



Women' s

1811 Repurposed Costume
Instructional Packet

Created by:

Alison Parker/ricRACK

Monica Grist-Weiner

Fabrics, Colors, and Silhouette

In order to achieve an historical look by repurposing modern clothes, there are some aesthetics that will help to make your costume appear similar to those of 1811.

Desired fabrics: cotton, linen, wool...please no synthetic or polyester fabrics.

Recommended Color palette: white, blues, red, yellow, and greens

No modern patterned fabrics, please use ONLY solids, stripes, or plaids.

Silhouette: Empire waistline (just below the bust), floor length skirt

All women must wear a tignon/turban/headwrap

We have created three looks for you to choose from.

First, find whichever clothing you have that best matches the color and material requirements previously mentioned.

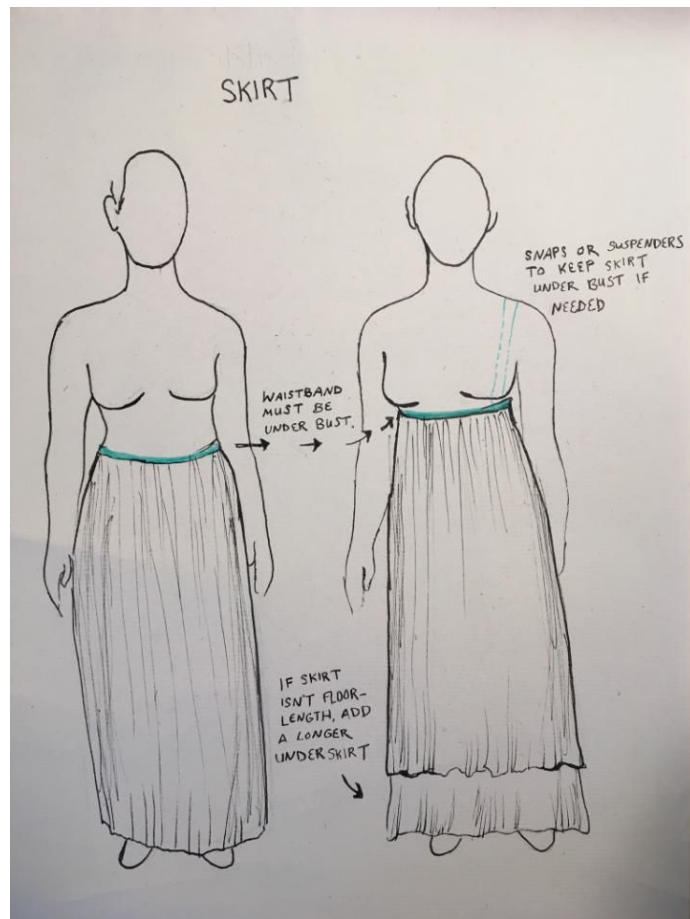
Women should have **at least** a skirt, blouse, and turban for this look. (If you have a dress that is similar to the silhouette, color, fabric, and length...please send us a photo so we can approve). As most of the enslaved made their clothes out of white, coarse fabric, it is ideal if one of your pieces, skirt or top, was white.

You will need...

- Scissors
- chalk or pen for marking your cutting line
- Ruler or something with a straight edge
- straight pins
- an iron is helpful!
- needle/thread
- twill tape or ribbon for suspenders (optional)
- big snaps for skirt and jacket connection (optional)

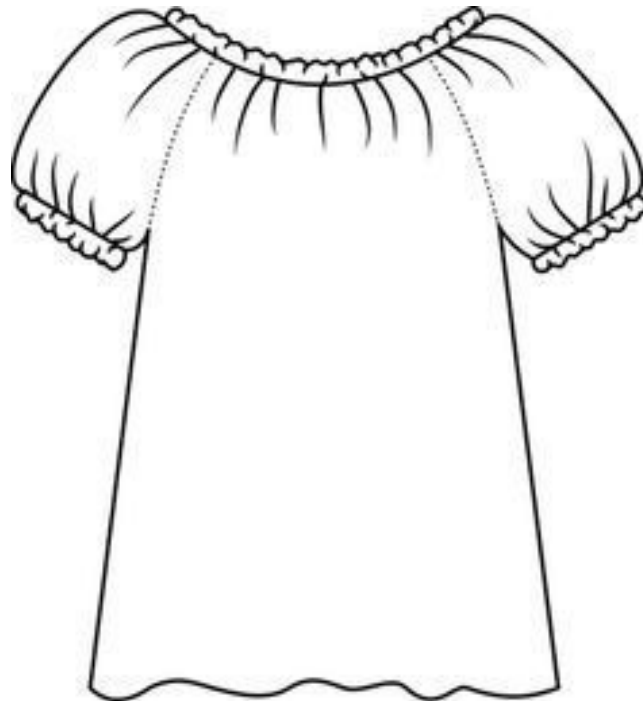
THE SKIRT

Select a simple skirt that is **floor length**. If you find the right skirt with color and texture, but is not the right length, you can always add layers to the bottom. A gathered skirt with a stretch or bigger waistband is important. Your skirt is worn **above** your true waist, right below your bust. Though subtle, its location is crucial to the silhouette of the time period of the rebellion. A couple of ways you can keep the skirt up is to sew snaps on the inside of your skirt waist and to the outside of your top. The other way would be to make yourself some suspenders with twill tape or ribbon and sew them to the skirt waist wearing your suspenders over your blouse.



THE BLOUSE

Aim for a blouse that resembles the "**peasant**" top. This blouse is known for being gathered with a drawstring or elastic around the neckline and often at the sleeve bottoms. Select a blouse that comes closest to that style. It can be short, $\frac{3}{4}$, or long sleeved. It is ok if it is long sleeved to roll them up!



THE BLAZER/JACKET : Look 1



If you would like to wear a cropped jacket over your blouse, find a simple women's blazer that has little structure and padding as possible.

STEP1: Cut the jacket so that it rests right below your bust. You are making a cropped jacket. Turn over the raw edge $\frac{1}{2}$ inch and topstitch a finished edge on your machine/or hand sew.

STEP2: Cut your jacket's sleeves to make them $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeves. Turn over the raw edge $\frac{1}{2}$ inch and hem the sleeves.

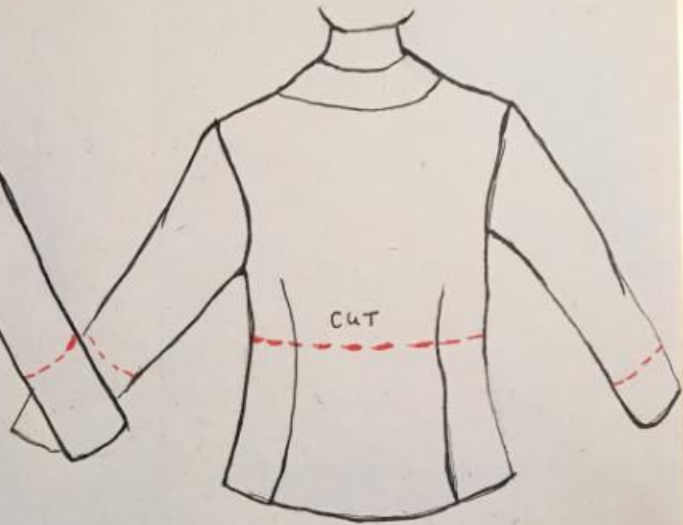
STEP 3: Now cut off the lapel and the collar in one smooth transition to achieve a beautiful V-neck. You can tie both center fronts together in a small knot or sew two cords so that the jacket stays closed at the sternum. Finish the raw edge like you would with the sleeves and bottom hem.

JACKET

FRONT

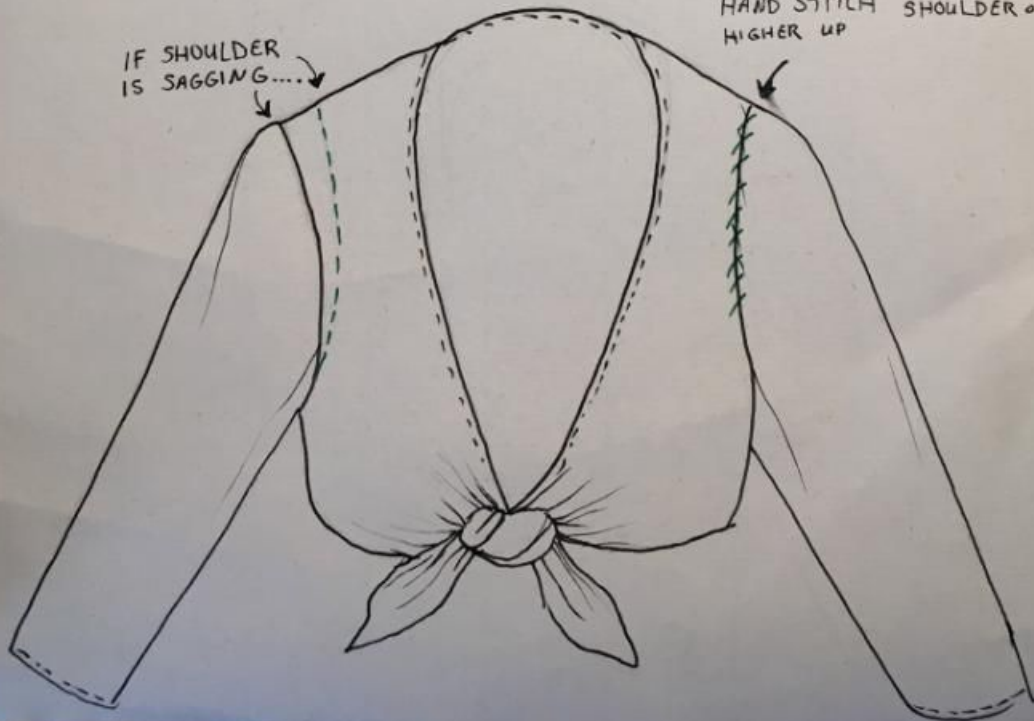


BACK



IF SHOULDER IS SAGGING.....

HAND STITCH SHOULDER OF SLEEVE HIGHER UP



THE CRISSCROSS SHAWL: Look 2



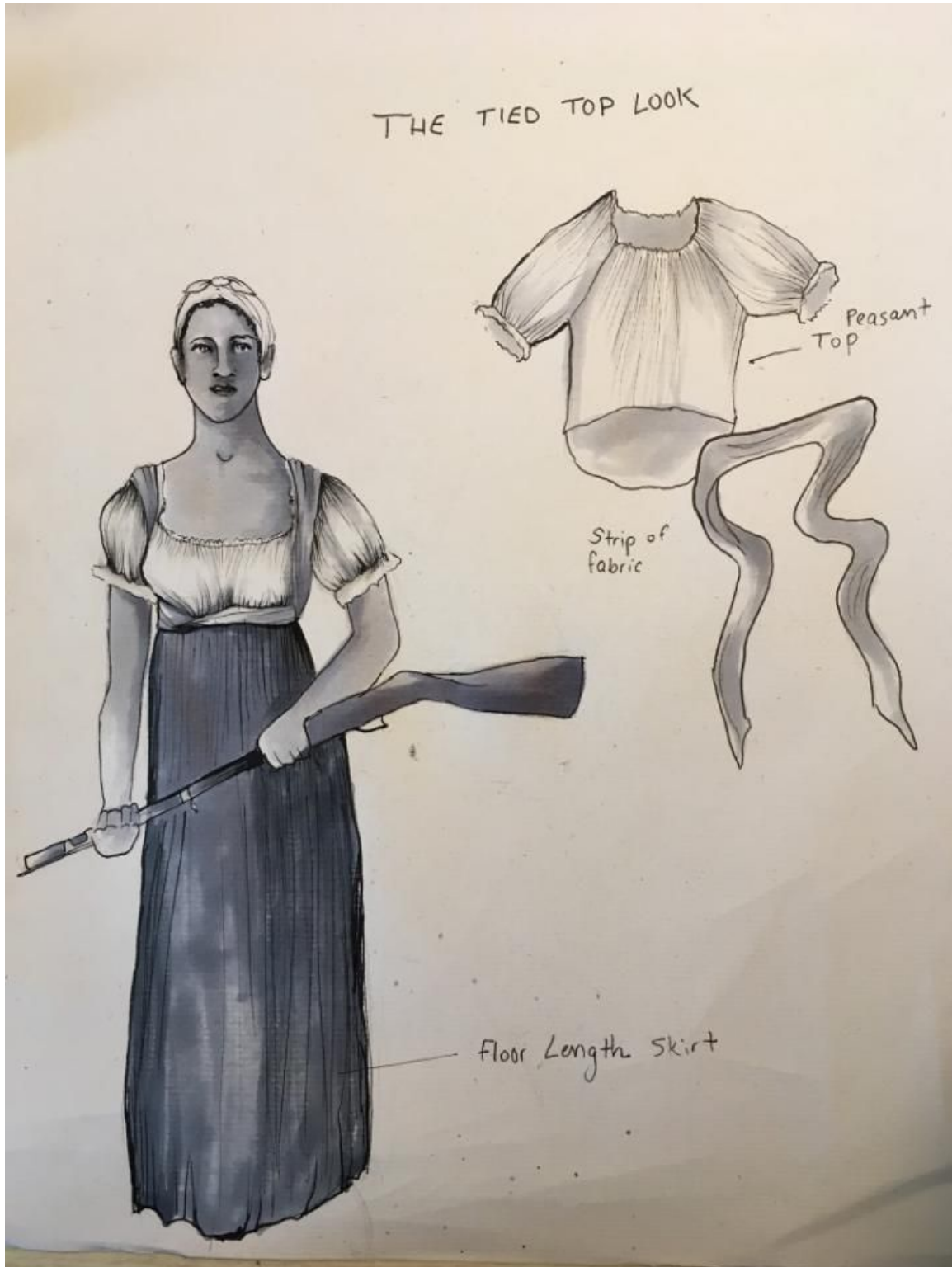
Another option for a top covering over your blouse is a wide, long strip of fabric crisscrossed at the center front and wrapped around the body just below your bust.

STEP 1: Cut long strips about 12-15" wide and the length of your height. If your strips are too short, sew them together to make one long strip.

STEP 2: Now find the middle of your strip and drape it over your shoulders. Let the entire width of the strip spread flat and cover your shoulders like a shawl.

STEP 3: Now bring the two ends of the strip across your bust, criss crossing, wrap around to the back and tie or come back to the front and tie off at the front under your bust.

THE TIED TOP: Look 3



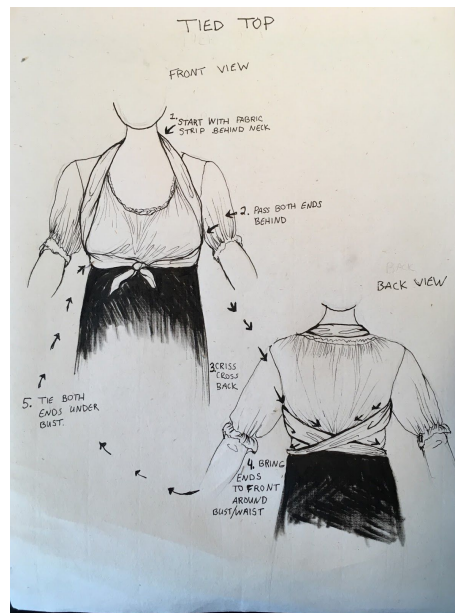
This style would be the simplest way of holding a loose blouse in place with some wrapping of a thin strip of fabric. It's almost as if this strip of fabric has the effect of an underwire bra.

STEP 1: Cut a strip of fabric that is roughly 6" wide and as long as your height. You can sew multiple strips together to make it that long, if needed.

STEP 2: Now find the middle of the strip and put it over your head like a halter top.

STEP 3: With both ends in your hands, pass them under your arm pit and criss cross them in the back.

STEP 4: Now pass them to your front and tie them under your bust.



THE TURBAN/TIGNON/HEADWRAP

All women of this time period had some sort of head covering, which could've been something very simple or elaborate, depending on their work, and where they were originally from. You may do something that is a simple headwrap, tied in a knot at the top of the head, or an wrapped and twisted turban. Please choose a fabric with a little more interest, color or pattern for this. You will need fabric that is at least 3yds long and 12" wide.

