

Army of the Ohio Civilian Guidelines

We should be constantly striving to be as authentic as we can be and to continue to improve our impressions -- to make progress in our clothing, appearance, actions, attitude, and personality. Our goals should be to:

Research and study diaries, letters, textiles, garments, images and original artifacts of the period.

Share research with our peers and the public.

Participate in civilian scenarios at battle reenactments and living history programs.

Demonstrate and learn by doing period activities such as knitting, sewing, quilting, spinning, needlework, rolling bandages, cooking, doing laundry, playing music or singing, etc.

Develop first person skills, both for public interpretation and our own education, and third person interpretative skills.

Illustrate the how the War affected the lives of ordinary citizens including coping with separation or loss of family members, economic hardship, shortages, and substitutes and the impact of invading armies.

Study and educate the public on the role of soldiers' aid societies and of the various ways in which civilians on the homefront aided the war effort.

Raise awareness and contribute to non-profit organizations dedicated to preservation of historic sites.

Authenticity should be a journey. While having the correct clothing, material culture items, etc. is crucial; the most important thing is having the right attitude, to WANT to do it right. (You can often borrow clothing and other items when you're starting out.)

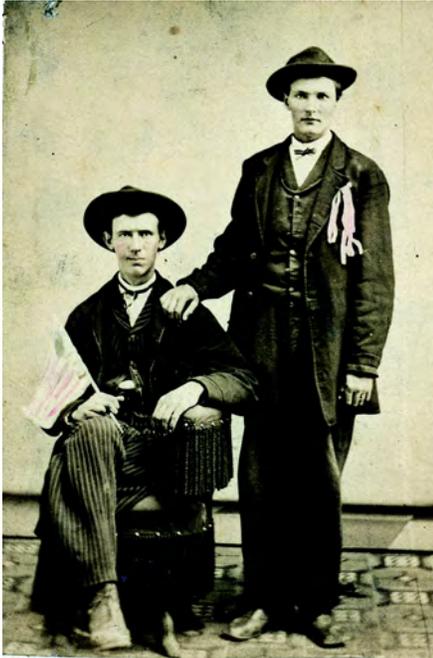
Basic Standards & Guidelines:



Clothing:

Clothing should be tailored to the portrayal you have chosen to do. It is important to know who you are, where you live and what your financial and social status is to get your "look" correct. There is no manual for civilian clothing – only YOU can decide what you want to portray.

Your clothing may vary, depending on the event and scenario you have chosen to participate in. You may have one or several characters in your closet! Many of the events we attend have published authenticity standards and guidelines to assist civilians in developing their impressions for that event. When this is not the case, your "core impression" should apply. When in doubt, especially if you have an historical character or specialized impression, speak with the civilian co-coordinator for the event or contact the AotO civilian coordinator.



Gentlemen:

http://www.memorialhall.mass.edu/activities/dressup/1860_man.html

Coats: Civilian frock coats, paletots, sacks, &c. of any period material and pattern. A frock coat would be standard daywear for a man of the period, either single or double breasted, with a skirt extending from the waist. A sack coat hangs loosely on the body. In the summer, linen is strongly encouraged.

Trousers: Period civilian materials and construction. You can wear Confederate "mule ear" trousers (which are civilian pattern) in drab colors; avoid cadet gray or blue. Do not wear Federal uniform trousers, either dark or sky blue.

Hats: Any period civilian hat will do. From stovepipes to bellcrowns, to battered slouches to mechanic's caps - the choice is yours and should match the social class of your impression. Straw hats are recommended for summer events.

Boots and shoes: Please, no bare feet, for safety's sake. Tall leather boots or civilian shoes are appropriate. No military brogans.

Shirts: Civilian only; cravats are highly desirable; detachable collars are for the very stylish. A white cotton or linen shirt was the standard middle class "undergarment." For a working class impression, a homespun shirt could be considered.

Personal items: Kid or cotton gloves. Period reading and writing materials.

Under Clothing: Underwear - no one will check, but please nothing modern that is visible. No obviously modern socks. No wristwatches. Consider purchasing a pair of antique frames to replace your modern eyeglasses with - or wear contact lenses. If you need sunglasses, blue, green or smoked lenses are OK. No visible modern tattoos, earrings, studs, or hairstyles.

Tobacco products: The usual stipulations, cigarettes are OK providing: no modern packaging (use a cigarette case), no modern lighters, and no filters.

Women:

http://www.memorialhall.mass.edu/activities/dressup/1860_woman.html

Footwear: Leather ankle boots are appropriate – can be lace up or have inside elastic for slip-ons. Shoes are encouraged to be worn at reenactments, for health and safety reasons.

Stockings: Wool, cotton or silk generally in variations of white, browns or blacks, reaching above the knee. May be held up by a string or a band of elastic or garters above or below the knee, or knotted below the knee.

Chemise: Absolutely necessary. Made of white cotton, with short sleeves, and reaching to mid-calf.

Drawers: Not everyone wore these. Recommended when a cage crinoline is worn.

Petticoats: Two to six petticoats can be worn if not wearing a cage. White cotton is most common, followed by wool flannel. An under petticoat should be worn with a cage esp. if not wearing drawers.

Corset or Stays: Highly recommended. A true corset may be worn, made of cotton twill and stiffened with steel boning, or a pair of stays stiffened with cording as an alternative. Remember – bras were not worn in the 1860s!

Dress: The most common for wear during the day would be a one-piece dress, consisting of a fitted bodice and an attached skirt. Possible fabrics include wool, cotton, silk, and combinations of the three. A separate basque bodice and skirt were sometimes worn during the 50s. An alternative is the two piece 'sack and petticoat', or loose-fit bodice, and separate skirt. This outfit tended to be less formal than the dress, being a descendant of the 18th c. Shortgown and Petticoat. It shows up in a number of engravings and paintings of working class women in the 1850s. This type of two-piece dress is not worn for middle and upper class impressions.

Ball Gowns: This type of dress is worn only for balls and formal eveningwear. Short sleeves and low necklines worn during the day are appropriate for only for young girls.

Outerwear: A voluminous wool shawl seems to have been an almost constant accessory, judging from the available images of women. Mantles, coats, and capes were also have been worn.

Headwear: Bonnets were the most common for "mature" ladies (over 25). Straw was the cheapest sort, but drawn silk was also fairly common. Broad straw hats might be worn for the garden, spa or seaside.



Hair: Hair in the 60s was parted down the center, with the back section pinned into a coiled bun, and the sides arranged smoothly above the ears. Some young women, especially those with naturally curly hair, wore their side hair in corkscrew curls. Hair was shiny and well oiled, either naturally or with added pomades. Bangs were not worn and curls were reserved for evening attire.

Make-up: The bourgeois and respectable avoided obvious make-up.

Miscellaneous: Aprons, kid or cotton gloves, small purses, baskets for lower class or if shopping, etc. Please note – ladies did not carry haversacks.



Boy's Clothing:

<http://www.victoriana.com/Fashion/boysclothing1860s.htm>

Girls' Clothing:

http://www.memorialhall.mass.edu/activities/dressup/1860_girl.html

Camping:

- In most circumstances, civilians during the Civil War era lived in houses, not tents. Although we would like to attend events where we can stay in a house or building, or where being in a tent or a shebang is related to the scenario (e.g. refugees), this is not usually possible and we must set up a "camp of convenience".
- Appear in correct period attire appropriate to the situation.
- Modern items should not be seen outside of your tent. This includes, but is not limited to, soda cans, cigarettes, plastic bags, modern food, coolers, etc. If event rules allow coolers or other modern items, they should be hidden and covered.
- We encourage members to avoid, where possible, the use of modern items of any kind other than medical and hygiene necessities (e.g. medicine, contact lens solution, sunscreen, insect repellent, feminine hygiene items, etc).

- In most situations, there is a feasible period way of doing things without resorting to a modern solution. Sometimes the period method or item is MORE effective than its modern counterpart. Part of the learning experience of living history is to experience as many aspects of daily life in the era as possible. When in doubt, seek a period solution.
- Coolers, modern bedding, and non-period items are NOT allowed at immersion events.
- No hairdressing in public. Hairdressing was privately done. In a "camp of convenience" situation, this means at your tent. (The obvious exception to this rule is if we are doing a third person presentation for the public on period hairdressing techniques!)
- No nail polish, modern makeup, modern eyeglasses, modern hairstyles or other obvious modern distractions. If you have non-period body piercings (e.g. anything other than one set of holes for period earrings) leave the body jewelry at home.
- Children under 12 must be supervised at all times and must be dressed in age-appropriate period civilian attire. NO modern toys are allowed. For a good selection of period toys, visit www.RaggedSoldier.com
- For legal liability reasons, all participants under the age of 18 must either have a parent or guardian present or an adult participant must be designated as responsible, with the approval of said parent or guardian.
- Period tobacco use (cigars, pipes, chewing) is permissible in public if appropriate to your impression.
- If event rules allow the presence of alcohol, please drink moderately and responsibly, and ensure that nobody under legal drinking age has access to alcohol.
- No illegal drug use will be tolerated, period.
- Any furniture and material culture items used should be of a period appropriate style, whether reproduction or original -- no two-piece slat chairs, speckle ware or other such modern items.
- Try to minimize fire pits. One communal fire pit should be sufficient for a group of us at events where this is our means of cooking.
- No hoop skirts should be worn around the fire. Other skirt support may be used, such as corded petticoats, starched petticoats, and wool petticoats. Wear only natural fibers such as wool, cotton, silk or linen. No synthetic fibers or blends as these are highly flammable.
- Every tent should have a period style bucket, painted red if possible, to be placed near the fire, filled with either sand or water.
- No civilians on the battlefield. Only military personnel in military uniforms, unless during an approved scripted scenario, approved in writing by both military commanders and the event Civilian Coordinator.
- Written approval of the Cavalry Commander is needed for any civilian equestrian scenarios.
- Event rules are to be obeyed at all times.

