

SCOTTISH GARB, HOW TO WEAR IT

The kilt and Highland Dress are not costumes or uniforms, but Scotland's national dress. They should be worn proudly and properly.

The most recognizable piece of Highland attire is the kilt (feileadh), the origins of which go back to the ancient Celts.

The modern or Little Kilt (Feileadh-Beag) is a cut down version of the great KILT (Fe il eadh~FIOR) which served the Highlander as a Kilt/plaid during the day and a bedroll at night.

The modern kilt is a superb example of tailoring, containing up to 8 yards of woven woolen material, called tartan. Each tartan is the prideful symbol of a clan or family.

The kilt should fit snugly at the waist and fall in a series of pleats, worn to the rear, so well designed as to preserve the set or pattern of the tartan. It may be worn with, or without, a belt, but never with suspenders.

The most common mistake is wearing the kilt too long. It should be worn to the top of the kneecap, and shorter if used for hiking or active wear.

Proper Highland etiquette designates that plain hose be worn during the day, and tartan hose for formal and evening wear. They should reach no higher than four fingers below the knee. Hose are held up by garters, to which are attached little colored "flags", called flashers.

On the outside of the right stocking is worn the "Black Knife" (Skean Dhu). It may seem logical to tuck only the sheath into the stocking, but this is wrong, only enough handle should protrude so as to get a grip on the knife when needed.

The Sporrán is a pouch - the original "fanny pouch". It is worn suspended around the waist by a chain or leather belt. For everyday wear, a simple leather sporrán is appropriate. The more elaborate silver-cantled fur sporráns are for evening or formal wear. The long horse hair sporráns are used by pipe bands and the military.

It is not necessary for a jacket to be worn with a kilt for informal day wear. A sport shirt, a plain sweater, or a simple vest over a white shirt is fine. If a jacket is worn, it should be a kilt jacket tailored to the proper length. IT should be no longer than the bottom of the pleat stitching on the kilt. A sport coat, blazer or tweed coat is not appropriate. The formal or evening kilt jacket comes in several styles which can include a vest. It can be worn with a black bow tie or a jabot (a lace ruffle and cuff set). A Jabot is worn with a doublet and this is very Highland. Formal Highland Dress may be worn at any function that requires a tuxedo.

IF a tie is worn it should be of a solid color. Tartan ties should never be worn with a kilt, nor should a tartan bow tie. The tie is a sassenach (saxon-english) piece of clothing. There is no word for a "tie" in the Gaelic language.

The Plaid was the end of the Great Kilt and was worn over the left shoulder. A plaid may also be worn with a modern kilt. It is a separate piece of cloth of the same tartan as the kilt and is held in place by a plaide brooch, the brooches are sometimes very ornate pieces of silver jewelry and often contain gemstones.

The prized possession of the highlander was his Dirk. This still holds a high place among arms collectors. Swearing an oath on the dirk was one of the most serious pledges a Highlander could make. The Dirk and the plaid are accessories that should only be worn with evening or formal wear.

The only correct headwear that should be worn with the kilt is the Bonnet - either the Balmoral or the Glengarry in plain colors, but not tartan. The tartan bonnet or "Tam-O-Shanter" is worn only by women and children. The Great Feathered Bonnet is the only other headgear worn with the kilt, and this only by bands and the military. The bonnet should always be worn with a brooch or appropriate clan or regimental badge to which one is entitled.

The traditional dress for ladies usually resembles the aboyne or arasaid dress. This usually has a knee length skirt with many petticoats worn underneath. Today, however, we see many women wearing kilted skirts and a variety of tartan wear.

The Sash is the traditional form of clan identification for women. It is worn over the right shoulder of a white or solid colored dress. The sash should be pinned with a pin or brooch. A plaide brooch should not be used, however, as this is considered too masculine. The wife or daughter of a chief would also pin the sash at the left hip.

Duncan MacLean
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Attire Guide

KILT JACKET - SEACAID FÉILIDN

BONNET - BOINEID



PRINCE CHARLIE
with black tie

BALMORAL
Plain wool, never
tartan or Tam O'
Shanter. May have
diced band. Cap
badge on left side.

JACKET - SEACAID

Day—plain tweed,
never reaches below
the seams of kilt.

SHIRT - LEINE

Plain contrasting
color or white.

TIE

Plain contrasting
color or regimental.

BUTTONS

FUTANAN
Day—bone or horn,
evening—silver.

WAISTCOAT

PEITIAN
Day—matching tweed,
evening—tartan,
scarlet or white.

KILT - FEILEADH

Reaches to center of
knee or touches floor
when kneeling.

GARTER FLASHES

Usually red or green,
but any color matching
kilt is satisfactory.

HOSE - STOCAINN

Day—plain colors,
evening—tartan,
diced, white or
fawn.

PLAID

Over left shoulder,
day wear for pipers,
evening for others.



CROMAG

Only carried outdoors.
Length should be equal
to distance from ground
to arm pit.

KILT PIN

Day—plain
Evening, ornate
with jewel

BELT - CRIOS

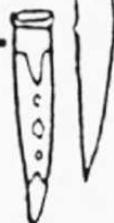
Day—brass buckle
evening—silver,
with crest or
insignia.

SPORRAN

Day—Leather or fur,
evening—trimmed with
silver

SKEAN DHU

Day—plain, evening
ornate, with sheath
worn in right stocking
(if you are right
handed)



SHOES - BROGAN

Day—sturdy laced or
buckled brogue.

