

Fashion in the Age of the Georgians: 1714 - 1800



University of Southampton International
Summer School 2017

The development of modern fashion has its roots in 18th century consumerism and design, the period in which the act of shopping and following fashionable clothing trends became widely available to wealthy English society. Fashion plays a crucial role in the development of English culture during the long eighteenth century (c.1688-1815), particularly for the elite classes.

This short course will examine elite formalwear from this period, considering how dress was used to influence social attitudes towards issues such as gender, class and politics. We will look at images and physical examples of surviving eighteenth century dress, and discuss the implications and impact of these garments. We will look at construction methods, and have a short interactive embroidery workshop, to explore the depth of skill and time needed to create elite fashions.

The course will conclude with a visit to the [Fashion Museum Bath](#), which houses a world class collection of contemporary and historic dress. The Fashion Museum's current exhibition 'The History of Fashion in 100 Objects' (running until January 2019) considers the evolution of dress from the 1600s to the present day, displaying examples of both men's and women's dress, footwear and children's clothing, and considering how the fashion of the past has influenced different styles today.

Articles to Read:

'Georgian Fashion and Clothing'

<http://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/Georgian-Fashion/>

'How to Survive in the Georgian Royal Court'

<http://www.historyextra.com/feature/how-survive-georgian-royal-court-lucy-worsley>

'The Rise of Consumerism'

<https://www.bl.uk/georgian-britain/articles/the-rise-of-consumerism>

'The History of Embroidery'

<http://historyofembroidery.blogspot.co.uk/p/1700-1799ad.html>

Websites:

Search the Collections – use keywords like '18th century dress', 'mantua', 'fashion' and the date search options to explore the V&A Fashion and Textiles Collection

<http://collections.vam.ac.uk>

Glossary of Women's Fashion Terms

**This glossary is very comprehensive – don't worry
if some of it is a little confusing!**

Glossary compiled by Candice Hern
(<http://candicehern.com/regency-world/glossary/#womensfashion>)

Bandeau

From the French word for "strip," a bandeau is a narrow strip or band of (usually) stiffened fabric worn on the head to confine the hair, often with flowers, jewels, or feathers attached. It can also be a length of pearls or twisted fabric woven into the hair.

Bombazine

A fabric with a warp of silk and weft of worsted, having a twilled appearance with a very dull finish. It was commonly dyed black, making it an ideal fabric for mourning garments.

Busk

A flat length of wood, ivory, bone, whalebone, or steel used to stiffen the front of a bodice. Generally the busk was inserted into a busk sheath, or busk point, down the front of a corset. It was intended to keep the corset straight and upright, but also made it almost impossible to bend from the waist. Sometimes a busk was carved with emblems or romantic symbols and presented as a love token. Sailors, for example, often carved whale bone busks to give their sweethearts back home.

Brussels lace

A point lace with designs worked separately and applied to a net ground.

Cambric

A very fine, delicate linen.

Capote

A transitional form between a cap (soft, unstructured) and a bonnet (rigid, shaped). The brim is made of stiffened fabric, but the crown is of soft fabric shaped into a sort of pouch. The capote first made an appearance in the 1790s and continued throughout the 19th century, with the brim or poke becoming larger over time. It was meant for outdoor wear, though in the early years of the 19th century evening capotes were occasionally worn, though the brims would have been abbreviated.

Capuchin

A cape with a hood.

Capuchin collar

A roll collar following the V-neckline of a bodice.

Carthage Cymar

A scarf of silk or net, generally with a gold-embossed border. Typically worn with evening dress, attached to one shoulder and hanging long down the back.

You can see a Carthage Cymar here, in a fashion print from 1809.

Chaplet

A garland or wreath of flowers worn on the head.

Chatelaine

A set of decorative and useful items hung at the waist, recreating the concept of the medieval chatelaine or lady of the castle wearing her keys at her waist. Keys were still a part of a housekeeper's utilitarian chatelaine, but they were also worn for strictly decorative purposes by fashionable ladies, and might include a watch and watch key, various *etuis* holding sewing or writing implements, vinaigrettes, pens, ivory leaves for notes, seals, and tiny coin purses. They were usually held at the waist with a chain, like a watch chain.

Chemise

A loose-fitting, long, straight shirt with short sleeves worn under the corset as an undergarment. The term *shift* is also used for this garment, though it was considered a somewhat vulgar term.

Chemisette

A short, sleeveless shirt, much like a dickey, used to fill in the neckline of a gown.

Chip straw

Chip straw, used for bonnets, was not actually made of straw, but of thin pieces of wood. Chip could be plaited or woven just like straw but was sturdier, less flexible. Once formed into a sort of basket in whatever shape was currently fashionable, it could be bleached or colored, then trimmed with as desired.

Silk bonnets sometimes had chip and wire sewn into the seams, creating a framework to give them shape.

Clocks

Fancy embroidery at the ankle of a stocking.

Cornette

A day cap with a soft, rounded crown, tied under the chin. Almost always white, it was typically made of muslin, crepe, or other lightweight fabric, trimmed with lace and ribbons. It could be worn alone with indoor morning dress, or underneath a bonnet.

Dimity

A stout cotton fabric, plain or twilled, with a raised pattern on one side. Sometimes printed.

Domino

A short hooded cloak with an attached mask, worn at masquerades. It was worn over evening attire by both men and women.

Drawers

For women, drawers appeared c1800 in response to the sheer dress materials and closer-fitting narrow skirts. However, they were not generally adopted as a standard undergarment for another decade or more. Made of cotton or linen, early female drawers were made of two tubular pieces of fabric for the legs, attached to a deep waistband. They were laced at the back and tied with tapes, sometimes brought round to fasten with a button at the front.

Epaulettes

Ornamental shoulder pieces, usually on outerwear such as spencers or pelisses. Later in the period also seen on dresses.

Fichu

A length of fabric, usually triangular, worn around the neck and

shoulders. Sometimes tucked inside the neckline of the bodice, sometimes crossed over the bodice.

Fillet

A wire-stiffened string or braid of fabrics and/or pearls, twisted into an evening hairstyle. The fillet was a part of general passion for all things antique in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, as fillets were often seen in Greek and Roman sculpture, frescoes, coins, and medallions.

Flannels

A large flannel gown or wrap worn by bathers at the seaside or when taking the waters at a spa.

Flounce

An ornamental row of decorative trim at the bottom of a skirt.

Fly-fringe

A fringe of cord with knots and bunches of floss silk attached, used to decorate gowns.

French gores

Gores added into the skirt of a day dress to eliminate gathers at the waist. Introduced around 1807.

Frock

A round gown (ie a dress where the bodice and skirt are a single piece) that closes in the back.

Fustian

An inexpensive, coarsely textured cotton fabric with a linen warp.

Gypsy hat

A flat-crowned, wide-brimmed straw hat with ribbons passing from the crown over the brim and tied in a bow under the chin or at the back of the neck.

Habit shirt

A short linen or muslin shirt, originally part of a riding costume, it was also worn to fill in a wide-necked bodice for day wear. Sometimes with a stand-up collar or ruff. Also called a chemisette.

Half boots

Ankle high boots for women, typically for outdoor wear, often made of kid, but sometimes of sturdy cloth, such as jean or even velvet. They are flat-soled, and laced up the front or the side.

Half dress

Something worn at informal evenings. Dressy, but not as formal as full-dress.

Huguenot lace

An imitation lace with a muslin net ground on which floral cut-out designs were sewn.

India muslin

A soft, opaque, silkier blend of cotton muslin.

Jaconet

A thin cotton fabric, with a texture between muslin and cambric.

Jockey cap

This style of cap or bonnet was very popular through about 1813. It is basically a capote in style, with the crown fitting a bit closer to the head, in the manner of a jockey's racing hat.

Lappets

Two long strips of material, most often lace, that hang from the top of the head down the back or over the shoulders. They can be extensions of a cap band or any sort of headdress. Lappets were a required element of female court dress from the early 18th through the early 20th centuries.

Leghorn hat

A hat of fine plaited straw made from an Italian variety of wheat. The name specifically refers to the type of straw.

Leno

A transparent gauze-like fabric of linen thread.

Limerick gloves

Often referred to as "chicken skin" gloves, they were actually made from the tanned skins of unborn calves. They were usually cream or yellow in color and were much sought after for their tight fit due to

the extremely thin skin.

Lutestring

A very fine, corded glossy silk.

Mantle

A short cloak.

Mechlin lace

A bobbin lace, with a fine twisted-and-plaited, hexagonal net ground, the pattern outlined with a loosely spun silk cord. Best known for its floral patterns.

Mitts

Also called mittens. Gloves with open fingers and thumbs. Though gloves were removed during meals, mitts could be worn for informal meals like tea.

Muff

A covering for both hands as a protection against cold, also used simply as an elegant accessory. Muffs were generally tubular, and made of fur, feathers, padded silk, and various other materials. They varied in size, sometimes reaching enormous proportions.

Muslin

A fine, semi-transparent cotton fabric. It could be plain, patterned, or printed.

Pattens

Ladies footwear for inclement weather, worn over a normal shoe, to elevate her a couple of inches above the mud or slush or rain puddles. The raised patten was made of wood or metal, held in place by leather or cloth bands.

Pelisse

An outdoor coat-like garment worn over a dress, with or without sleeves, made of a variety of fabrics and linings, depending on the season and the occasion. Until around 1810, the pelisse was generally $\frac{3}{4}$ -length. After that time, it was almost always ankle-length.

Pocket

A flat, slitted pouch or bag worn beneath the dress, tied around the waist with tapes. Generally about 12" or more long. They were

accessed via a pocket slit in the side seam of a skirt. Common during the 18th century before reticules (purses) came into popularity, pockets fell out of use when the skirts narrowed during the Regency. However, muslin gowns c1805 in the collection of the Museum of Costume in Bath include pocket slits, so they did continue in use for the early years of the new century, but must have been reduced in size to avoid a bulky look.

Quilling

Small round pleats made in lace, tulle, or ribbon lightly sewn down, the edge of the trimming left in open flute-like folds. Used for trimming dresses and bonnets.

Quizzing glass

A monocle or small magnifying glass dangling from a neck chain or ribbon, worn as a fashionable accessory by both men and women.

Reticule

A lady's purse. More properly called a ridicule, probably because it seemed a ridiculous notion in the late 18th/early 19th century to carry outside the dress those personal belongings formerly kept in large pockets beneath the dress. When waists rose and skirts narrowed, bulky pockets could no longer be accommodated without spoiling the line of the dress, and so the ridicule became an essential accessory.

Round gown

A dress with the bodice and skirt joined in a single garment, with the skirt closed all around, ie not opened to expose an underskirt.

Sandals

Slippers cut low over the foot and tied on by a criss-cross of ribbons or strings over the instep and around the ankle. Any shoe that laced up the ankle was called a sandal.

Sarsnet

A thin twilled fabric which uses different colors in the warp and weft, thus allowing the fabric to subtly change colors as it moves. Though it is sometimes spelled sarsenet or sarcenet, the fashion magazines of the Regency period almost always use the spelling *sarsnet*.

Spencer

A short, waist-length jacket (ie following the high waist of the current fashions, not the natural waist), with or without sleeves. Generally an outdoor garment worn in the morning or afternoon, but could also be part of an evening ensemble, when it was most often sleeveless. The spencer was adapted from a short, double-breasted men's jacket, without tails, that was named for the 2nd Earl Spencer, who is said to have started the fashion in the 1790s.

Stays

A corset. Stays was the more commonly used term through the end of the 18th century, when the French term "corset" began to be used. They are most often made of linen or cotton, lightly boned for additional stiffness, and laced up the back. Shorter corsets were also worn, but the long corset seems to have been the most popular, as it helped to smooth the line of the vertical silhouette.

Stuff

A general term for ordinary wool.

Tiffany

A transparent silk gauze.

Tippet

An abbreviated cape. Similar to what might today be called a stole or a boa. In the late 18th century they were long and slender, in the form of a modern boa.

Tucker

A white edging of lace, lawn, or muslin, usually frilled, on a low neckline. A tucker was often worn for modesty during the daytime on a low-cut dress that might be worn without it during the evening. When it was turned over to hang down over the front of the bodice, it was called a "falling tucker."

Undress

A term used for simple, casual gowns for wear at home.

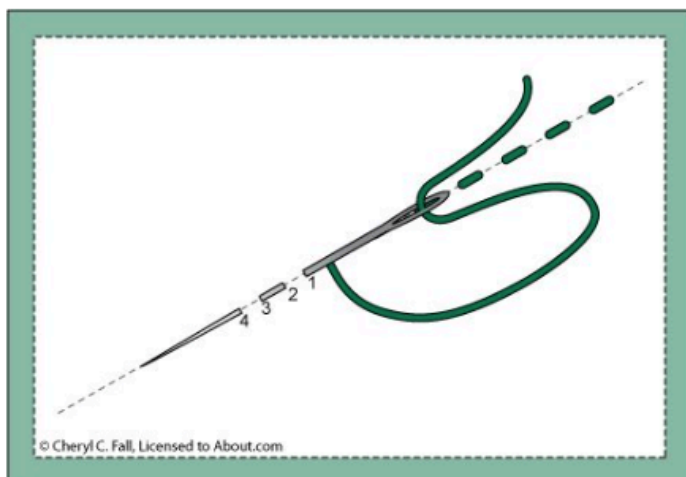
Embroidery Workshop

As part of the course, we will be doing a basic embroidery workshop using 18th Century embroidery patterns taken from *The Lady's Magazine*.

All materials will be provided for you, but you might want to familiarise yourself with some basic embroidery techniques first!

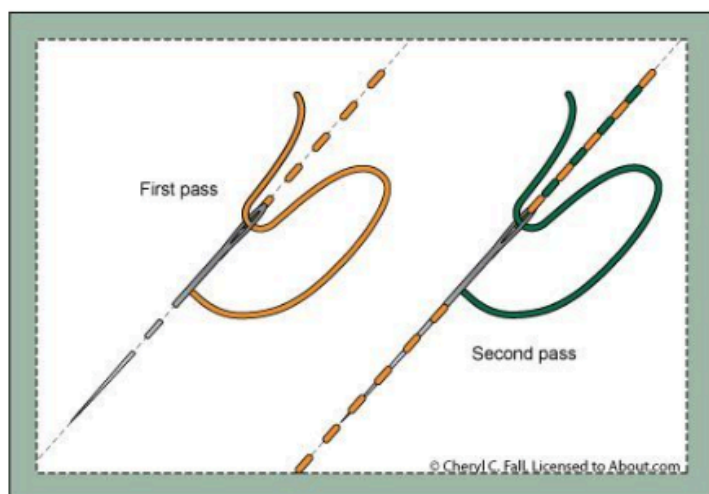
Diagrams from <https://www.thespruce.com/surface-embroidery-stitches-117758>

Running Stitch



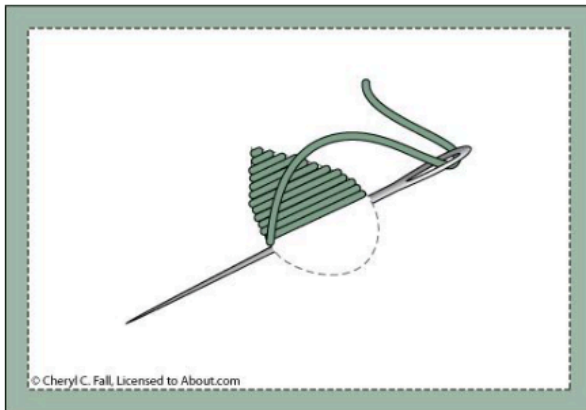
The Running Stitch is one of the most basic stitches and is usually the first stitch learned by the beginner embroidery enthusiast or sewing student. This stitch can be worked in straight or curved lines, or for assembly when finishing an embroidery project.

Running Stitch - Double



The Double Running Stitch is worked in two passes of running stitch, with the second pass filling the gaps made in the first pass.

Satin Stitch - Basic

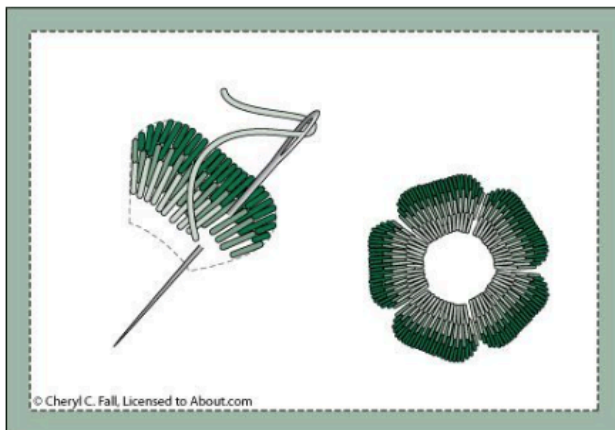


Basic, Flat Satin Stitch. © Cheryl C. Fall, Licen...

Basic, flat **Satin Stitch** is an easy filling stitch that can be used to fill smaller areas that are not to be raised, and has also been called the flat satin stitch due to its lack of padding.

Other variations of the satin stitch include the long & short satin stitch, padded satin stitch (the inside area of the shape is padded with seed stitch, multiple layers of satin stitch, or an outline stitch filling), outlined stitch, or an outline stitch filling), outlined satin stitch and shaded satin stitch.

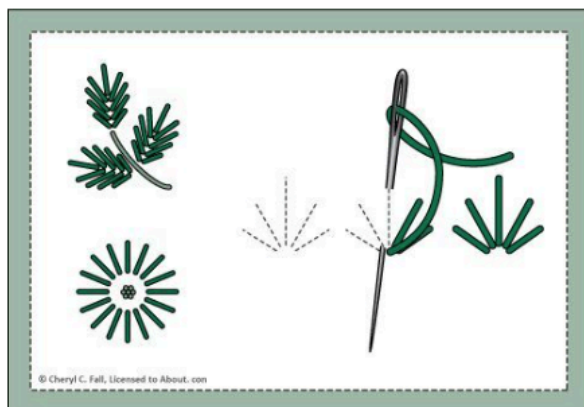
Satin Stitch - Long & Short



Working the Shaded Long & Short Stitch. © C...

This version of the **Long & Short Satin Stitch** can be used in a single color or in multiple colors to create a shaded filling.

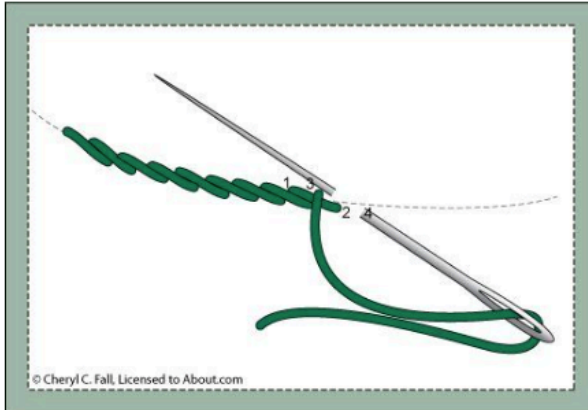
Straight Stitch



Working the Basic Straight Stitch. © Cheryl C. ...

Standard or basic **Straight Stitch** is a simple embroidery stitch created using a straight, long stitch individually or in patterns. This popular surface embroidery stitch can be worked on any type of embroidery fabric including plainweave. Using straight stitches arranged in groups you can make leaves and flowers or geometric designs. Premark the fabric, or work the stitch freestyle, creating an infinite number of unique patterns.

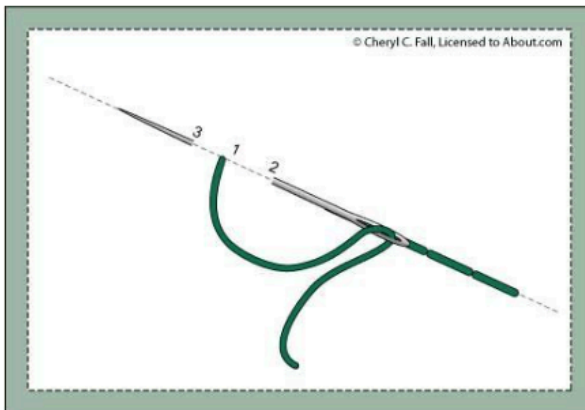
Stem Stitch



Working the Stem Stitch. © Cheryl C. Fall, Lic...

Stem Stitch is one of the most common embroidery stitches. It is worked as a thin line and can be used to outline embroidered shapes, as flower and plant stems, and in tendrils. Stem stitch can also be worked as a filling.

Back Stitch



Working the Back Stitch. © Cheryl C. Fall, Lice...

The **Back Stitch** is a basic embroidery and sewing stitch used to produce a thin line of stitching, to outline shapes that will be filled with satin stitch, or to stitch fabric pieces together.

Our course will conclude with a trip to the Fashion Museum Bath, where we will see surviving examples of 18th Century dress.

For more information about the museum, please visit:

<https://www.fashionmuseum.co.uk>