

Medieval Research

Hints, Tips and Tricks

Focus on your period

- Define your period
 - Limit your time period to a short timeframe – say 10 - 30 year period
- Decide who you want to be
 - Social class
 - Job/role
- Decide where you want to live or come from
 - If you make it too complicated you will need to explain all the time
 - Say if you are living in England but you are Italian and have an Italian name/persona/garb you will need to explain why someone who is clearly Italian is in northern England
- Use that information to find a name that is appropriate for your time period, social class and location.
 - There are a number of sources for this kind of information.
 - Soldiers rolls, manor records, Bishops registers, Hundreds rolls
- Once you have this you can begin to research

Focus on your period

- Try to find out what manuscripts were written in your period
- Be aware that sometimes the illustrations were done in a later edition and reflect what is seen in the period
- Be aware that some manuscripts were written over a long period and styles change throughout
- If you find a picture you like that looks like it is proper medieval you will need to find the source.

Finding a source for a picture

- If you use Microsoft edge you can right click on the picture and select search web for image.
- Otherwise, open google search and drag the image into the search bar and it will go to image search and then bring up results of the image.
- You will need to look through all this dross to find a proper manuscript source for the image.
 - Remember that many places will have the image and may have it captioned but may not be accurate so look for the original manuscript.

Finding manuscripts

- Many libraries have digitised copies of manuscripts that you can review and download images from.
 - These are often good sources of when the manuscript was written or if this edition is much later on.
- A prime example of looking at the dates of the manuscript edition or artwork is the *Tacuinum Sanitatis* which was an 11th century Arabic book on health.
- It was subsequently rewritten and illustrated throughout the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries



- The Liechtenstein Tacuinum Sanitatis. Fol 44v
- Illuminated manuscript in Latin on vellum, Italy, Padua, c. 1450.
- This is clearly not an 11th century image.
- The style of dress puts this to probably late 15th century.
- On a side note, if you look under the table, you will see they are both wearing poulaines which were in style at the time.

- Scene from Battle of Crecy 1346

- The source of the image is the Chronicles of Froissart which is a late 14th century manuscript but this edition is dated at least 1410 and is probably later looking at the armour of the combatants
- Also the arms of England show 3 fleur de Lys in the 1st and 4th quarters this was not adopted until 1406 by Henry IV
- Before that Edward III had azure seme de Lys Or in the 1st and 4th quarters.



All these things help to place the time frame for the image.





- Usefulness of Images
- Look at the context of the image
- Compare the context of the image to your persona and see how relevant it is.
- For example this image from the Jean Duc de Berry's Book of Hours shows clearly upper class people.
- The chaperon being worn by the man on the left is clearly 15th century despite the event shown being the betrothal of Charles d'Orleans and Bonne de Berry being in 1406. They were 16 and 11 respectively and the wedding was 4 months later.
- This is then not an image that gives us anything for our persona.



- Usefulness of Images
- Look at the context of the image
- Compare the context of the image to your persona and see how relevant it is.
- For example this image from the Jean Duc de Berry's Book of Hours shows clearly peasants working in the fields in July.
- This image was dated to a summer day in 1412
- The man with the straw hat and white linen shirt is wearing the closely fitted braies more associated with the mid 15th century.
- The Artist draws what he knows and it is up to us to date those images to select ones relevant to us



- Usefulness of Images
- Look at the context of the image
- Compare the context of the image to your persona and see how relevant it is.
- For example this image is from "hausbücher der nürnberg zwölfb Brüderstiftungen" (House books of Nuremberg 12 brothers) dated 1453 and shows a spice merchant.
- The time period is wrong for me but shows spice being stored in sacks which is what I wanted to know.

Primary Sources

- Manuscripts are our primary source – mainly from illustrations with the limitations we talked about
- As you look at many manuscripts things will stick and when you see something you often can say yes that looks right or no that looks wrong because of Sometimes things just stick in your head.
- When I was researching the Garb Guidelines I came across the pointed straw hats that were called Judenhut and that lead me to see where that came from so when Merchant Sue put up a picture of her knitted and then felted hat I was able to say that's a Jew's hat and provide sources.
 - This is an example of how we are able to look at things that we see in manuscript and go yes I'll use that then someone comes and applies context which may change your view.

Comment l'enfant la ducce puelle e ioseph auceperre amene lui fugez l'he ouvelles en sa
 chere e out respice ouckes les oestres de la les pl estoit alage de ducce amz. e de la gence
 a l'age de pl estoit de xxix. aniz. pl seruit la mere e ioseph. a quere de la elbe a la gence
 ne e de apualier amanger. e euf seruit amanger. e en tuel choses lui sugger estoit.



ai comete l'entree de l'enfant l'ho le
 baptiz. son pere out nomme zacharie
 e. e li estoit establi de la les. e l'enfant
 pl seruit son oncle al'age de deux



le temple le temple sur ac
 tendre bon al'age. e l'enfant de
 vint al'age. e d'ic zacharie out un
 mer ou la femme li engendrat un
 enfant a l'age de l'eterna cruce
 anomele l'ho e pl d'ic ma
 femme est binnie d'ic por
 ebre e por d'ic
 geber l'en
 fant d'ic
 cruce.



Secondary Sources

- We often use secondary sources for evidence
 - Medieval Tailors Assistant
 - Medieval Costume in England and France 13th,14th,15th centuries
 - Make your own medieval clothing:
 - Shoes of the High and Late Middle Ages
 - Basic garments for men
 - Basic garments for women
 - Getting dressed Guides
 - For men 1340-1380
 - For women 1340-1380
 - These are all secondary sources and need to be checked against other independent sources or primary sources.

Secondary Sources

- Patterns
 - reconstructing history
 - Butterick pattern
 - Others
- These need to be checked against other secondary sources or primary sources.

Secondary Sources

- Other re-enactors
 - Select these carefully as just because someone else is wearing such and such or has so and so does not mean it is historically accurate
 - We have all looked at our gear from early on and said Hmmmm need to ditch that or improve this.

Use for sources

- Sources can be used to develop our persona and garb but also to look at the accoutrements which help guide our choices
 - Look at the shape of pouches on workers
 - Look at the shape and style of tableware – note the absence of forks
 - Look at plates/cups etc as to what was period.
 - What shape were the jugs on the table?

Useful Primary Sources

- <https://imagesonline.bl.uk/search/?searchQuery=Luttrell%20Psalter>
 - Luttrell Psalter
- <https://imagesonline.bl.uk/search/?searchQuery=Holkham%20Bible%20Picture%20Book>
 - Holkham Bible Picture book
- <https://imagesonline.bl.uk/search/?searchQuery=bohun+psalter>
 - Bohun Psalter
- https://les-tres-riches-heures.chateaudechantilly.fr/?fbclid=IwAR03-uCGtVhVeApwIV_43gt1EpiicCLOC24_v32odSD9muWWczB1fCwXKu8
 - Duc de Berry Book of Hours
- <https://www.themorgan.org/collection/Illuminating-the-Medieval-Hunt/thumbs>
 - Le Livre de la chasse (Gaston Phoebus book of the hunt)
- <https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/cpg848>
 - Codex Manesse
- <https://www.themorgan.org/collection/Crusader-Bible/thumbs>
 - *Maciejowski Bible*
- <https://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/illuminated/manuscript/discover/the-macclesfield-psalter>
 - Macclesfield Psalter
- <https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/8d17bc13-14b6-4a56-b3b5-d2e1a935c60d/surfaces/6fb21473-8721-4b74-8916-8519575b90cc/>
 - Romance of Alexander
- <https://imagesonline.bl.uk/search/?searchQuery=smithfield+decretals>
 - Smithfield Decretals

How to stop a Snail Attack



1. Watch for warning signs.
Snails stay low to the ground, often in a pouncing position. This is a sign of your imminent doom.



3. Keep your distance.
If you believe you are under attack, find a large object to hold the snail at bay. Stick an orange on the end of it. It's possible snails dislike citrus fruit.



2. Do not attempt to pet snail
Snails are cunning. They often look harmless when in fact they are plotting your certain destruction.



4. Do not fight.
Snails are protected by a shell. You are not. Do you think you can really win?

5. Accept your fate.
Defeat is inevitable. Do not panic. Pray that when you meet your end the snail does not take your soul.



This could
save your
life!