



Medieval Stallholder Guide



Your guide to getting it right!

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1. Welcome to the Middle Ages...

A time of tournaments, knights, manors and markets.

Enter the hustle and bustle of a busy marketplace. Everyday people dress in **blues, reds, greens, browns and yellows of brightly coloured wools and linens**. Men wear decorative hoods and any good lady covers her hair.

Traders, craftsmen and merchants of all kinds sell their wares. Baskets of goods are displayed on trestle tables. Perhaps the trader's logo might be displayed on a sign above. Most of the population cannot read or write so signs with words are not to be seen. Crowds browse the goods and stallholders vie to offer the best bargains!

Do you fit this picture? Would you like to? Let us answer your questions and help you tailor your stall and goods into something truly medieval.



2. Common Stallholder Problems

Medieval clothing is uncomfortable and not practical!

You're right, in that the modern representation of medieval clothing is very impractical and uncomfortable. But you don't have to worry. Authentic style medieval clothing is comfortable. See the *'Dress for Success!'* section of this guide for more information.

It's too expensive to change the look of my stall.

It doesn't have to be! Check out the hints and tips in the *'Dressing up your stall on a shoestring budget'* section.

Why isn't my stock "medieval" enough?

There are a number of items that we don't allow because they either didn't exist or, in the case of food, it wasn't eaten. There are heaps of alternatives though, so keep reading!

I don't want to have leftover "medieval" stock if I make up things specially and don't sell it.

We had over 30,100 people at the 2019 Festival and many stallholders sold out of stock. See the *'Your Goods'* section.

Non-medieval stock, like fairy wands and glittery dragons, sell well.

Thousands of people come to the Festival each year to be part of the REAL medieval experience. We strive to give the public an authentic look into the Middle Ages. Visitors like to go home with something that could have been worn or used 500 years ago not something they can buy at any festival or market.

How can people find me if I don't have a sign?

You can have a sign, it could be your logo or a picture of an item that best represents what you are selling or your business. See the *'Dressing up your stall on a shoestring budget'* section for ideas.

3. Dressing up your stall on a shoestring budget!

Signage



Display your logo on a **wooden sign**. The less writing you use, the better your stall will look. **Banners** using pictures are also effective. If you have an arty family member, they might make one for you.

Price Tags

Avoid tagging individual items. Use a small sign which applies to an entire basket. E.g. "12 gold pieces".

Colour schemes

USE: Shades of greens, blues, mustards, yellows, reds, burgundies, tans, browns - both muted tones and bright, bold colours are appropriate and look festive.

DO NOT USE: Pinks were not used by the middle classes.

Presenting your goods

Goods should be displayed in:

- **woven baskets**
- unpainted **wooden boxes**
- wooden **bowls**

Baskets and wooden bowls of all sizes are readily available from Op shops from 50c to a few dollars.



Plastic bags are not allowed

- Use paper bags instead of plastic
- Stamp your logo on the bag as a form of advertising

Throws and hangings

- Use plain colours
- Only use Celtic patterns if your business sells Celtic goods

Tablecloths

In the Middle Ages, velvet was extremely expensive. People of the middle class would not have been able to afford it for clothing and it would **never** have been used for tablecloths.

- A **plain white cotton bedsheet** is ideal.
- A **woolen blanket** from an op shop costs only a few dollars and looks great. Patterns or checks would not have been used.
- A **tea towel** in a plain colour makes a cheap cloth to line a basket with.
- A **lambswool** or **cowhide** also look great to cover benches if you happen to have one.



Storage of stock

One of the benefits of using plain white sheets to cover table tops, is that they reach the ground and easily conceal boxes of stock not on display. Other great period ideas for storage include:

- **Wooden chests** which also double as seating and provide a secure place for personal valuables.
- **Sacks** - plain unbleached calico sacks cover a multitude of sins.
- **Woolen blankets** in plain colours as covers for anything that can't be stashed.

Crushed velvet

While many “medieval” style costumes these days are made from crushed velvet, it did **not** actually exist in the Middle Ages. It is used often because it is a cheap (both in price and look) alternative to proper velvet.

Stallholders should not use crushed velvet for any aspect of their stall or costume.

4. Food Stalls

The following items were not eaten in Medieval Europe and as such, are not accepted at the festival:

- Tomatoes, potatoes (including chips), corn, pumpkin, squash, sweet potato, bananas and milk chocolate.
- Ice creams, fairy floss, icy pops etc.
- Soft drinks

Items you can sell include:

- Meats (incl. bacon and other dried meats) and seafood
- Berries, apples, pears, oranges and lemons
- Beans, peas,
- Bread and pastry, rice
- Dairy products, honey, nuts, marzipan

We accept the following beverages:

- Ginger beer
- Juice: pear, apple, orange, lemon, pomegranate
- Non-alcoholic cider
- Cordials/Syrups with water: rose, lavender, elderflower

NB. Bottles with a pop-top and cap are not to be sold as they are not environmentally friendly.

Important points:

- Beverages must not to be sold in glass bottles.
- We also have a recyclable materials policy, whereby food vendors are required to serve their items on/in materials that are either recycled or are recyclable.
- Throw away eating utensils are to be wooden, not plastic.
- While we understand modern appliances can't always be hidden, it adds to the atmosphere, when they can't be seen.

Please see a food appendix at the end of this document.

5. Dress for Success!

Thanks to Hollywood, many people have misconceptions about real medieval clothing. Remember, you're a trader or merchant, not a princess or duke. Dress accordingly.



Easy answers for comfortable clothes

The clothes are uncomfortable. The lacing is tight and the big sleeves are impractical. I can't work like that!

We don't expect you to! Those clothes are all wrong for you. In the Middle Ages both men and women often wore looser fitting tunics and dresses that pulled on over the head and were pulled in with a belt.

Think of those comfy kaftans of the 70's and you're heading in the right direction.

I look and feel stupid in a veil. Why should I wear one?

No woman would leave her hair uncovered in public! It was regarded unseemly and shocking. Your veil will not only enhance your look, but will protect you from sunburn. Veils range from fine silks, to thick linens and can be short, or long and worn in a variety of ways. Wimples were popular as well for women of good breeding.



I'm not wearing tights or hose.

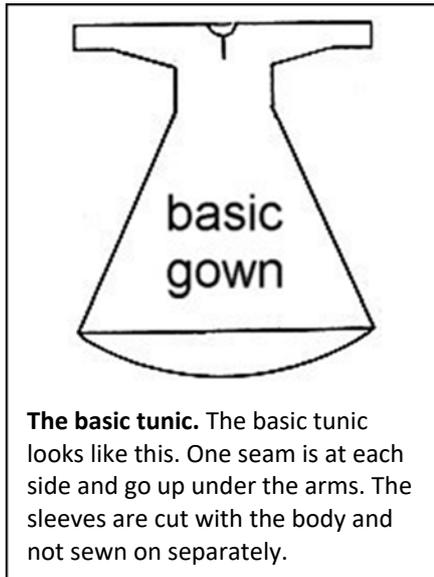
Try drawstring trousers.

Having an outfit made is expensive.

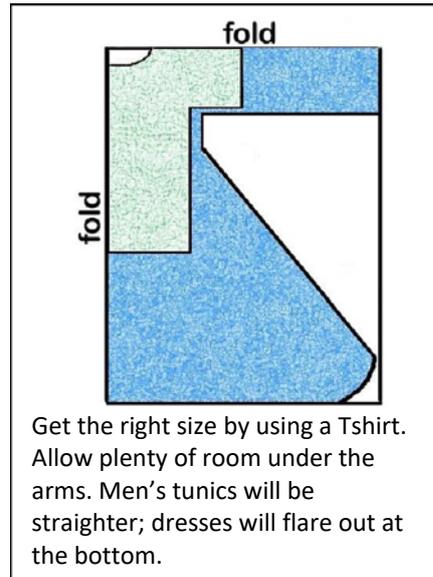
Think back to the kaftan... made in a linen blend in a bright colour, it'll cost less than you think. Two side seams, you could probably make one yourself!

MAKING A BASIC COSTUME

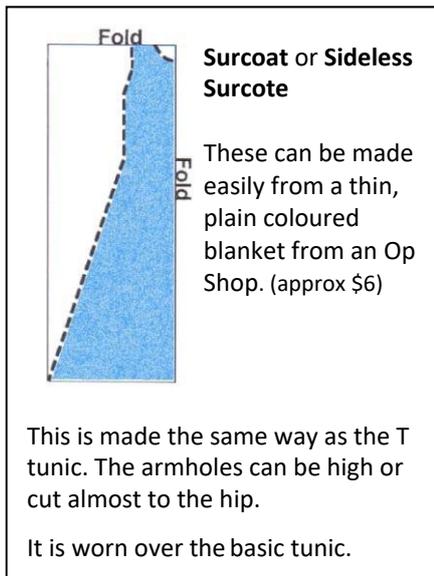
The basic medieval gown is what we call a "T Tunic" because it's shaped like a T. It's easy to make your own. Men's tunics can be short or long. Ladies can have a small train.



The basic tunic. The basic tunic looks like this. One seam is at each side and go up under the arms. The sleeves are cut with the body and not sewn on separately.



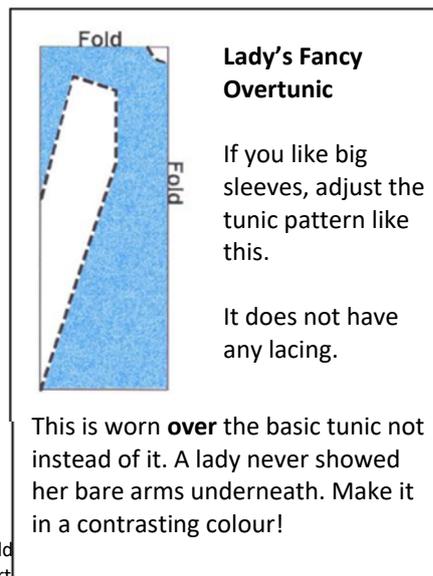
Get the right size by using a Tshirt. Allow plenty of room under the arms. Men's tunics will be straighter; dresses will flare out at the bottom.



These can be made easily from a thin, plain coloured blanket from an Op Shop. (approx \$6)

This is made the same way as the T tunic. The armholes can be high or cut almost to the hip.

It is worn over the basic tunic.

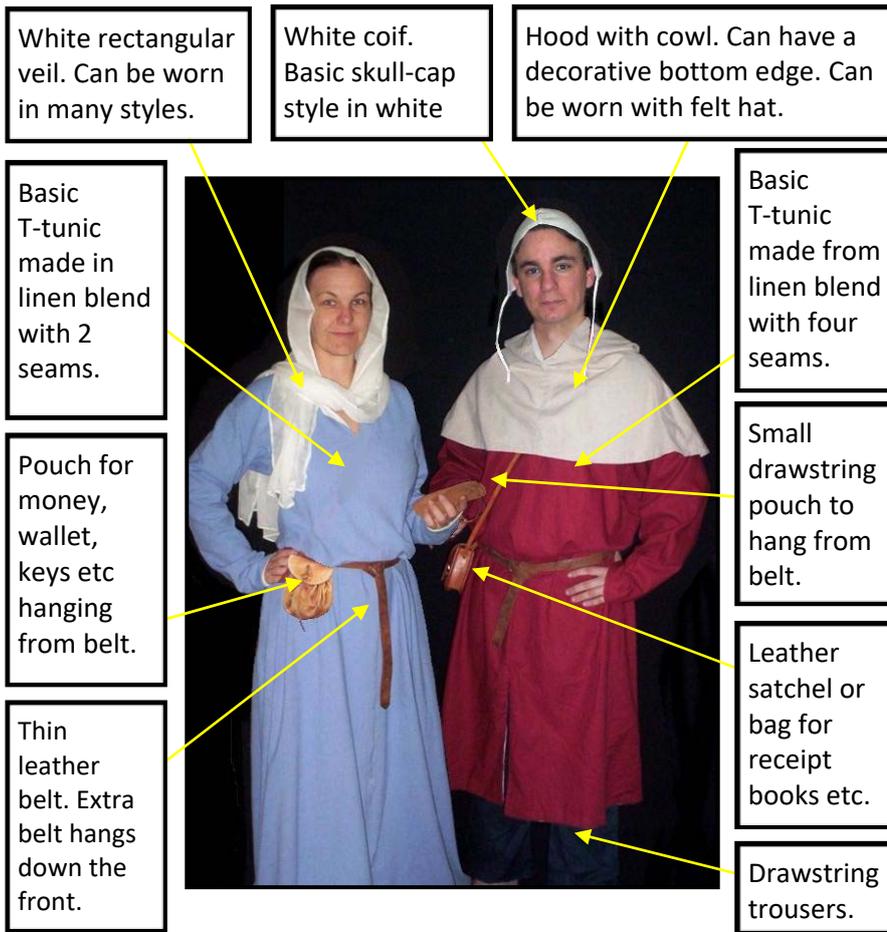


If you like big sleeves, adjust the tunic pattern like this.

It does not have any lacing.

This is worn **over** the basic tunic not instead of it. A lady never showed her bare arms underneath. Make it in a contrasting colour!

BASIC STALLHOLDER CLOTHING



The finishing touches

- A long white apron
- A coif or skullcap
- A hood or floppy felt hat for men
- A sideless surcote is often worn over the basic dress.
- A leather or linen pouch hanging from your belt will provide a secure place for your money, keys etc.,

MORE ADVANCED STALLHOLDER CLOTHING



The finishing touches

- Plain suede slippers make reasonable shoes.
- A paternoster or rosary was widely worn by regular people.
- Rings were popular. Necklaces & bracelets were not.
- Pilgrim badges were very popular for both women and men.
- Laced dresses can be made following the basic T tunic pattern adding a seam at the front and back.

6. Your Goods

Take stock of your stock! Think for a minute of that medieval market place. Would you find your goods there? Was it invented then? Is it plastic? Fairy wings may sell well, but they weren't sold in the Middle Ages.

A small sample of appropriate goods include:

- Ceramics, clay goods
- Wooden toys, swords, shields, hobby horses
- Wooden ware– boxes, plates, goblets etc.
- Pewter & silverware.
- Jewellery - brooches, necklaces, rings
- Produce of all kinds– breads, cheeses, some fruits
- Leather goods– belts, shoes, bags, pouches.
- Herbal goods, floral wreaths & decorations.
- Clothing. Be aware of what is appropriate.
- Bone and horn goods– combs, sewing goods
- Felt hats in medieval styles.
- Wines, ciders and ales.
- Illuminations, paintings and drawings.
- Religious icons, images, jewellery.
- Heraldic items of most kinds.
- Rugs and woven throws.
- Beeswax or hand made candles
- Chess, backgammon, 9 mens morris.

Not appropriate goods include:

- **Fairies, witches, elves, wizards, wands & Modern/Disney characters.**
- **Frogs, Indians and Buddha statues.**
- **Plastic goods.**
- **Tie dye and batik.**
- **Crushed velvet clothing.**
- **Skeletons & demons.**
- **Oriental daggers & fantasy swords.**
- **Many dragon goods are not appropriate.**

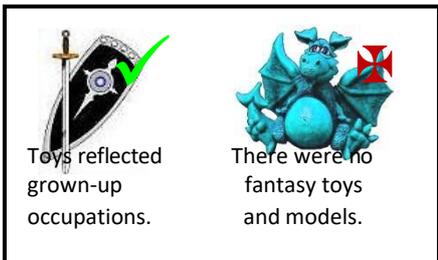
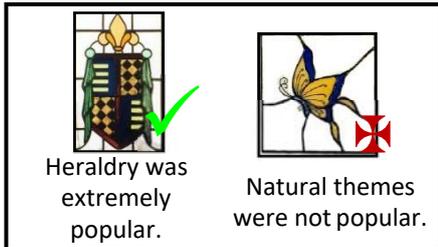
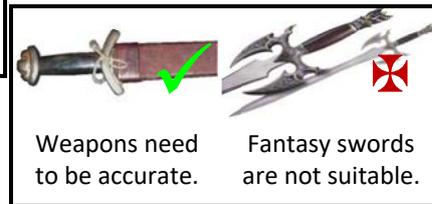
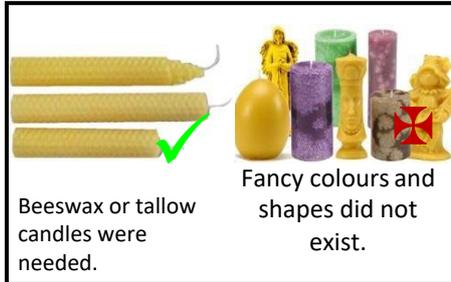
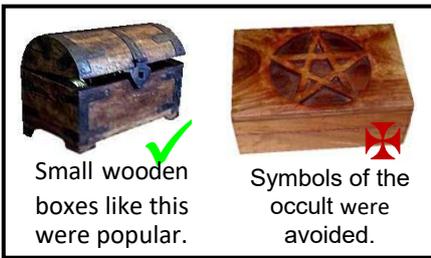


*The fabric and style
is not right.*

Adapt your current goods!

For example, if you usually sell brocaded or velvet clothing in a style that is non-medieval, consider selling material straight from the roll. If you are unsure, feel free to email and ask.

EXAMPLES OF ACCEPTABLE & UNACCEPTABLE ITEMS



UNACCEPTABLE

<p>The goods are not medieval. E.g frogs, candles, wands are not suitable.</p>	<p>Shiny white plastic stall cover easily identifies as modern. Metal posts are visible.</p>	<p>The stallholder is not dressed suitably. eg jeans, t-shirt & sneakers.</p>	<p>Modern items being worn. E.g. hat, sunglasses etc.</p>
<p>Fantasy dresses are hanging on plastic display models.</p>			
<p>Glittery star table cloth is not suitable.</p>	<p>Modern table legs clearly visible.</p>		
<p>Goods are displayed in modern & plastic container</p>	<p>Goods have modern themes & characters. E.g. kids plastic backpack</p>	<p>Storage containers & cardboard boxes are easily seen under the tables.</p>	<p>Signs are fluro green & have lots of writing in modern colours & styles.</p>
<p>Modern chair, esky, coke cans are all clearly visible. Receipt books & plastic bags are easily seen.</p>			

Comments:

This stall is not suited to a medieval market. Little effort has been made to meet the minimum requirements of dress and presentation. Most of the goods for sale are not suitable and too modern. The fantasy element is too strong and there is too much that screams '21st century'!!

ROOM TO IMPROVE

The shiny, white stall has still not been altered at all to make it look medieval.

This costume is fantasy. Sunglasses & mobile phone are still visible.

Storage containers & esky can still be seen under the tables, but the look is improved. Plastic bags are hidden at the back.

An effort has been made to cover the chair, but it still stands out.

The range of goods is now excellent.



Camera & receipt book etc is still visible.

The fluoro green signs still detract from the stall's appearance

The lunch box & coke can could've been hidden under the chair.

Big basket to display goods in is appropriate and looks good. It could also be lined with a cloth.

Extra goods are displayed on a woolen blanket at the front. Great!

If the table cloth was a bit longer, it would hide the metal table legs.

Comments:

This stallholder is off to an encouraging start upgrading their stall. Some medieval elements are apparent in both presentation and dress, but there are many small ways to improve the overall look.

ALMOST THERE

Greatly improved! This stall looks nice with many improvements, but a few small things are apparent.

<p>Basic T-tunic with long belt and pouch looks great! The floral wreath still needs a veil to go with it.</p>	<p>Note: The fluro signs have been removed!</p>	<p>A canvas or cotton stall cover in plain colours is needed. An 'A' frame stall would be better.</p>	<p>Wooden display stand looks great & is appropriate.</p>
<p>Sunglasses hooked onto clothes really detracts from the authentic look.</p>			
<p>Goods displayed in baskets look great. Lunchbox replaced with mug & bowl.</p>			
<p>Long tablecloth in plain white is good. The trestle table legs are wooden.</p>			
<p>Items displayed on a goat skin at front of the stall looks good. The big baskets display goods & look good.</p>			
<p>Boxes behind the table are for storage & covered with wool blanket.</p>			

Comments:

This stallholder has made a significant effort to eliminate modern elements from her stall. Presentation and costuming are simpler, but better than most.

AWESOME!!



Comments:

This is an accurate representation of a stall from the Middle Ages. It is a replica of one from a manuscript. The tables are also copies of drawings. The costuming is significantly improved with the addition of a veil.



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VEGETABLES

Some of the vegetables available in Europe and the Middle East during the Middle Ages

- Asparagus
- Beans – broadbeans, fava (most common), haricot etc. Modern green beans are originally from the New World and red kidney beans originate in India and don't appear in Europe until after the medieval era.
- Brussels Sprouts – Not surprisingly they were grown in Belgium
- Cabbage – very common and popular, often pickled
- Capers
- Carrot – While orange carrots were known, they were generally smaller purple, white, yellow or red varieties.
- Cauliflower
- Celery – 'wild celery' used as a 'pot herb' for flavouring
- Chard or Silverbeet
- Chickpeas/Garbanzo beans – More common in the south of Europe
- Cress
- Cucumber
- Garlic
- Scallion/Shallot
- Leek
- Lettuce
- Mushrooms – Gathered wild
- Olives – Eaten in mainly southern Europe, olive oil was exported across Europe for medical and culinary purposes
- Onions – Used extensively
- Peas – In or out of pods, one of the most common medieval vegetables as they could easily be preserved by drying
- Radish
- Spinach
- Turnip

FRUIT

Some of the fruit found in the Middle Ages:

- Apricot
- Apple
- Almond – Almond ‘milk; was a common ingredient in many medieval dishes
- Orange – Grown in Spain (Valencia oranges) though they were more bitter than modern varieties
- Blackberry
- Cherry
- Chestnut
- Plum
- Custard Apple
- Dates – Imported from the Middle East with many other ‘warm’ fruits
- Figs – Imported from the Mediterranean
- Grapes – Fresh, dried and in wine, they were even grown in southern England
- Lemons – Grown in Spain and the Middle East and shipped across Europe
- Melons – Some varieties
- Peach
- Pear
- Pine nuts
- Pomegranate
- Quince
- Walnut
- Strawberry

Fruit and vegetables not that we do not accept

- Maize/Corn
- Avocado
- Potato
- Tomato
- Banana
- Capsicum

Other foods not accepted:

Milk Chocolate, chocolate drinks, ice cream, soft drinks, fairy floss.