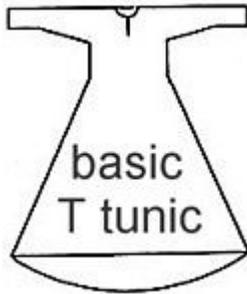
Basic D.I.Y. patterns to get you started!

Make your own!

It's not that difficult to make your own proper medieval clothes the way they would have been made. Basic tunics like the one on the right, for both men and women use 2 or 4 seams.

Below are 4 easy ways to make a pattern for yourself. These tunics pull on over the head and are NOT meant to be tight. You might like to make the sleeves from the elbow down to the wrist more fitted so it doesn't dangle into your stock, food service or lute strings.

The same basic pattern can be made with a seam down the front instead of on a fold if your fabric is narrow. This has the advantage of giving you a front or back lacing if you like that kind of thing, or want your clothes to be a little more form-fitting.



The Shape of the basic T tunic

The basic tunic for both men, women and children looks like this. It's longer for the ladies and for the men can be long, thigh length or just long enough to cover the bottom.

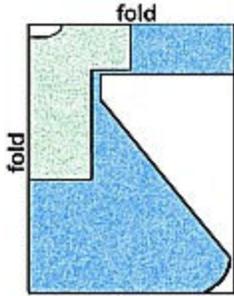
There is one seam under each arm that goes down the sides. The sleeves are not cut separately, but they can be if your fabric is very narrow. The armholes are not shaped. The neckline can be round, V, keyhole or square and needs only be big enough to get the head through.

Pattern Cutting Guide- Making the tunic

The below are guides only for construction your own medieval tunic. You should always make a trial one from an old sheet first, without overlocking the edges so you can undo the sides afterwards. Your first trial pattern is most likely going to be a poor fit and hang a bit like a potato sack. You will need to put the tunic on inside out and pin the tunic to shape through the body to get a good fit.

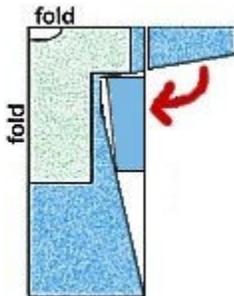
Test that you can pull it on and off over your head while the tunic is pinned, unless you are planning to lace the front or back. When you feel you have a reasonable fit, sew when you pinned and try on again. If you are happy that it fits well, undo the sides of your tunic and use it as a pattern for your good fabric.

Always try on your tunic with a belt as this dramatically changes the way your tunic will fit and hang. What looks very square and shapeless without a belt, looks different with.

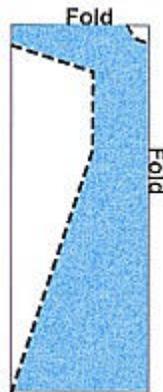


For a **lady's tunic**, get the right size by using a t-shirt for a guide. Fold the fabric as shown and lay the t-shirt in the top corner where all the folds are. Leave plenty of room under the arms. Ladies tunics can flare out for a fuller hem. Dresses were often quite long and worn tucked into the belt to show off the underdress. The underdress is the same as this but not as full.

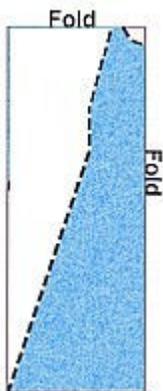
Men's tunics are straighter and not as long, although they can be mid-calf.



For 11th-13th century tunics using a narrower fabric where you can't cut the sleeve in one piece, try this. Cut your sleeve piece out of the bit at the side. The join usually sits mid-upper arm. You can have the fold the same as the top pattern or on the sleeve side.



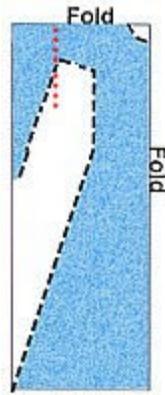
This is how it looks when the fabric is folded in half ready to cut. The front of the neck will be lower than the back. If your fabric is narrow, use the centre seam up against the edge of the fabric and put another seam there. Using that technique will also give you a really full skirt if you are feeling you want to be feminine. The picture at right was made that way.



For a **sleeveless overtunic**, called a surcote, adjust your pattern like this. The sleeve holes can be regular armhole size or can be cut deeply almost to the hip.

It has no lacing and worn OVER the basic tunic, never alone. Try using contrasting colours for the surcote and it's lining for a really great look!





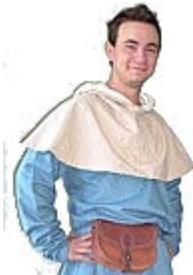
For a fancy **overtunic**, adjust your pattern like this. You can make the sleeves as long as you like. Often they were so long, they were worn knotted at the bottom to stop them dragging on the ground. It has no lacing and worn **OVER** the basic tunic, never alone. Try contrasting colours. This overtunic can be made with a seam where the sleeve flares (red dotted line). It can then be lined with a different colour.



Making basic hoods

Medieval hoods weren't constructed in one piece, but there's no real reason why you can't make yours this way. Hoods were almost always lined, and a great way to add a splash of extra colour to your outfit is with a lined hood. When the hood is pushed back off the face, the lining is shown. The lining is made exactly the same way as the top piece. You can lay the lining fabric on top of the other fabric and cut the two together if your fabrics aren't too thick.

When you sew the pieces together, you do not need to sew the front of the hood. You can sew the front of the hood together or you may button it. The bottom edge of the hood can be plain as worn in the top photo, or more elaborately daggued, like the bottom picture.



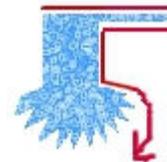
This is a basic hood. It is made from little more than a folded piece of fabric cut into a rectangle and a semicircle. This looks very nice lined with a different colour. To do that, just cut 2 and sew them together, taking care that the "good sides" are inside before turning.

stitch along the red line



This is almost the same thing but with decorative "daggues". Popular designs include scallops, leaves, rectangles and triangle points. You might also like to add a "liripipe"- a long, thin tube to the top of your hood which dangles decoratively down the back.

stitch along the red line



Some suitable fabrics

Generally, as a medieval stallholder, you'd be wearing wool, which was cheap and plentiful in the Middle Ages. Nowadays a good substitute for wool are linen, homespuns or linen/cotton blends. They come in a great range of colours, some are relatively cheap and they dye well. The wealthy stallholder who is not engaged in the daily production of their goods, might also wear brocade, silk or have patterned cloth in simple geometric designs. A sample of these is included below.

From left to right-
geometric circles, thin lozenges (diamond-shaped), wide patterned brocade, fleur de lys brocade, blue cotton/linen blend, 100% linen, silk with small grouped lozenges, wool (an old op shop blanket that I dyed).

