

HOW TO MAKE A BATH BORDER OUTFIT V3

You will need a hat, tee shirt, coat, dress/trousers and boots. Everything is black but the coat will be decorated with coloured tatters. You provide the hat and clothing but, so we all have the same colours, Jan provides all the materials needed to decorate your outfit. Those materials cost £20 which includes a very small profit for our funds. Pay Jan. If you want to check how others have made their outfits there are lots of photos on our website.

HAT

You need a black top-hat of whatever height you like. They can be bought online but the best local source is the huge Newflower Clothing and Accessories stall in Bristol's "Old Market" indoor market hall. Make sure it fits well as it needs to stay on when you are leaping around dancing. They cost about £40 but you can pick them up a bit cheaper in 'collectables' shops.

It must be decorated with two deep strips of material around the top, one blue, one red (see right). The strips should be cut from the material provided and be long enough to wrap round the hat and hang down your back, see photo. Some people sew them on, others simply tie a knot in them, a few just use a safety pin to hold them in place. Whatever works for you.



Put the 75mm Bath Border badge you get from Jan on the front of the bands as shown above.

You don't have to decorate your hat but most border dancers do using badges, feathers, masks..... whatever you like to make your own personal statement. Tall pheasant feathers are very popular (Jan has some) so border dancers can seem to be 10' tall! For lots of images and ideas Google 'border morris dancers'.

COAT

This is the most important part of the outfit as it gives us our unique identity. The easiest and cheapest way to create one is to use a standard long sleeved black shirt to which you add some tails so they hang down behind towards your knees. The simplest way to create the tails is to cut a 'U' shaped piece of black material and sew it onto the back of the shirt. Alternatively, if your shirt has front tails, cut them off and sew them onto the back. Some people also cut off the sleeves leaving them with bare arms but sleeves are warmer in colder weather.

Next, sew the big Bath Border cloth roundel from Jan onto the upper middle back - see right.

The coat should then be covered in tatters cut from the material Jan gives you. If you use pinking shears that will stop the edges fraying although lots of people prefer the frayed look as being more "Border". Your choice. They should be stitched on although pins and glue have been tried. Hand sewn is best (but laborious) as it gives a more random mix; machine sewing tends to encourage long regular lines of tatters.

The guide size for tatters is broadly 50mm/2" wide and 300mm/11" long but you can adjust that a bit. Some sides have tatters 2' even 3' long, we don't, ours are shorter. Completely cover your coat in red and blue tatters, if you're not sure how many tatters to have, always go for more! To give a contrast to the red and blue when we are swirling around dancing, a very small number of white or silver or gold or black tatters may be mixed in with the red and blue ones. But it is just a few, not even 1 in 10, see the dancer on the right above. Cut tatters to shape around the roundel so it can be seen. Some people put tatters all down the sleeves, others prefer plain sleeves.



TEE SHIRT

This is worn under the coat and is just a plain black shirt or tee shirt with long or short sleeves.

DRESS/TROUSERS

Any black trousers, shorts, skirt or kilt you like. Grungy black fishnets are a popular addition.

SHOES

Black boots or shoes.