

# Clothes



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## Men's linen braies

**Men's linen braies** — (or Breeches) were the innermost layer of clothing for men, long loose underpants made from linen. They were worn under and filled in the gap between single leg hose in the 13th and 14th centuries. As hose became fuller, braies got shorter and smaller.



### How do we know about linen braies?

There are no surviving examples of braies as linen rots away too quickly. These replicas are “best guesses” worked out from 13th illuminated manuscript evidence. There are many illustrations of men wearing braies in medieval manuscripts, including the Luttrell Psalter. Peasants working in the fields seem to have worn braies without leg hose.



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## Men's linen lined woollen single leg hose

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— hose began as simple foot coverings and extended upwards covering more of the leg. During 13th and much of the 14th century hose were single-legged garments, and men sometimes wore different colours on each leg. Hose fasten directly to the waistband (breech girdle) of the braies.



### How do we know about woollen single leg hose?

There are many illustrations of men wearing leg hose in medieval manuscripts, including the Luttrell Psalter.



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## Women's woollen leg hose

**Women's woollen leg hose** — women's hose were knee-length socks cut from woven woollen cloth. They were cut on the bias to give as much movement as possible, were often quite loose and held up by garters tied just below the knee. Rich women may have had garters made from expensive cloth, possibly embroidered, with buckles, and poor women would have used plain twill cloth or braid. We have sewn ties in to the seams of these replica leg hose to make them easier to try on, but C13th century leg hose had separate garters.



### How do we know about women's leg hoses?

There are no surviving examples of woollen leg hose. These replicas are “best guesses” worked out from C13th illuminated manuscript evidence. It is possible that shorter knitted socks may have been worn, as there are descriptions in manuscripts, but there is no surviving evidence – and knitting was exclusively a male pastime in medieval times.



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## Women's linen shift / chemise

**Women's linen shift / chemise** — shifts and chemises were worn next to the skin under more elaborately decorated outer clothes. As well as helping to keep the wearer warm, they also absorbed bodily odours and kept the outer clothing clean and smell free for longer. This was important when all clothing was hand washed, as it would have been much easier and quicker to wash a linen shift than a heavy woollen garment or elaborately embroidered and perhaps jewelled outer garment as worn by nobility.



### How do we know about women's linen shifts?

There are no surviving examples of linen shifts. These replicas are “best guesses” worked out from C13th illuminated manuscript evidence. Three distinctly different styles of shift or chemise are shown in medieval manuscripts, and there are also various references in written descriptions to pleated and embroidered chemises. We have chosen to replicate the simplest shape — a t-shaped garment very similar to men's shirts, just longer and fuller.

