

Hats



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Coif

Coif — coifs, which tied under the chin, were considered to be underwear — they were a sign of respectability and no self respecting person would be seen in public with their head uncovered. They were worn underneath formal hats by everybody over 12 except those doing physical labour. They had several practical uses as they would have restricted the spread of head lice, and kept grease, dirt and lice from contaminating more expensive outer hats. Coifs were also worn in bed to keep people warm at night. Coifs were made from linen, a fabric made from the flax plant.



How do we know about coifs?

There are many illustrations of people at all levels of society wearing coifs in medieval manuscripts, including the Luttrell Psalter; Romance of Alexander; Murthly Hours, and the Queen Mary Psalter.



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

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Hood with buttoned front

Hood with buttoned front — this could be worn up to cover the head, or down to just keep the neck warm, depending on the season and the weather. It is made from wool, with a linen lining and cast pewter buttons.

The medieval hood was worn by men, women, and children. It was very practical cold weather-wear, and also became a fashion item. The liripipe (the point at the back of the head) was extended until it reached outrageous proportions by the end of the 15th Century.

The hood can be worn off the head, turned back at the front edge or the wearer could just hide away inside — useful in rainy weather or if the wearer wanted to appear mysterious.



How do we know about woollen hoods?

There are many illustrations of people at all levels of society wearing hoods in medieval manuscripts, including the Luttrell Psalter, Romance of Alexander, Murthly Hours, and the Queen Mary Psalter.

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Hat with folded brim

Hat with folded brim — this hat has two layers of wool, which would keep the wearer warm. It could be single coloured or have a variety of colours, and also be reversible, making it a versatile piece of headwear.



How do we know about woollen hats?

There are many illustrations of people at all levels of society wearing hats in medieval manuscripts, including the Luttrell Psalter, Romance of Alexander, Murthly Hours, and the Queen Mary Psalter.

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Wimple

Wimple — respectable women aged 12 and over were required to keep their hair covered, and wore wimples. There are several types of wimple — some were like a linen tube which was wider at one end than the other — these could be pulled on over the head and worn, with the need for help from a servant.

Rich women, who had servants to help them put their hearwear on, wore wimples which consisted of two linen strips — one wound around the crown of the head, the other worn from the top of the head to under the chin. Both strips were pinned, then a linen or silk or fine wool oblong or oval 'veil' was pinned to these.



How do we know about wimples?

There are many illustrations of women at all levels of society wearing wimples in medieval manuscripts, including the Luttrell Psalter, Romance of Alexander, Murthly Hours, and the Queen Mary Psalter.

