

## Arch Brim Tall Hat

### **Definition:**

This is an Elizabethan Arch Brim Tall Hat. This type of hat was made popular during Elizabeth's reign, but was worn in other areas other than England, such as France, Spain and parts of Italy, Germany and the Low Countries. [1] Upper-middle class and merchants are most often pictured this type of hat. While being a foundation based hat, it does not aspire to the more sumptuous pleated hats with their abundance of "wasted" fabric. Both men and women wore this type of hat. Women also wore a decorated snood to cover their hair.



### **Origins and spread of the style:**

The foundation based hats using heavy foundation materials began to appear at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> C throughout Europe. The impetus for this seems to have been the rise of the middle class and the availability of excess resources and materials as well as the rise of millinery workshops[2]. For the purposes of this documentation, I will focus on this hat style as seen in England.

With the rise of craftsmen and materials, hats became even more of a social statement than the chapeau of the previous century. Foundation hats were an artform of their own and having one or several would define a person's social status. [3]

### **Impact:**

Because of the social status associated with hats and headgear of the late 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> C. There were a variety of sumptuary laws associated with hats. Such laws pertained to the height of the crown, type of material that could be used, size of hat broach and stones that could be used [4].

These hats were extremely popular and worn throughout the Elizabethan age and beyond.

### **An SCA interpretation:**

The following table compares some of the differences between how an Elizabethan Arch Brim Tall Hat was typically constructed in period and how I construct the Elizabethan Arch Brim Tall Hat I make for SCA.

	<b>Period materials/Techniques</b>	<b>My Variations</b>
<b>Fabric</b>	Satin, velvet, leather, wool, brocade. silk	same
<b>Thread</b>	White cotton, wool or silk thread.	Cotton /poly or cotton thread
<b>Foundation materials</b>	Heavy paper, glue covered burlap, quilted fabrics	2 ply buckram
<b>Foundation edging</b>	Metal wire, covered cord, rolled paper	Metal wire with joiners
<b>Finish trim</b>	Satin, velvet, leather, wool, brocade. Woven ribbon, gimp, silk	Same
<b>Hat band</b>	Satin, velvet, leather, wool, brocade. Woven ribbon, gimp, silk	same

### **Tools and Materials**

1. Fabric: 1 yards of 45-inch fashion fabric - I recommend wool
2. Thread: Use a good quality thread - silk is best if you can find it, a cotton thread will work too.
3. Millinery needles #14 #16
4. 1 yard of 2 ply buckram
5. Millinery wire #8 or #9
5. Cotton wading or French fleece
6. Chalk or tracing paper
7. Manila paper for pattern

### **Construction process for Elizabethan Arch Brim Tall Hat**

I started with the basics, taking a head plate measurement and then extrapolating that into the stock of the hat. In order to make the "arch" I cut the sides of the stock with a slight upward curve over the ears.

I cut out the brim using 2 pieces of 2 ply buckram. One was cut with the grain and the other on the bias, and wired the edge, added French fleece and wool fabric. I sewed it together using small hidden stitches.

Then I cut the stock and tip from 2 ply buckram, wired the tip and the bottom of the stock and sewed those pieces together. I added an extra layer of French fleece to the tip and sewed it down using a simple stab stitch.

I now had the brim and stock completed and was ready to make them into a hat

- I cut the center oval in the brim leaving 1/2 inch seam allowance
- I graded the seam allowance and cut down to the seam allowance.
- Folded the tabs up ( if you fold alternating tabs, the line will be more crisp)

I placed the stock on the brim and sewed it together, again using a stab stitch.

I finished by using my stock and tip patterns to cut out the lining and attached that along with a comfortable band on the inside.

### **Construction Tips:**

- When buying buckram, make sure you get "2 ply buckram" I like to get my supplies from California Millinery in Los Angeles.
- I like to use wool for this type of hat as it helps "hide" stitches very well!

### **Bibliography:**

[1], [2] Boucher, François; 20,000 Years of Fashion The History of Costume and Personal Adornment. (Library of Congress # 66-12103).

[3] <http://renaissance.dm.net/sumptuary/who-wears-what.html>

[4] <http://www.svtc.org.uk/resources/history/parliament/workshop2.html>