

# A Comprehensive Guide to Early 17th Century European Women's Dressing Rituals

Step into the fascinating world of early 17th century European fashion, where women's dressing rituals were elaborate processes that required skill, time, and a keen eye for detail. This comprehensive guide will unveil the intricate steps involved in getting dressed, from donning undergarments to accessorizing with exquisite pieces.



## Early 17th century European Women's Getting Dressed Guide (Getting Dressed Guides) by Kass McGann

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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## Layering the Base

The foundation of a 17th century woman's attire lay in her undergarments, known as "shifts." These garments, typically made of fine linen or silk, were often adorned with delicate embroidery and lace. Shifts were worn loose and reached mid-calf, providing a smooth base layer for the subsequent layers of clothing.

## Constructing the Silhouette

Over the shift, women wore a "pair of bodies," a corset-like garment that shaped and supported the torso. The bodies were meticulously fitted, with boned panels to create a conical silhouette. The low neckline and sleeveless design allowed the ornamentation of the shift to peek through, adding a touch of elegance.

## **Wrapping in Skirts**

The centerpiece of a 17th century woman's attire was the skirt, or "petticoat." Constructed from rich fabrics such as velvet, silk, or brocade, the skirts were full and bell-shaped, with pleats or gathers at the waist. The length of the skirt varied depending on the occasion, with shorter skirts for everyday wear and floor-length skirts for formal events.

## **Adorning with Gowns**

Over the petticoat, women wore gowns known as "kirtles" or "gowns." These garments were typically made of fine fabrics, such as silk, satin, or wool, and featured intricate embroidery, decorative trims, or jeweled accents. The gowns were often worn open at the front, revealing the layers of clothing beneath and adding a touch of opulence.

## **Covering with Outerwear**

Depending on the weather or occasion, women might don outerwear such as cloaks or mantles. Cloaks were made from thick fabrics like wool or fur, and offered protection from the cold. Mantles, on the other hand, were lighter and more decorative garments, often trimmed with lace or embroidery.

## **Accessorizing with Finesse**

Accessories played a vital role in completing a woman's attire. Women adorned themselves with jewelry, including necklaces, earrings, bracelets, and rings. Intricate hairpieces and veils added height and elegance to their hairstyles. Gloves, made of leather or fabric, were not only functional but also fashionable, often embroidered or adorned with jewels.

## Footwear and Footwear

Footwear in the early 17th century consisted of shoes, boots, and slippers. Shoes were made of leather or silk, with pointed toes and heels. Boots, made of leather or suede, were worn for riding or traveling. Slippers, made of soft fabrics, were reserved for indoor wear.

Getting dressed in early 17th century Europe was an elaborate ritual that showcased the fashion sensibilities and social hierarchy of the time. From the intricate undergarments to the opulent gowns and accessories, women's attire was a reflection of their status, wealth, and adherence to societal norms. By understanding these dressing rituals, we gain a deeper appreciation for the artistry, craftsmanship, and cultural significance of historical fashion.



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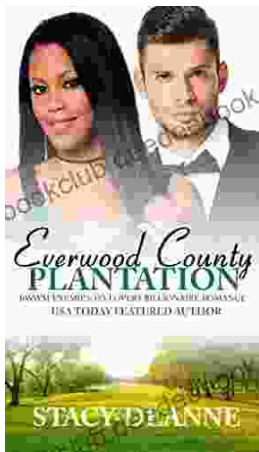
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