



# IN ANCESTORS FOOTSTEPS COSTUME GUIDE

2022

<https://iforfadersspar.se/>



# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE

The following guide is made for you who would like to create your own costume with the purpose of portraying common people during the later part of Scandinavian Iron age. We want to make it easier for new members of the community, and show you that it doesn't have to be hard or expensive to create an outfit.

This guide is created with the mindset of "less is more". Therefore, most of the fabrics are undyed, and objects made of metal are used sparingly.

The guide is divided into the segments - textiles (p.3), mens outfit (p.4-7) and womens outfit (p.8-12)

## WHO ARE WE?

The creators of this guide are the organizers of *In ancestors footsteps*, a living history event that runs every other year - next time in July of 2023.

You can read more about our event on our website. Please follow us on social media!



# TEXTILES, COLORS AND WEAVES

## WOOL

Wool is the most common type of textiles found in the source material. It is used for all sorts of overgarments and possible accessories, but can also be used closest to the skin.

Regular tabby weave or diagonal twill is preferred. Weaves like diamond- or herringbone twill are rare in the source material and seem to have been reserved for people of high social status in society.

Wool can be plant dyed, but this should be done with social status in mind. For this guide we have avoided red and blue for just that reason.

## LINEN

Linen was more expensive to produce compared to wool, and is preferably used for undergarments.

Regular tabby weave is preferred here. Ordering unbleached tabby linen is in general a safe card.

Linen has historically speaking been hard to dye. Therefore it is kept naturally unbleached in this guide.



# MENS OUTFIT

## UNDERGARMENTS

- Shirt/tunic made of linen. Runs halfway down to the thigh or to the knee. Long sleeves to the wrist.
- Needlebound socks or sewn woolen hose, based on finds from Iceland and Hedeby.
- Possible breeches of linen

## OVERGARMENTS

- Shirt/kirtle made of wool. Same pattern as the undergarment. The cut is based on several finds.
- Long, straight trousers made of wool. Based on finds from Thorsberg and Hedeby.
- Belt of leather or weaved band. Buckle of iron, bronze or antler.
- Turnshoes made of leather. Based on several finds.

## POSSIBLE ACCESSORIES

- Leg wraps woven in one piece. Herringbone weave is overrepresented in the source material. Diamond twill is far more scarce. Can be fastened by tucking them in, with a piece of string, or with hooks.
- Woolen hat. Round model made from five to six pieces in the form of wedges.
- Simple tools, e.g. a knife and wetstone

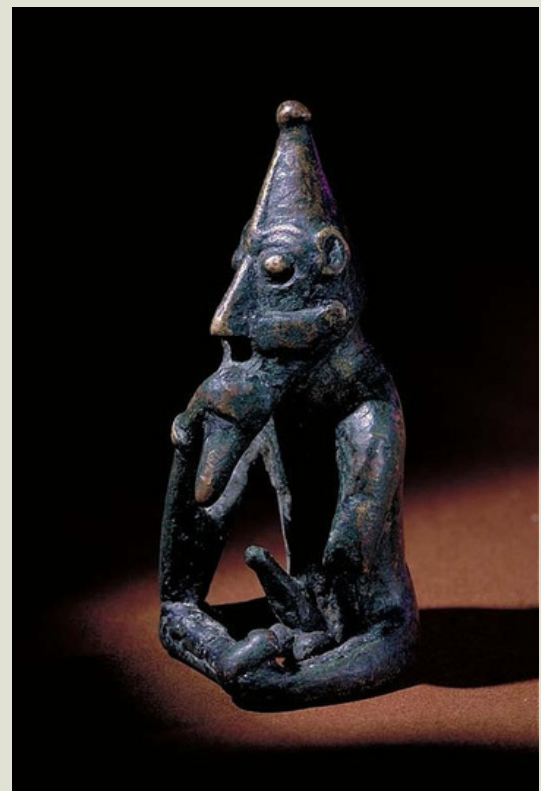
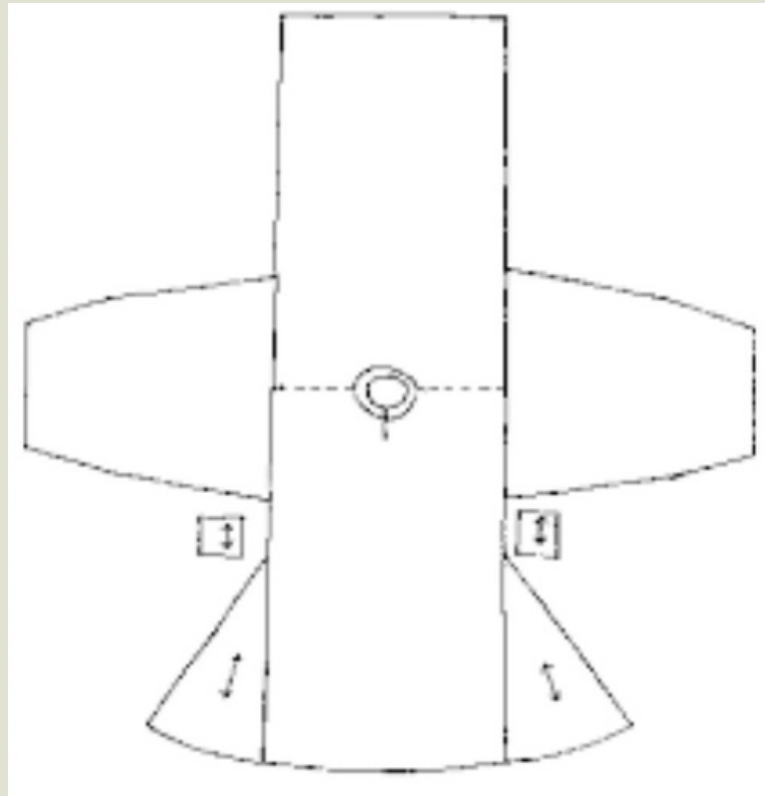


Photo: Historiska museet, Ola Myrin

# UNDERGARMENTS



Simple linen tunic. Made from straight cut pieces with two or four gores. The same pattern is used for the overgarment, but then from wool.



Needlebound socks made from wool.  
Sewn woolen hose.

# OVERGARMENTS



Two examples  
of simple  
outfits for  
men.



Straight  
trousers based  
on finds from  
Thorsberg and  
Hedeby. Shoes  
based on finds  
from York.  
(left)



Shoes based on  
finds from  
Hedeby and  
Viborg (right)



Different styles  
of belts (below)



# POSSIBLE ACCESSORIES



Legwraps and three different ways of securing them



Woolen round hat.  
Bag with wooden handle. Based on several finds, mostly Hedeby and Birka. The size of the handles varies greatly. The material for the bag is not known, but we suggest fabric, net or leather for reconstructions.  
Simple knife and wetstone.

# WOMENS OUTFIT

## UNDER GARMENTS

- Linen dress. In general ankle length, but can be made shorter to avoid dirt and moisture from the ground.
- Needlebound socks or sewn woolen hose.

## MIDDLE LAYER

- Woolen dress. Same pattern as the undergarment.
- A head covering/scarf can be worn. Made of wool, but linen works aswell.
- No belt as very few belt buckles has been found in womens graves. A woven or braided band is an alternative as finds in Hedeby indicate that some aprons have been worn out along the waistline. A small fragment from Birka has been interpreted as a woven belt.

## OVERGARMENTS

- A coat with front opening. Based on depictions on figurines and other jewellery, and the positions of brooches in womens graves, for example Birka.
- Rectangular or square shawl to be worn over the shoulders is great for colder days.
- Turnshoes made out of leather.

## POSSIBLE ACCESSORIES

- Pearls. Often few and small in size when found outside of rich graves. Often made from glass and/or amber. Semiprecious stones, silver or gold is more rare but can be found in a wealthier context.
- Bag with handles
- Simple tools





# UNDERGARMENTS



Linen dress. A possible vent can be closed with a brooch.



Needlebound socks.  
Sewn woolen hose.

# MIDDLE LAYER

Woolen dress. Same pattern as the linen one.



A head covering/scarf can be used. The example in the picture is based on several finds in the Baltic area, plus some fragments from Birka. Made from thin wool, but linen is also possible.

# OVERGARMENTS



Coat with front opening. Based on depictions i jewelry and the placement of brooches in graves, for example on Birka. The example in the picture is closed with a bone needle and woolen braid as an alternative to expensive jewelry.



Turnshoes made out of leather. Based on find from Oseberg. The finds presented in the Mens outfit are also viable for women.



Rectangular or square shawl made out of wool to be worn over the shoulders is great for colder days.

# POSSIBLE ACCESSORIES

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Bag with wooden handle. Based on several finds, mostly Hedeby and Birka. The size of the handles varies greatly. The material for the bag is not known, but we suggest fabric, net or leather for reconstructions.

