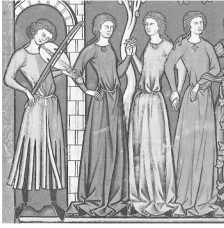


Rectangular Construction

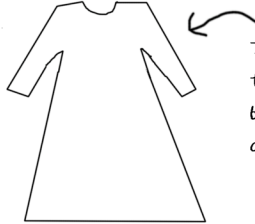
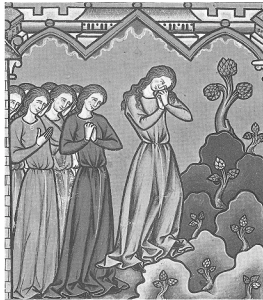
(The Universal Tunic)

by Wenyeve atte Grene (Wendi Dunlap)



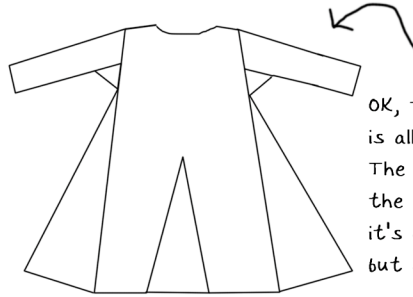
When most people start in the SCA, they are directed to the simplest garb of all: the "T-Tunic." It's easy to make, though somewhat wasteful of fabric, and the cut is not quite documentably authentic, though the results aren't bad.

Once you start researching extant clothing of the Middle Ages, you realize that the clothing wasn't cut like this:



Two pieces of fabric with a wide skirt, sewn together front and back -- this is very easy but wastes a TON of fabric and doesn't give a full enough skirt!

but instead, like *this*!



OK, this is more than two pieces of fabric... but it is all straight lines, so it uses very little fabric. The added gores give you the proper fullness of the skirt. And because all the lines are straight, it's darned easy to sew! This is a rough drawing, but you get the idea. :-)



(These pictures are from the period 1250-1350. Toward the end of this period, clothing started to be more fitted and the construction began to change. So these tunics are best if your persona is mid 14th century or earlier.)

Clothing of this style is documentable to the 14th Century (the Bocksten Man bog find, for example), but likely existed for some time before that. The illustrations to the left show tunics in the mid 13th Century (the Maciejowski Bible) and the mid 14th Century (the Manesse Codex) that seem likely to be based on a similar pattern. If you make your tunic of a fine wool, you will see that the skirt hangs in a way that matches that shown in period artwork quite nicely!

Speaking of wool -- it is the typical fabric for this kind of clothing, at least, when worn as outerwear. (You can make undergarments -- *smocks* -- in this style as well.) Whether linen was used for outerwear is a hotly-debated topic, though it was definitely used for underwear! If you can't find wool, or you are worried about the heat, linen is a good substitute, and cotton is OK, too, though it's not really period for this type of clothing. Just stay away from knits, and from man-made fibers (you'll broil!), and you will be fine.

In the rest of this class we will measure each other to make your own pattern, then we will lay out the fabric (if you brought any) and draw the pattern onto your fabric. When you're done, you'll be ready to start sewing your own authentic tunic!