

What the Tudor Men Really Wore

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Research and hand drawn sketches created by Kimiko Small, March-April 2006, except where noted. This was originally developed for Margo Anderson's Historical Costume Patterns, and has been modified and updated for use in the Collegium Caidis class on April 10, 2010.

Shirts

The Low-Necked Shirt

The low-necked shirt sketch is based on early Tudor men's shirts seen in various images. Its style is fading by the early 1530s, although it can be seen here and there. The body is finely pleated into the neckline that would be held by embroidery.

For more info on creating this type of shirt, please go to the following yahoogroup:

Pleatwork Embroidery (Smocking)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pleatwork/>



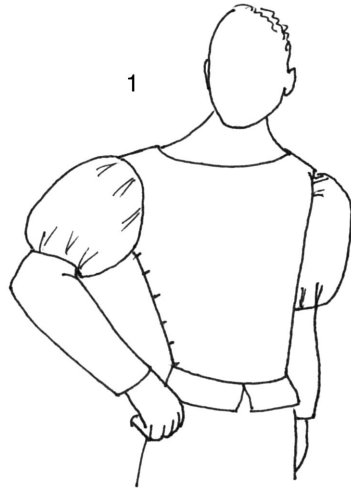
The High-Necked Shirt

This shirt is based on an image of Henry VIII in 1536. As can be seen in the detail image of Henry, the shoulder line at the left shows a short shoulder area (about half the shoulder length) with a V where the sleeves are attached. The collar area is most likely finely pleated with decorative stitching to hold the pleats in place (Posavad, 18), but a collar would be easier for most people to create. The small frill or ruffle, from which the later ruff is derived, tops the shirt collar. This ruffle is optional, as some images do not show a ruffle. The collar is open at center front and is usually closed with 2 shirt strings. There is a matching slit into the center top of the body to allow the shirt to fit over the head. There is a surviving

boy's shirt noted in Janet Arnold's *Pattern of Fashion 4* that seems to look like this style of shirt that can be consulted for creating an historical version.

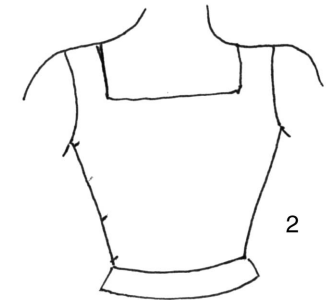
What the Tudor Men Really Wore

Doublet



The doublet is usually the first garment worn over the shirt (a petticoat, in this case a small coat, may be first). It is unclear from the period images how the doublet is fastened, as in most images only the decorated front of the doublet is clearly shown, the rest of the doublet hiding under the jacket and gown. It is also unclear from the images how the sleeves attach. So some presumptions are made on the doublet that is corroborated by the patterns given by Mikhaila.

The doublet in its basic form is similar to Doublet #1, and dates from 1525-36. The neckline is oval, with the shirt seen peeking above the doublet neckline. The doublet is fastened at one side (or possibly both) with ties, hook & eyes, buckles or other fastenings. In this image the sleeves shown are the most common, the puff upper sleeve with a tight lower sleeve. Both the doublet front and the lower sleeves could be heavily decorated in various designs, including pinking, slashing, and various embroidery and jewels. These designs would match on the doublet front, the lower sleeves, and the matching upperstocks of the hose.



Doublet #2 shows a square necked version, and dates from 1500-36. The doublet would fasten at the side.

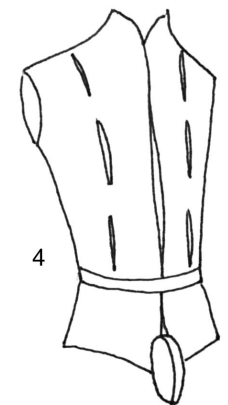
Doublet #3 dates from 1530-40. At this time the doublet now closes down the front, and the neckline is much higher. The shirt collar would be seen above the neckline. Tabs are shown for the skirting.

Doublet #4 is based on an image of Emperor Charles V in 1532. While the image shows this as a jacket, the same shape can be seen in other images for a doublet. The doublet has a high collar line, something Mikhaila calls a “grown on collar”. It is fastened down the front, and slashes can be seen along the sides. This may have hidden an extra seamline for fitting, although that is conjecture and not known for certain. The belt is at the waist, with long skirts shown below the belt. The codpiece is shown at the approximate location.



As can be seen in the various doublet sketches, there are several styles of of doublet skirting that can be done. Cunnington (pg 19) notes the options as follows:

- No skirting up to the 1530s;
- Some skirting always present after the 1530s but usually thin after 1545
 - Full and covering the hips.
 - Shortened to a narrow flared border, often tabbed or scalloped.

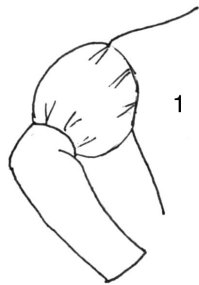


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Doublet Sleeves

Since they are often hidden, it is unclear what some doublet sleeves look like, especially the upper sleeve area, or how exactly the sleeves are attached to the doublet body. Cunnington notes that detachable doublet sleeves were common after 1540 (Cunnington, 21), but I do not know how common it was prior to that date. If they are detachable, points at the armhole joined them, with the join being hidden by an overgarment, or a hanging sleeve. Wings hiding the join belong to a later period, being common after 1545.

They also note that two sleeves could occasionally be worn at the same time. This can often be seen with the gown sleeve and the doublet sleeve in various paintings. But according to Cunnington, such could be done with the doublet sleeve proper being allowed to hang loose behind, while a detachable sleeve of a different color and material was worn. Cunnington calls this a 'fore sleeve' or 'half sleeve', because usually only the forearm portion was visible.

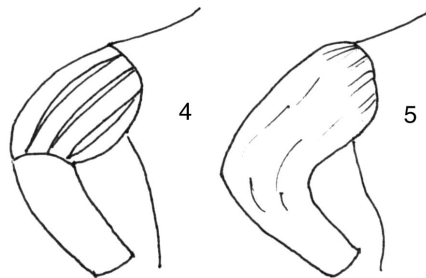


Sleeve #1 matches the style often seen in gown sleeves. The upper arm is puffed, with the lower arm tight fitting. The upper sleeve I think would be pleated, not gathered into the armhole and the same method would be used onto the lower sleeve. I am unsure, because again, there are very few images that actually show the upper arm of a doublet sleeve. The lower sleeve is usually heavily decorated to match the doublet front as it will be seen. I wondered if a puffed sleeve actually would be worn under the puff of the gown sleeve. The image, above right, of a gentleman wearing a puffed gown sleeve (red), where the puff of the blue doublet sleeve can be seen peeking out, so it is not necessary to have a tight upper doublet sleeve under the puff of the gown sleeve.

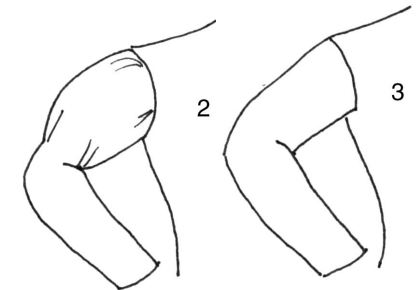
Sleeve #2 is an alternate form of sleeve #1. The sleeve is all one piece, with the upper puff simply being shaped by the pattern and the tightness of the lower sleeve.

Sleeve #3 is a basic tight fitting sleeve.

Sleeve #4 is a panned puff sleeve, which is similar to sleeves #1 & #2. Use either #1 or #2 and cut the upper portion into panes.



Sleeve #5 shows a wide sleeve that slopes to a closer fit at the wrist. Cunnington notes that this style was usually slashed to show the shirtsleeve, a waistcoat sleeve or sewn-in contrasting lining. If the similar to the women's wide sleeve, then the slashes could followed the seam lines, or perhaps done in a spiral slash. Some images also show this sleeve appearing to be extra long and worn pushed up on the arm, showing extra wrinkles along the arm.



slashes were

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Jacket

The jacket is worn over the doublet and shirt. An alternate name for the jacket is the jerkin, although jerkins appear to be a country garment, possibly in leather such as “buff jerkins”. Henry VIII’s wardrobe only contained the term “jacquettes” up to 1536, at which point “jerkins” took their place (Cunnington, 23). For continuity’s sake, I will call this garment a jacket.

The jacket had a fairly close fitting body with the waist at a man’s natural level, just like the doublet. A skirt was usually attached to the jacket. There was a separate skirt called a base that was used for riding and military use. Skirts were always split down the front. The back could be either split or closed. The skirt varied in length from mid thigh to knee length or lower, but the jacket skirt always covered the doublet skirt (Cunnington, 23).

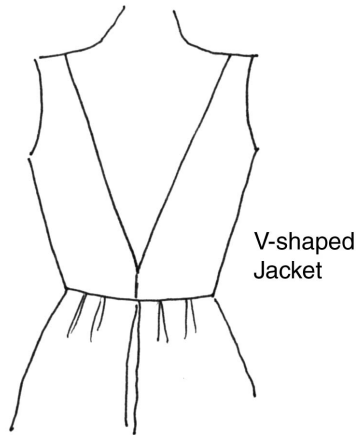
The jacket could have sleeves like the doublet with possible hanging sleeves as well, according to Cunnington, or no sleeves at all. How one can tell which sleeves are attached is still a bit of a mystery to me. I can only presume that if the sleeves matched the style of the doublet, then they are doublet sleeves. If the style matched the jacket, then they are jacket sleeves. How one knows a doublet is worn under a jacket that closes down the front is unclear.

In the image to the right the man is wearing a U-shaped jacket with a long full skirt. The jacket closes at the center front at the waist, usually with hook and eye, as obvious closures are not seen.

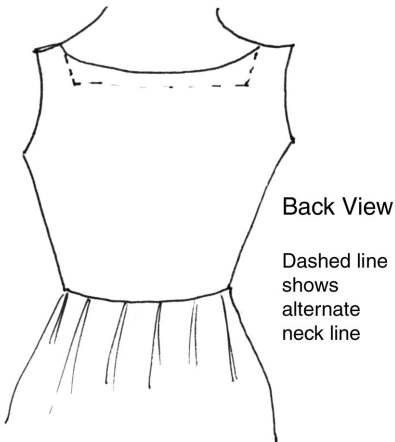
I also show a placard, which is used to fill in the chest area of the jacket. This placard was usually heavily decorated and matched the fore-sleeves of the doublet (Cunnington 209). It can be worn over the doublet to provide a variety of looks, or in place of the doublet if desired (nice for hot weather days).

Image #2 is a jacket with a V-shaped opening, which closes at the center front. Cunnington states that V-shaped opening jackets are edged with revers, broadening upwards to a flat falling collar behind (Cunnington, 23). I could not find any image to support this, and one of the images that appear to be a V-front opening jacket, to my eye appears to actually be full front closing jackets that were folded under in front, with no revers and no collar to be seen. Considering all the layers, I would suggest not having revers/collar added to this style of jacket.

Image #3 shows the back view of the jacket. The neckline can be round or squared, and it usually matches the front of the jacket, as in the U-shaped doublet seems to favor the round neck back.

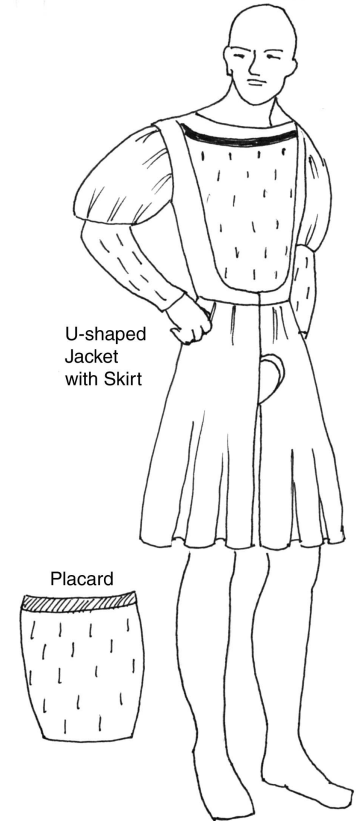


V-shaped Jacket



Back View

Dashed line shows alternate neck line

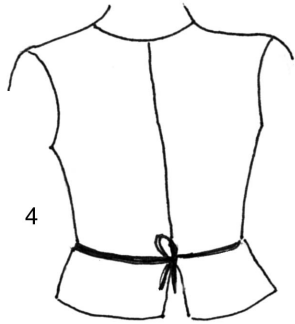


U-shaped Jacket with Skirt

Placard

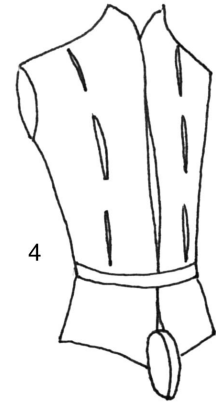
What the Tudor Men Really Wore

The image (right #4) has been seen before. It is based on an image of Emperor Charles V in 1532. This shows just how much doublets and jackets can be interchanged in some styles. The jacket has a high collar line aka a “grown on” collar. It is fastened down the front, and slashes can be seen along the sides. This may have hidden an extra seam line for fitting, although that is conjecture and not known for certain. The belt is at the waist, with long skirts shown below the belt. As noted before, the jacket skirts always cover the doublet skirts in length.



The image on the left also marked #4 shows a front closing jacket similar to the doublet. This jacket has a round neck, no collar, and closes fully down the front. The closures could be lacing, buttons, hook and eyes, or ties. This image shows a round neck, but it could also have a square neck. The low stand up collar was added in the 1540s (Cunnington, 25).

As you can see, it can be difficult to determine the differences between doublets and jackets during this time, as they were often similar in styles. The only clearly different styles are the U-shaped and V-shaped jackets, since the doublet, or the doublet placard, can be seen underneath.



Jacket Skirts and Bases

The skirts of the jacket are often very full and pleated, and sewn onto the bottom of the jackets. From about 1500-1520s sometime, it was the fashion to have multi-colored skirts, where each pleat was of a different color (generally between two colors). Later, solid colored skirts are preferred. Skirts could be welted, guarded, or embroidered. Some of Henry's show a lot of embroidered decoration both horizontally and vertically along each pleat. Skirts might be rectangular, gored, or circular in shape.

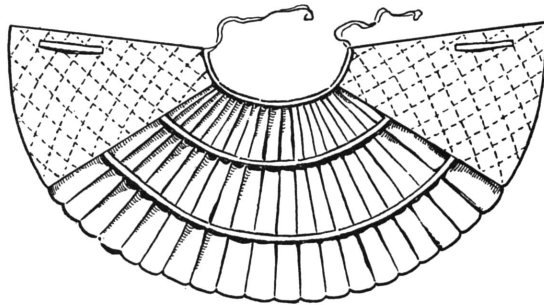


Fig. 40. Bases, inside

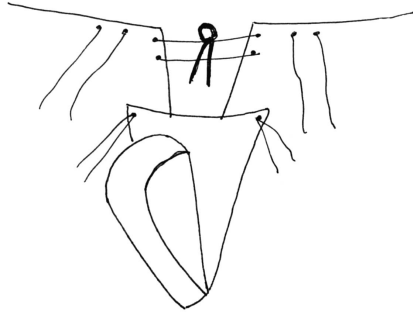
Bases were skirts that were made separately from the jacket, and were usually worn in the military over armor, or for wearing on horseback. There is an extant base at the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Norris gives a good written description of it, although the measurements may be off from that given on the pattern sheet.

“It is more than a semicircle, the pleats or corrugations radiating from the waist. It measures twenty-one inches from the waist to hem and four yards round at the lower edge. The waist measures twenty-three inches. In this example the back parts are without pleats. ... Twenty pleats or corrugations occupy the front part, each pleat kept in place internally by two bands of heavy braid. The back parts, right and left, are quilted behind the pleats. The lining throughout is of heavy linen, and the whole garment is padded with flax more than half an inch in thickness” (Norris, 37).

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The Hose

Hose are made up of two parts, the upperstocks (also known as breeches) (1515-1545) and the netherstocks (aka stockings) (1515-1600) (Cunnington, 35). During this time frame they were treated as one garment. Some hose had the upperstocks decorated differently than the netherstocks, and in this case Cunnington suggests they were sewn together (Cunnington, 32). They were held up with points at the waistband that laced onto the bottom of the doublet.



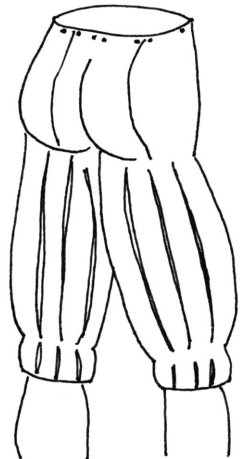
Hose are cut on the bias to give the maximum stretch to the fabric. Use material that has some natural stretch, such as a twill wool fabric. A plain weave fabric may not give enough stretch, and crepe wool is not appropriate wool for the time period, nor is lycra mixed wools (tho that is getting harder to avoid). Period wool used was “kersey”, a fine version of which was used by the nobility and upper classes for hose, and other garments (Norris, 370).

A lining, complete or partial, was used and the lining of a contrasting color can often be seen in areas that are cut or slashed. I know modernly people may not use a lining, and instead wear tights of a contrasting color, which can be seen under the hose slashes. Soft chamois leather was also used to line hose (Malcolm-Davies, 38)

The first image right, shows the back view of a plain hose. You can see there is a definite seam along the back of each leg, along with the seam at the center back. Points can be seen along the top of the waist, which is at the natural waist (matching the doublet waist), not down around the hips or modern jeans waist. A tied ribbon garter helps to keep the hose up, but is optional. These hose were sketched with stirrups, while period hose images seem to show full feet, as in modern tights. While footed hose may be appropriately period, the toes and heels seem to wear out rather frequently, which is why I suggest stirrups to hold the hose in place. This is a matter of personal preference.

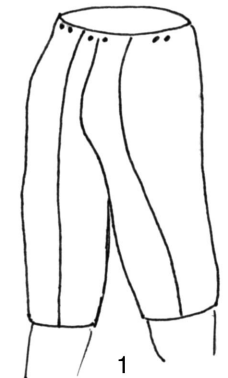


The image to the above left shows the codpiece, a staple for every man’s hose during this time. It’s shape and size may be different depending on the time period & wearer, but it’s function remained the same, to cover the front opening of the hose. The codpiece during this time was usually very prominent, and was padded. The body of it could be slashed or embroidered to match the decoration of the upperstocks (Cunnington, 35). It was usually attached to the hose by points (Cunnington, 36), although I think hook and eyes could also be used. I know that modern snaps will not hold, so I do not suggest they be used.



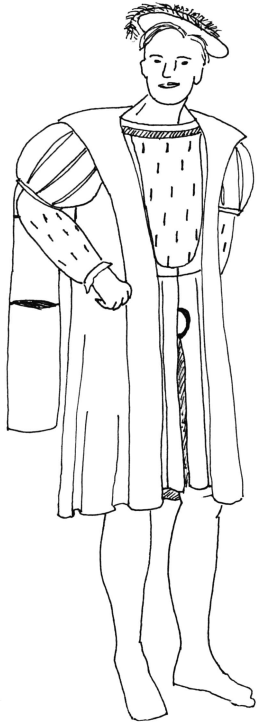
The image to the right marked ‘1’ is one version of the upper stocks. It is rather plain, although it could be heavily decorated with pinks, slashes, cuttes, embroidery, strapwork, and more. Most images of the time do not show the upper stocks which were hidden under doublet or gown, so it is only a few images that show the broad range of possible decorative forms.

Image to the left is a version of upperstocks that have been slashed along the leg, and again at the knee area. Note that the buttocks area is not slashed, although in some images slashing can and does occur throughout the breeches including the upper half. A contrasting interlining usually shows through the slashes.



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Gown



A gown is worn over everything else. It was broad shouldered and loose, and made with ample folds falling in the back (Cunnington, 26). The gown is typically seen among the fashionable to be knee length (the demigown) but can be worn from calf to floor length as well. Usually professionals wear floor length versions (long gown), although ceremonial use calls for the long gown as well (Cunnington, 28).

The gown is open down the front, with the edges having a turned back facing that “broadened over the shoulders to form a square or rounded collar, known as a Cape” (Cunnington, 26). Sometimes the gown of lower classes would go into a rolled collar (Cunnington, 28), or a hood as seen in an image of Henry’s fool.

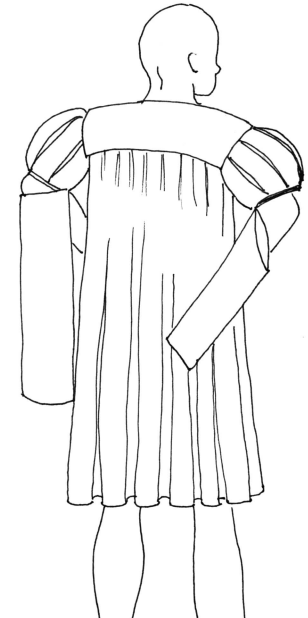
The back view of the gown can be seen here right. The collar area is shown as a square, but can also be circular in shape. It actually hangs over the tops of the gown sleeves a bit.

The back of the gown is circular in shape being very full at the bottom. The shoulder area may be made with set in pleats, or flat across without pleats. Either seems to be appropriate, although there are only a few images that show the back of the gown.

The hanging sleeves are a difficult one to pin down exactly how it hangs. One image of a son of King Francois of France shows the sleeve hanging closest to the body in what appears to be just an inch or so of the sleeve, as if the tube was made separately and just tacked onto the upper puff. Other images such as from Simon Benning show that the sleeve is slit at that area in only the front portion, with the back portion hanging but otherwise fully attached.

The fabric should have some sort of body to it, or be lined or interlined with another fabric to give the gown more body. Common fabrics used for gowns were “velvet, damaske, chamlett, cloth, frieze, tawny, worsted, satin, russet, or marble” (Cunnington, 30).

Many images show the gown lined and faced in fur, even if only a small portion shows at the various seam lines and at the turn back collar.



What the Tudor Men Really Wore

Gown Sleeves

Like the doublet, there are a variety of gown sleeves. Most appear to be gathered into the body of the gown. Most of the gown sleeves are designed to allow the forearm of the doublet to be seen, either from the bottom of the gown sleeve, or along a slit, or multiple slits along the sleeve. It is unclear in most images if the bottom is closed or left open. One image I have shows hanging sleeves that are open at the bottom.

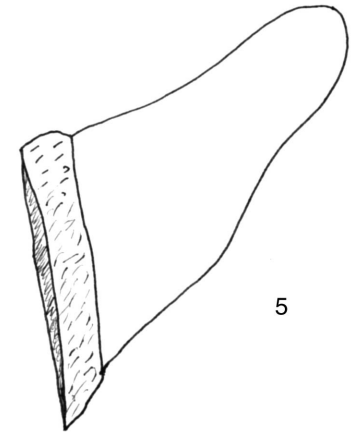
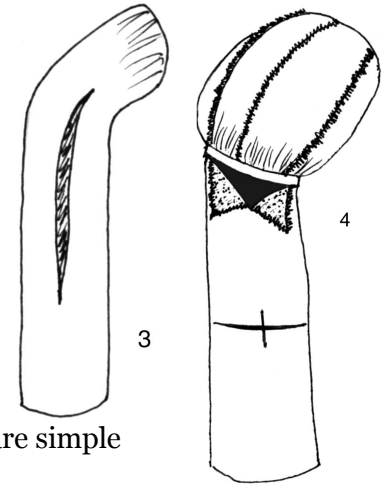
Gown sleeve #1 appears to be the most common in the images I have. The upper sleeve is puffed, but not stiffly so. I believe that the linings of fur is what gives the upper puff its shape, and that can be mimicked with the proper semi-stiff interlining, and not so much the use of stuffing. Stuffing the upper sleeve is how my friends usually create the upper puff, and it looks inaccurate, and doesn't allow for a puffed doublet sleeve to fit comfortably. Also note the slit at the wrist level for another point of access.

Gown sleeve #2 is long, full and tubular. It is gently gathered or pleated into the armhole. It shows two cross-shaped slits for the arm to hang out from. Other possible slits are simple horizontal or vertical slits, and a T shaped slit.

Sleeve #3 is long, full and tubular with one long vertical slit. One image shows the slit deliberately much wider with a facing or bound edge, more like a long oval than just a slit.

Sleeve #4 (left) is similar to #1, except the hanging sleeve does not appear attached at a singular point, but is more like a T-shaped slit in the hanging tube. This sketch is based on *The Ambassadors* by Holbein, and is similar to Henry VIII (1537) by Holbein. The lines on the puff represent fur coming through the seam lines, as if they were panes sewn together.

Sleeve #5 (right) is similar to a woman's hanging sleeve. This was seen more often earlier in Henry's reign, and Cunnington notes the dates as 1500-1520 (Cunnington, 28). Professional men continued to wear this style of sleeve, and it is also seen in ceremonial long gowns.



What the Tudor Men Really Wore

Headwear

Coif

The coif could be made of different fabrics. Lawyers and professional men usually wore linen coifs worn close fitting and tied under the chin only. Elderly men wore a coif of black cloth, silk or velvet, usually under a bonnet or when indoors, and this was allowed in the presence of Royalty (Cunnington, 47). The coif seems to appear similar to the arming coifs worn by military men and known since the middle ages, but this is not known for sure.

Bonnets

The Henrician bonnet is seen in many of Henry VIII's portraits, including possibly one in a drawing of him as a child. As I am bad at drawing heads and hats, I am using a detail from the portrait of Henry VIII by Holbein (1537). This bonnet is simple to make. It is the detailing of jewels and feather(s) that sets this bonnet apart as special, and "makes" Henry VIII come alive. Part of the detail is in making the bonnet brim slightly oval, not circular, to fit the head properly.

In adding the feather(s), one set of instructions notes the feather in the painting as being singular. However I know from buying ostrich feathers that the big, full, plumes such as these are very difficult to buy, and very costly when available. My local feather wholesaler showed me four such magnificent plumes and told me these were special, his, and not for sale. So I recommend using multiple feathers bound together to make the look of the feathers in the bonnet. Some images also show a single smaller feather.

The second bonnet I suggest is the flat cap, as it is fairly simple and most people are already familiar with the style (there are instructions available online). The only suggestion I would have to make regarding the flat cap is to use a small stiff brim, as I haven't seen any flat caps with floppy brims in the images I have seen.



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