

Clothing and costumes of the Elizabethan Era



The Colors of the Classes

- People of the era wore colors based on class ranking.
- These color codes were enforced by laws called Sumptuary Laws.
- The lower classes were forbidden to dress in the same fabrics and colors as the upper class.



Upper Class



- The upper class could afford the more expensive dyes and often wore:
 1. Gold
 2. Silver
 3. Crimson
 4. Deep indigo
 5. Violet

Middle Class

- This group could afford modestly priced dyes and fabrics. Their color scheme was traditionally:
 1. Black
 2. White
 3. Jeweled tones



Lower Class



- This class could not afford to buy most dyes. They relied on primarily on dye they could make from things found in nature.
- Common colors worn were:
 1. Earth tones
 2. Pastels

Fabrics define the class

- Upper classes wore imported fabrics such as:
 1. Silk
 2. Lace
 3. Velvet
 4. Material adorned with unrestrained jewels.
- Lower classes wore common domestic fabrics such as:
 1. Leather
 2. Wool
 3. Linen

Women's Fashion

- Bum Roll:
- Also known as a bustle.
- It is an undergarment worn to accentuate the hips, thereby making the waist seem smaller.



Farthingale



- Also known as a hoop skirt.
- It is a hoop worn beneath a skirt to extend it horizontally.

Corset

- This undergarment was worn to slim the waist.
- Corsets were also used to shape a woman's torso to conform to the fashionable silhouette of the time.
- Corsets caused:
 1. Broken ribs
 2. Difficulty breathing
 3. Fainting



Ruffs



- Also referred to as whisks
- This item of clothing served no actual function.

Make up and Wigs

- White paste was worn on the face for make up.
- Most make up was lead based.
- Many women died of lead poisoning.
- Wigs were a way to show off your status.



Men's Fashion: Ruffs



- These were very large collars.
- This item of clothing served no actual function.
- Consider its modern day equivalent to be a neck tie.

Slops

- These were full, short pants.
- Very popular among the upper class during this age.



Vests and Doublets



- A doublet was a padded jacket.
- It was common to wear both the vest and the doublet even in warm weather.
- It may have been warm, but it showed off status.

Costumes of the Era

- When someone from the upper class died they often left their clothing to their servant.
- Servants were often classified as being part of the lower class and had no use for these garments.
- In turn, these clothes were often sold or donated to acting troupes to be used as costumes.