

COSTUME ADVICE FOR LARPERS FROM LARPERS

MEET THE LARPERS:

Bob Dunham is a LARPer with almost 20 years of experience. He's the CEO of Mystwood, the co-GM of Mystwood: Chronicles of Burgundar and he'll be running the highly anticipated LARP Dark Times that will be premiering in 2019.

Carrie Johnson is a LARPer of 3 years and has played Mystwood: Chronicles of the Keep, Mystwood: Chronicles of Burgundar, The Pearls of Asura, Mistgate, Beyond the Wall, Paranoia, Reality Bites, and Spookey Forest.

Heather Nadeau is a LARPer of 10 years and has played Drakon, Steam and Cinders, Occam's Razor, various vampire LARPs, and Parallax. She also NPC's for the Violence Committee which is a collective of NPC volunteers.

Aarin Miles has LARPed on and off for the past 15 years, playing three World of Darkness based LARPs and Parallax.

Kevin Gavel has LARPed for 4/5 years and has played The Realms, Occam's Razor, The Outpost, Madrigal 3, and New World Magischola.

MAKING YOUR COSTUME:

“Don't use modern fabrics- spending a bit more for cotton and linen is going to make a world of difference in both look and feel. Go the extra mile on trim. Use a slightly heavier weight fabric than you think you need if you're going to be fighting at all.” – Bob Dunham

“Old bed sheets are a good source of cheap material. Don't be afraid to repurpose them if you are on a budget. The other big thing is accessories. A few details like a little embroidery, buttons, or patches go a long ways towards changing your costume from ye Olde adventurer to Olaf the bold, slayer of monsters.” – Carrie Johnson

“JoAnn's has a lot of sales and many coupons. Take advantage of them. Also, the Garment District in Boston is your friend. Other than that, just have an understanding that you can re-purpose modern things to look like other things...For someone like me, a person who is not sewing inclined, I would recommend accessorizing and re-purposing things you have laying around. It is also helpful to search the internet for great tutorials. www.instructables.com is a great website that has a lot of useful tutorials...” – Heather Nadeau

“Give yourself ample time so you don't rush the work and remember it needs to be both durable and comfortable.” – Aarin Miles

“Don’t be afraid to ask for help. There are many craftspeople out there willing to lend advice/help. Check out if there are any Maker guilds in your area. Places that have space and tools to rent/borrow to work on projects.” – Kevin Gavel

ASSEMBLING YOUR COSTUME:

“Accessories are the heart of a costume. You can spend hundreds of dollars on a linen tunic and coat, but without something under and over it to break up the pieces and make it look lived in, it will still be a “costume”, not “clothes”.” – Bob Dunham

“Layers! Having layers does several things. First, it allows you to adapt to changing weather conditions while still staying in clothes appropriate for the character. Secondly, layers also help to take your kit from looking like a costume to looking like real clothes that someone in the setting would wear.” – Carrie Johnson

“Start with the basics and add to it as you go to match aspects of your characters developing personality. That way you aren’t investing a ton at the start and can get a feeling for what you truly need and want as you go.” – Aarin Miles

“Make sure it’s comfortable to wear/stays on. It can be the coolest looking costume in the world, but if you have to take off half of it because you are overheating, or the horns fall off in the first half hour, it’s just not the same. And Pockets! It’s a game. You will pick up things. Either make sure you have some pockets or have a carry all bag as part of the costume.” – Kevin Gavel

FOOTWEAR:

“Sandals, slip on mocs from LL Bean, or good, well fitting boots. Honestly, though, for me comfort and safety are more important than whether or not the shoes perfectly fit the genre.” – Bob Dunham

“Focus on function over accuracy for the setting. You will be on your feet a LOT. Make sure you have good, supportive shoes, preferably with ankle support since turned ankles are one of the most common larp injuries.” – Carrie Johnson

“Function over fashion. It is worth spending the most money on your footwear. Trust me.” – Heather Nadeau

“Get a good pair of boots. it’s worth every penny. If you get the right pair you will be able to have very durable, great looking and most importantly comfortable foot wear.” – Aarin Miles

“Comfortable boots with good ankle support if LARPing in rough terrain. If LARPing indoors, comfortable shoes you can stand/walk in for hours.” – Kevin Gavel