

1410 AD Houppelande

Houppelande of royal blue silk noil lined in Kelly green silk noil. Rounded, flat collar also of silk and self belt.

Under dress of gold colored silk.

Hair braided on each side then wrapped around ears.

Headdress of gold colored silk formed into a roll with a brooch on center front.

Shoes are soft-soled, pointed poulaines worn with wooden pattens.

Accessories consist of a long string of beads draping from one shoulder and a black leather belt belted below the bustline.

Jewelry consists of finger rings. No earrings appear in any of the literature.



GENERAL NOTES

Germany influenced fashions at this time. There was also a lot of influence from the Franco-Burgundian area shown by the use of novelties like the folly bells and jeweled collars. The under garment is not under discussion here. It is however typically a Gothic fitted dress and laces in the front

To my knowledge, there are no existing houppelandes. I also could not find any pattern books, tailor's notes or household accounts written during the fifteenth century that discusses construction. There are several theories about how the houppelandes were made. The most common pattern is like a modern dress with a relatively closely cut neck, shoulder, and arm, and then a wide angle going to the hemline from under the arm. The trouble with this is that many of the illustrations show fullness / pleats pointing toward the shoulder line, and this manner of construction doesn't give that effect.

Master José Felipe Francisco de Sastre de Madrid suggested a different theory at a clothing roundtable held at RUSH in Oak Heart, Calontir. He mentioned that it was a theory only and had not been tried. I decided to work from his suggestions and see what happens!

This particular houppelande is made with four quarter-circle panels, like a pieced circle skirt - but the "center" curve of the panel is at the shoulder seam, not at the neck. This worked to produce narrowing fullness that pointed at the shoulder line

On men's houppelandes of this period, there is sometimes a very obvious v-necked seam across the upper back because the long side of the panels part ways with each other mid upper back, as they head toward the shoulder (Payne, 217, Figure 237) and (Longnon, Plate 6). There is the same effect to the front, to a lesser degree. This "V" probably existed in women's garments but they are rarely seen from the back. When we do see women from the back, the hair or hat hides the back of the neck area. However, in "Hunting With Falcons At the Court of Phillip the Good" a lady appears on the right side of the painting in the neckline I'm purporting. This painting is dated from 1442 as the Limburg lions in the coat were only added at that date to the arms of the Duke of Burgundy. However, the clothing all correspond to earlier dates (Boucher, 207, Figure 392).

Materials used in making garments of this century included silk, satin, taffeta, fustian, embroidered materials, fine woolens, a type of thick cloth called frieze, serge, linen, and russet. The nobility wore velvets. Lawn, an almost transparent linen; damask, a richly patterned silk originally made in Damascus; and an unnamed soft silky cloth that was a mixture of silk and fine hair, were all introduced at this time. Furs were used in trimming and lining of garments.

Hair is still parted in the center with two plaited coils. Headdresses consisted typically of a wide, ornamented, padded roll called a chaplet. Occasionally a short veil was worn. The heart-shaped headdresses were becoming popular at this time also. The headgear in the chimney piece photos appears to be a large roll with attachments.

Accessories include a long string of red or gold beads draping from one shoulder as seen in the painting "Hunting With Falcons at the Court of Phillip the Good". Several rings were worn on each hand but I could not find any indications of earrings being worn in the paintings and illuminations I examined. Footwear was the long, pointed, soft-soled poulaines worn with wooden patens to protect them.

Typical fabric colors that were popular in garments of this time period were scarlet, greens, blue, purple, black, russets, and grays. Also red and white (the King's colors) and blue and white (Lancastrian colors) were put together frequently.

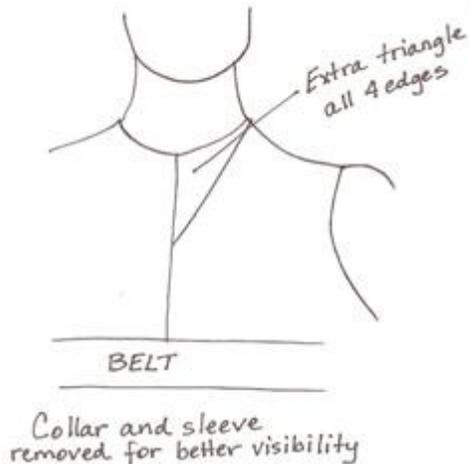


DIAGRAM OF USAGE OF EXTRA TRIANGLES AT NECKLINE

LAYOUT AND CUTTING DETAILS

The layout and cutting diagram below was inspired by Cynthia Virtue and her wonderful website which can be found in The Library of Links.

Lay 4 layers of fabric all "right" side up:
(2 for front, 2 for back)

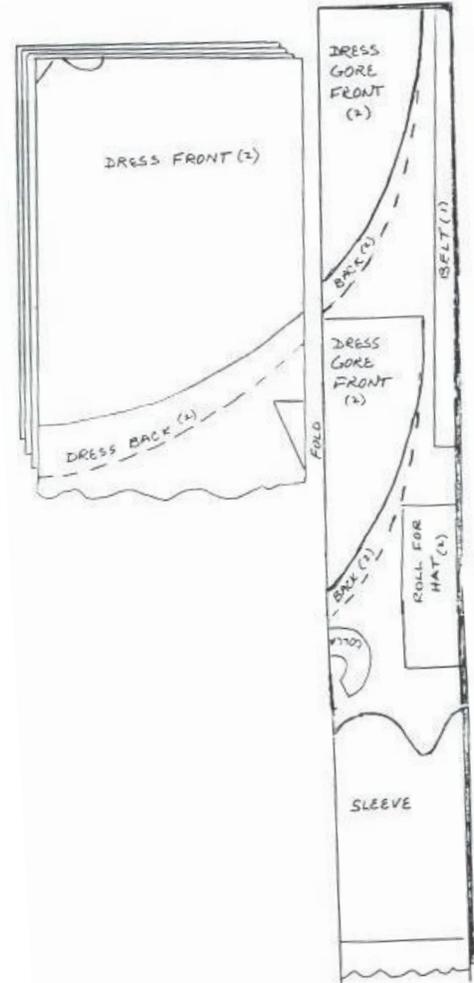
- Cut two sets for dress and lining.
- Cut triangles each for front and back center.

Lay fabric folded lengthwise traditionally:

- Cut 2 sleeves each for dress and lining
- Cut 4 gores each for dress and lining
- Cut 2 collars each on fold for dress and lining.

Using single layer of fabric:

- Cut belt
- Cut 20" wide roll for hat.



CONSTRUCTION NOTES

General Sewing Tips:

1. It is very important to pre-shrink all fabric and trim. Treat the fabric as you would after the garment is complete.
2. All seams are to have 1/2" seam allowances.
3. Zigzag all edges to prevent raveling.
4. Backstitch 1/4" at the beginning and end of each seam to keep seam from coming out.
5. Pin pieces of fabric being sewn together before sewing to keep fabric from slipping and edges together while sewing.
6. Always put "right" sides of fabric together when sewing.
7. Mark "wrong" sides of material if necessary with a chalk pencil or soap as pieces are cut out.

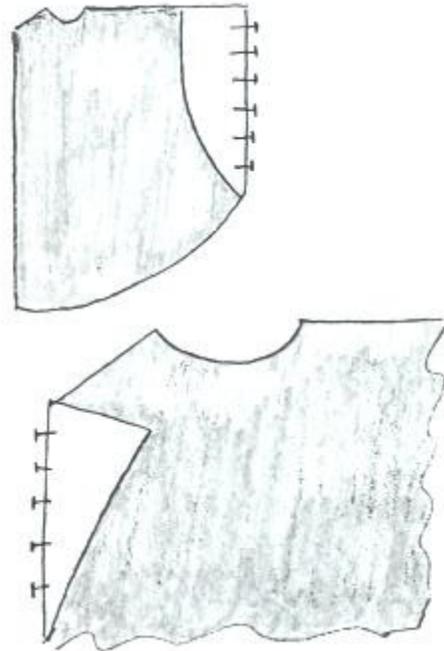
SEWING DIRECTIONS

Step 1

Sew gores onto the skirt of the dress. Lay it on the floor before pinning to make sure the right sides are together. Pin gores to each of the four sides.

Step 2

Sew triangles to each upper edge of the center front and back.



Step 3

Sew Center seam of back together from neck to floor.

Step 4

Sew the front center seam from base of triangles to the floor.

Step 5

Put "right" sides of front and "right" sides of back together. Double check to make sure the gore seam allowance is sticking out.

Step 6

Open up the front and back of the dress and put the "right" sides together. Sew together at shoulder seams.

Step 7

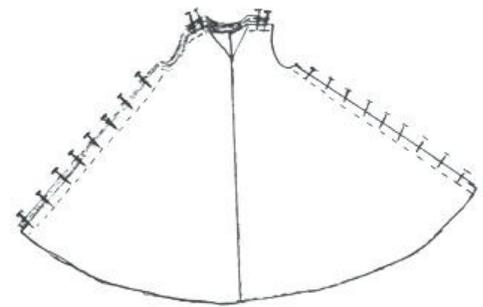
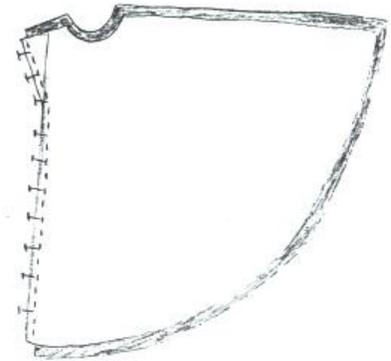
Without separating the front and back of dress, sew the side seams together from armpit to hem.

Step 8

Repeat steps one through seven using the lining fabric.

Step 9

Place "wrong" sides of dress and lining together. Pin at neckline and armhole edges.



Step 10

Fuse interfacing to lining. Sew Collar and lining together.



Step 11

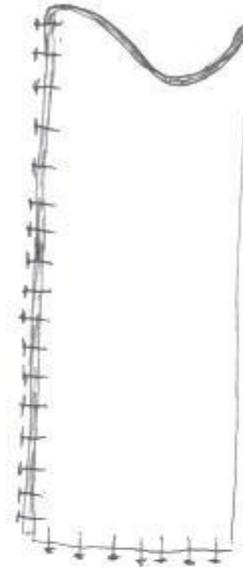
Clip seam allowance around the curve of the collar. Turn.



Step 12

Fold under seam allowance on lining edge and hand stitch to neckline finishing the edge.

Step 13 Sew "right" side of sleeve to "right" side of lining on three sides. Leave the shoulder seam open. Sew both sleeves in this manner.

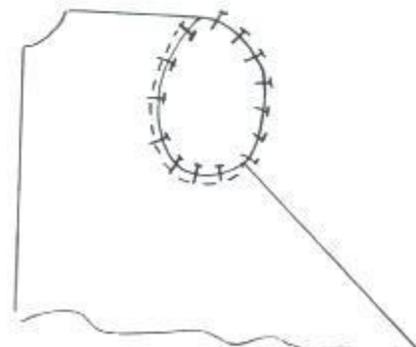


Step 14

Turn the sleeves inside out and pin the "right" sides of the sleeve to the dress sleeve opening. (right sides together). This means the sleeve will be on the inside of the dress – which is "wrong side" out. Match the center of the sleeve with the armpit seam of the dress, and overlap the back edge on top of the front edge of the sleeve at the shoulder of the dress.

Step 15

Clip sleeve seam allowance around the curve of the sleeve.



Step 16

Fold under seam allowance on lining edge and hand stitch to sleeve edge.

Step 17

Measure belt length to fit body plus 2". This allows for seam allowances on the edges and a 1" overlap. Pin right sides of belt together leaving 2 - 3" in center open for turning. Sew belt together. Turn. Press. Hand stitch turning opening closed. Fasten belt with brooch or hooks.



Step 18

Hang dress from hanger for about one month before hemming. Hem the bottom of the dress by binding with 3-inch wide bias stripping. Finish front neckline opening with a hook and eye closure.

HEAD ROLL

Materials: 1/2 yd fabric, fiber fill, wire, wire cutters, needle, thread to match fabric, decorations if desired.

Step 1

Cut a piece of fabric 1 yard long by whatever diameter roll you want. A good size to start with is 7" wide for a 6" final diameter. Sew it into a tube with one closed end. Turn inside out.

Step 2

Stuff with stuffing. Fill the tube with the stuffing to get it firm enough to keep the shape, but not so dense that it can't compress very well.

Step 3

Occasionally bend the tube around your head to see how it fits. When you get to the point where the closed end of the tube and the empty end of the tube meet, Put in the wire.

Step 4

Tuck the non-filled part of the tube back inside its own end. Slide this over the closed end and baste together. Now you have a donut.

Step 5

Trim with ribbon, a round pin in the center front, or with dags/lappets. Veils can be held on with straight pins.