

# The Arts Council's A Dickens Holiday

Presented with  
the Downtown Alliance

## How Men Dress

Anyone can dress up in Victorian style to really get in the Dickens Holiday spirit. And it is so easy! You can sew your own clothes if you like, but you can also put together a good outfit with just a few items from thrift stores or your grandparents' attic. You might even have some old clothes in the back of your closet that will work! Here is an easy how-to guide to help you get started.



### HATS

A top hat is good for middle class or above and is appropriate for daytime as well as evening wear. A derby or bowler is also good for all classes and may even be worn by a tradesman. Used top hats or derbies are sometimes available from formal wear stores. New, good quality top hats and derbies may be purchased during A Dickens Holiday at 222 Hay Street. A wide-brimmed hat with a flat crown is also OK, but no cowboy hats! A soft cap, or newsboy's cap, is best for laborers, craftsmen, and boys.

Any white or pin-stripe dress shirt will work. Fold the collar inside to create the look of a high collar and button the top button. You can make a false ascot with a regular tie. Just tie it like normal, except for the last step - bring the wide part in front of the knot instead of through it. Hold in place with a tie or stick pin. Use a solid color or traditional pattern made of a soft silk or similar fabric. You can find ties at thrift stores. You can also use a ladies long (40"+) narrow (6-8") lightweight fabric scarf (solid color), tie a big bow (8") and let it drape down the front with the tie ends tucked into your vest.

### SHIRTS & TIES

Tuxedo (tails) with a vest, or a morning coat. You can find them at thrift shops or formalwear (tuxedo) stores that sell their rental wear. For topcoats or capes: Black or brown, the coat usually had a wide collar.

### COATS



Regular pants, black, dark gray or brown without cuffs or pleats. Use suspenders (plain black) or a plain leather belt. Create "knickers" for young boys by pulling up pant legs and tucking inside the top of knee-high socks.

### PANTS

Boots are good (remember the dirt streets were often muddy and dusty). Cowboy boots and tennis shoes do not fit the theme! Complete the look with a walking stick or cane, black umbrella, pocket watch, cloth dress gloves.

### SHOES (& accessories)

For more information, call (910) 323-1776 or visit [www.TheArtsCouncil.com](http://www.TheArtsCouncil.com).

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## How Women Dress

Anyone can dress up in Victorian style to really get in the Dickens Holiday spirit. And it is so easy! You can sew your own clothes if you like, but you can also put together a good outfit with just a few items from thrift stores or your grandparents' attic. You might even have some old clothes in the back of your closet that will work! Here is an easy how-to guide to help you get started.

### HATS & HAIR

Look in thrift shops/resale shops/yard sales for old wide brimmed dress hats. Trim with flowers, feathers, ribbon, netting, lace, etc. Bonnets were popular also. Check with relatives, they may have an old bonnet in their attic.



You can make a mobcap (maid's cap) by cutting an 18" circle from cotton material. Thread a large needle with narrow ribbon (or you can use narrow rope elastic) and use a running stitch 3" from the cut edge all the way around. After you have gone all around the circle make sure both the ribbon ends come out the same side. Glue lace around the edge. You will set it on your head, pull the ribbon (rope elastic) to fit and tie the ends into a bow. Tuck the bow under the cap. Pin cap to hair to keep in place. Ladies always wore their hair

up (the only time they let it down was for bed).

### SKIRTS & BLOUSES

Blouses with high collars are best. Lace and ruffles were popular. Mostly whites and solids; colors were subdued. For dresses: High collar similar to the blouse/skirt combination.

### CAPES

From fingertip to floor length with ribbons/buttons/clasps to keep them closed. Made from wool, velvet, satin, etc. Some had a hood and/or were trimmed with fur.



### SHOES (& accessories)

High top shoes (which we call granny boots) were worn mostly (remember the streets were not paved and the dust, horse droppings and rain made for dirty shoes). Brooches, watches on gold chains as a necklace, parasols, gloves. Purses were usually made of cloth to compliment or contrast with the clothing and were closed with a drawstring which was also used to carry it. A few had a metal clasp with a chain handle and trimmed with lace, ribbon, fur. Muffs to keep the hands warm – made of matching or contrasting material or fur.

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