

Cloth Buttons – Mistress Elaine Montjoy

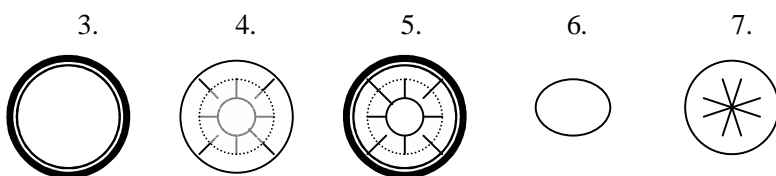
- ✘ Authentic
- ✘ Inexpensive
- ✘ Match your garment exactly
- ✘ Fun – if you like fiddly time consuming activities

Two major types

1. Condensed cloth only buttons (no filling) Woolen cloth (fuzzy/substantial) is best for these
2. Covered buttons – cloth over substance e.g. bead, disk of wood or leather. Can be made to imitate type 1

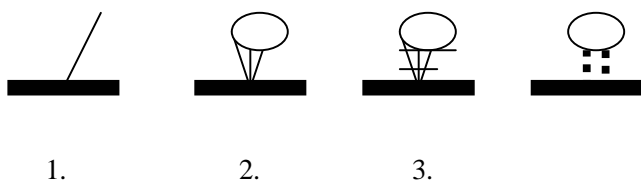
Construction of Type 1

1. Use a strong sewing needle (not too fine), thimble, doubled thread
2. Cut circle of cloth – trial and error here. (Try 2mm larger than sewing matching bobbin)
3. Running stitch close to edge
4. Gather to form disk
5. Run another line of running stitch on new edge
6. Pull up thread so button gathers over previous gathers
7. Sew across button and secure.



Sewing the buttons on

1. Secure thread to the very edge of your garment – faced or reinforced edge is good!
2. Take stitches from fastening position on edge (point only) to points on lower edge around the button leaving a gap
3. Wind thread around the fastening threads to form shank and secure to the garment at the bottom.



Construction of Type 2

1. Start with circle large enough for your substrate – trial and error here!
2. Follow steps up to 5 for type 1
3. Insert substrate before pulling up second gathering thread (step 6 type 1)
4. Step 7 type 1

Attach in the same manner

Buttonholes should be perpendicular to garment edge
Buttons should be many and close together (about 1-1.5cm)

Reference:

Elizabeth Crowfoot, Francis Pritchard and Kay Staniland, “Medieval Finds from Excavations in London: 4 Textiles and Clothing” C1150-1450, HMSO 1992