

# Guide to Finishing Your Garb

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You've sewn your first garment, all the seams are accurate and suit that medieval source perfectly. However, you come to the finishing of the garment, and realize, "Now What?"

This class will cover some basic methods of closing your garb. We will cover hand sewn eyelets, cloth buttons, and woven thread buttons. These methods are used throughout SCA period in many different countries, so chances are one or more of these methods are accurate for your persona.

## Hand Sewn Eyelets



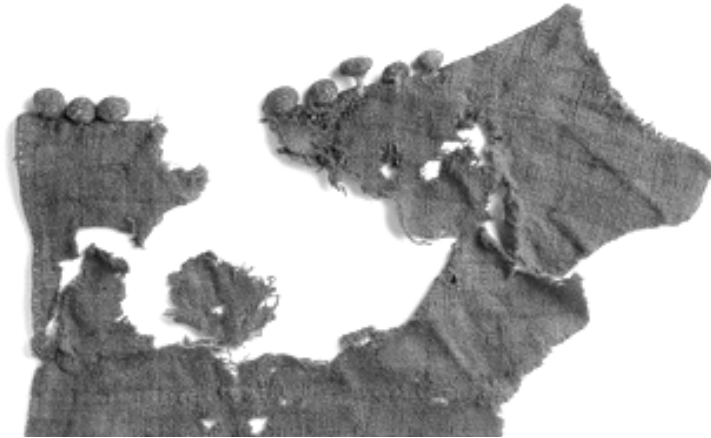
*Doublet, Sweden 1560*

Hand sewn eyelets are commonly seen on the fronts and sleeves of cotehardies, but are used throughout SCA period for holes in armor, bodices, doublets, and various other uses. If your persona is from 1200-1600 or even earlier, chances are, they knew how to sew these. Medieval people did not have access to the modern metal eyelets we use today, so hand sewing your eyelets is an easy upgrade from metal eyelets. Once you get the hang of this method, these take hardly any time to sew. If you want something even stronger, try sewing a metal ring into the eyelet.

To sew a hand eyelet:

1. Sew a small circle in your fabric using a back stitch or running stitch.
2. Pierce the fabric with an awl. Using an awl instead of cutting creates a stronger hole.
3. Sew using a satin stitch all around the hole, using the awl to keep the hole open.
4. Secure the end of your thread onto the back.

## Cloth Buttons



*Woolen Sleeve, 1350-1400*

Cloth buttons are commonly seen on cottehardies, but have also shown up on all sorts of garments in SCA period. Cloth buttons can be made in many sizes, but I find that keeping them on the small size works best. You can use the same fabric as your garb, or a contrasting fabric.

To sew a cloth button:

1. Cut your fabric into a small circle.
2. Place a running stitch about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch from the edge of the circle.
3. Pull the thread to gather the circle and tuck the raw edge into the little pouch created. At this point, you may need to stuff extra fabric scraps into the pouch to fill the space.
4. Sew the opening of the pouch shut around the filling until it is tight around the filling.
5. To Attach: Sew the button into place on the garb and wrap threads around to make a shank.

## Woven Thread Buttons



*Farsetto Fragment, 1457*

Woven thread buttons are seen in many different extent garments, but are mainly associated with Turkish/Persian garb and Italian garb of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. This type of button can have a number of different weave patterns and can be embellished with small glass beads, pearls, or metallic threads. The instructions below are for the simplest weave pattern, but feel free to experiment with others.

To sew a woven thread button:

1. Use a wooden bead in whatever size you would like your button to be.
2. Take a length of embroidery floss or pearl cotton and run it over beeswax to keep the threads together.
3. Sew through the hole of the bead and around, making an odd number of spines to weave on. Make sure your spines are even, with a small space between each one. The number of spines will vary depending on bead size, but will probably be either 7 or 9. End your spines with both ends of the embroidery floss coming from the same hole of the bead and tie them together.
4. Take a long piece of embroidery floss, 36'' or more depending on the size of your bead, and wax it with beeswax as well.
5. Go through the hole in the bead with your long piece, leaving a small tail.
6. Weave in an over-under pattern starting from one end and working your way down the bead, making sure to avoid any large gaps.
7. Once you reach the end, tie off the end of the long piece and snip off any remaining threads.
8. To attach: Sew the button to your garb through one of the ends. Wrap the the threads around to create a shank.