

Cloth of the Middle Ages

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- 1. Wool- knitted, crocheted, woven, felted into different apparel, grown mostly in the northern areas of different countries, worn by all classes*
- 2. Linen- growing flax is labor intensive and making linen is time consuming. The resulting material wrinkled easily so the poorer classes avoided it even when it was restricted to them. It was commonly available. Fine linen was used for veils, wimples, undergarments, a variety of apparel and household items.*
- 3. Silk- a luxurious and costly material, used by the wealthiest classes and the church.*
- 4. Hemp- A less costly plant to grow than flax and was much easier to spin in higher humidities. Often used to make workaday fabrics, although it was mostly used to make sail canvas and rope. It may have been used for aprons and undergarments.*
- 5. Cotton- Grown in hot regions and relatively cost effective to grow and spin. The fabric was worn in warm areas and seasons. It was occasionally used as an alternative to linen.*

6. *Fustian*- a cotton and linen blend more commonly used in the 16th century.
7. *Leather*- Commonly used for shoes, belts, armor, horse tackle, and a wide assortment of everyday items. Could be tooled, dyed, painted and embroidered in a variety of fashions for ornamentation.
8. *Fur*- Was commonly used by all classes. In the Early Medieval Age, due to the use of animal skins by the Barbarian tribes, fur was considered too crass to be worn in public, so it was used as a liner in gloves, capes, and other items. Coming back into fashion in the 10th Century, fur was worn openly again. Popular furs for the nobility were beaver, fox, sable, vair (squirrel), ermine, and marten. They were used for warmth and as a sign of status.