

## = Uniforms of the Confederate States military forces =

The Uniforms of the Confederate States military forces were the uniforms used by the Confederate Army and Navy during the American Civil War , from 1861 to 1865 . The uniform initially varied greatly due to a variety of reasons , such as location , limitations on the supply of cloth and other materials , State regulations that were different from the standard regulations , and the cost of materials during the war .

Texas units , for example , had access to massive stocks of Federal blue uniforms , which were acquired after Confederate forces captured a Federal supply depot in San Antonio in 1861 . These were worn as late as 1863 .

Early on , servicemen sometimes wore combinations of uniform pieces , making do with what they could get from captured Union soldiers , or from Union and Confederate dead , or just wear civilian clothing .

There are some controversies about some of the exact details of a few of the uniforms , since some of the records were lost or destroyed after the Civil War ended .

## = = Overview = =

The original Confederate uniforms from all branches of the military closely followed the lines of the Union ? s uniforms . This was until June 6 , 1861 , when the Confederate Council issued General Order 9 , the new regulations for the Confederate Infantry , Cavalry and Artillery .

The new uniforms were designed by Nicola Marschall , a German @-@ American artist who also designed the original Confederate flag . He was heavily influenced by the mid @-@ 1800s uniforms of the Austrian and French Armies .

Although the regular Confederate military had a paper strength of 6 @, @ 000 personnel , the first 100 @, @ 000 volunteers from all over the South participated in a variety of dress . Many were from state militia outfits , which had their own state @-@ issued uniforms . In the early battles , some Confederate units that wore dark blue uniforms were often mistaken on the field of battle for the enemy . Conversely , many Union units that were originally militia units went to war wearing gray .

It was not until the depot system was established in early 1862 by the Confederate Quartermaster in Richmond , Virginia , that uniforms were mass @-@ produced and supplied to troops . Until that time , the " commutation system " was in place ; this allowed soldiers to have their own uniforms made to the new CSA regulations and to be reimbursed by the CS government . The allowance for uniforms was \$ 21 per six months .

Officers always had to buy their own uniforms until March 6 , 1864 , when General Order 28 was released ; this allowed Confederate officers to purchase uniforms from the same sources as the troops , and at cost price .

Following the Richmond Depot , other depots started up throughout the South to supply their respective regional forces . Major depots were in Columbus , Athens and Atlanta , Georgia for the Army of Tennessee and Houston , Texas and Shreveport , Louisiana for the Trans @-@ Mississippi forces . The use of the depot system meant that army @-@ wide uniformity was impossible , as different depots had unique uniforms ( Columbus Depot Jackets for instance , had breast pockets , whilst Richmond Depot Jackets did not ) . This resulted in a varied set of uniforms worn by different Confederate units .

As the war progressed , the image began to shift from the " ragged rebel " look to a well @-@ uniformed Army in the Eastern and Western theaters . In the last 12 months of fighting , these Confederate forces were well @-@ uniformed , the best they had ever appeared in terms of consistency , wearing clothing made of imported blue @-@ gray cloth , either manufactured locally or bought ready @-@ made under contract from British manufacturers , such as Peter Tait of Limerick , Ireland who became a major supplier of uniforms for the Confederacy .

Unfortunately , in the department of the Trans @-@ Mississippi , problems with the distribution of the plentiful uniforms made in Houston and Shreveport meant that the South Western forces went without proper uniforms for some part of the war .

Confederate headgear was to be the chasseur cap , or " kepi " , a French military cap . Often broad felt or straw hats or even slouch hats were worn instead . The Federal Army style forage cap was also popular . General Stonewall Jackson was famous for wearing the forage cap . Confederate Cavalry troops often wore Hardee hats , much like the Union Cavalry , which was a representative of the additional " flair " associated with the Cavalry troops . Two examples of CSA Cavalry officer 's famous for wearing these hats are Colonel John S. Mosby and General J.E.B. Stuart .

= = = Design = = =

The use of wool in the uniform meant that the uniforms were not suited to the warm climates that were common in the South . This contributed to many Confederate soldiers suffering from heatstroke on long marches . However , one understanding of the heavy woolen garments is that after the marching during the day time , when the soldiers would rest at night and cool themselves down , the thermal @-@ shock could render some men unable to function the next day . As such , the woolen garments would protect the soldiers from this , and keep them able to keep marching the next day to fulfill their duties . This was also the case with the better equipped U.S. Army . Many Confederate soldiers started the war with frock coats . However , cloth shortages and wartime wear insured that , by 1863 , waist @-@ length cadet gray or butternut shell jackets were generally worn by Confederates in the Eastern and Western Theater . Examples of frock coats being worn by enlisted men can be seen in photographs taken after the battles of Gettysburg , ( 1863 ) , and Spotsylvania , ( 1864 ) .

Gray was not chosen for camouflage , however , it did , at times , provide enough of a mask along tree lines during battle ; keeping the line of Infantry hidden long enough to strike effectively . At the time of the American Civil War , the usefulness of camouflage was not generally recognized . Gray was chosen for Confederate uniforms because gray dye could be made relatively cheaply and it was the standard uniform color of the various State Militias . The gray uniforms worn by early State volunteers was normally a shade of Cadet gray , which is not suitable for combat wear , as it gives away the position of the individual easily from its bright blue @-@ gray tones , and for this reason it was preserved by some men for dress @-@ parade functions . The gray mentioned is dull toned , often varying in color depending on the region and time during the conflict , resulting in a uniform that could blend in with the tree lines , or hide the men in the field wearing them .

Generally , the uniform jacket of the Confederate soldier was single breasted , made of gray or brown fabric , with a six to nine button front . The design of the garment featured several variations : a four to six piece body , and one or two piece sleeves , usually with lining , often of a cotton material . The fabric used in these jackets , ranged from the finer kerseys and broadcloths used early in the war , to the cotton / wool blends of jeans , satinette , and cassimere , to name several examples . The exact color of the fabric also ranged from the prewar bright cadet gray , similar to the fabric used by Virginia Military Institute , or West Point U.S. Military Academy dress uniforms , to the sumac and logwood dyed fabrics , that would eventually fade to the ragged butternut appearance . Epaulettes may have been used in the construction of the jacket , as was the case for the Richmond clothing bureau designed jackets , commonly called today , the Richmond Depot types I , II , and III . Belt loops were also in intermittent use , such as the Richmond and the Charleston clothing depots . Trimming on the jackets range from piped or taped collars , cuffs , and front lapel edges , to full facings on the collar and cuffs , commonly in light blue , dark blue , red , or black . Due to the difficulty in obtaining yellow dye ingredients as the war progressed , yellow was infrequently used by the Cavalry Corps throughout the conflict .

= = Confederate States Army uniforms = =

= = = General officers = = =

===== Rank insignias =====

===== Collar insignias and buttons =====

On the upright collar of full generals , lieutenant generals , major generals , and brigadier generals three stars were stitched within a wreath , all embroidered in gold coloring . The center star was slightly larger than the other stars . It was not possible to know which grade of general an officer was by his collar insignia . However , major generals and lieutenant generals wore two rows of nine buttons in groups of three down the front of the overcoat , and brigadier generals wore two rows of eight buttons in groups of two . However , Confederate Army Regulations had no distinction between the General Officer grades , and had only the insignia for Brigadier Generals recognized . At least three General officers did not wear the prescribed uniform : Robert E. Lee who wore the uniform of a Colonel , refusing to wear a general's insignia until the Confederate victory ; Joseph L. Hogg , who died of a fever ; and Benjamin McCulloch .

===== Field and company officers =====

===== Rank insignias =====

===== Collar insignias =====

Colonels wore three gold stars of the same size on their collar ; the same as generals , but without the wreath . While lieutenant colonels wore two stars on their collars , majors wore one star , which was placed in the middle of the collar . Captains had three gold horizontal bars , first lieutenants wore two bars , and second lieutenants wore one bar . However , the Confederate Congress often created new commissions , and did not always standardize rank insignia immediately .

===== Sleeve insignias , branch of service colors =====

Confederate Army officers indicated their military affiliation with different colored facing on their coats or jackets . The colors were red for artillery , yellow for cavalry , light blue for infantry , and black for medical . A very distinctive feature of the Confederate officers uniforms was the gold braid Austrian knots on their sleeves . More elaborate braiding indicated higher rank and some knots almost reached the shoulder . However , a general order , issued in 1862 , called for the Austrian knots not to be worn in the field , as this made officers conspicuous to enemy combatants .

===== Buttons =====

Field Grade officers , and Company Grade officers commonly wore two rows of seven equally spaced buttons each , despite regulations calling for the top two buttons to be spaced at four inches apart , coming closer together at the waist at 3 inches in distance .

===== Trousers =====

The Confederate trousers were very similar to those of the Union forces . Early on , the trousers were sky blue in color . They were most often made of wool , and were easily worn during long marches . If trousers did not arrive for the troops the soldiers would have to use their own pants to wear . Regimental and company officers wore the colors of their respective branch on the outer seam of their pants on one and one @-@ quarter inch stripes . Generals wore two and five @-@ eighths inch stripes on each pant leg . While the quartermasters , commissary , and engineer

officers wore a single magenta , one and one @-@ quarter inch outer @-@ seam stripe . Non @-@ commissioned officers were to wear on their outer seams a one and one @-@ quarter inch cotton stripe or braid of colors appropriate to their army branch .

===== Kepis =====

The " French " pattern kepi was the standard issue headgear to all army personnel , with a dark blue band , sides & crown for generals , staff officers , and engineers . Kepis worn by commissioned officers and enlisted personnel had two patterns , specified by regulations in 1861 and 1862 , respectively . The first pattern was a colored band , denoting the branch of service , with the crown and sides to be made of Cadet Gray cloth . The second pattern had a dark blue band for all branches , with the crown and sides colored according to the branch of service . The branch of service colors were as follows , Red for artillery , yellow for cavalry , and light or sky blue for infantry .

===== Army enlisted men =====

===== Rank insignias =====

===== Chevrons =====

In the Confederate Army , chevrons were worn by sergeants ( three on each sleeve ) and corporals ( two on each sleeve )

===== Sword and sash =====

When in full dress and sometimes also in battle , all ranks above Corporal ( i.e. all Sergeants ) in non @-@ mounted service branches carried the M1840 NCO Sword ( when available ) suspending on a leather belt ( as did their counterparts in the Union Army , except Hospital Stewards who carried a special Sword Model ) . Additionally all CSA Sergeant ranks were permitted worsted waist sashes : red for Artillery and Infantry ( and all others Service branches ) , but yellow for Cavalry . ( For their counterparts in the Union Army crimson worsted waist sashes for all service branches were only allowed to NCOs above Sergeant ( i.e. First Sergeant , Ordnance Sergeant , Hospital Steward , Sergeant Major etc . ) )

===== Trousers =====

Army trousers were of similar pattern to the U.S. Army trousers , or civilian designs , depending on the area in which they were made . They were typically a shade of gray or brown , with a variety of medium blues also produced . The individual could also have them trimmed to reflect his militia unit , his Non @-@ commissioned officer status , or as a personal flare , to the ubiquitous service pants . Noncommissioned officers were to wear on their outer seams a one and one @-@ quarter inch cotton stripe or braid of colors appropriate to their army branch .

===== Belt =====

There were numerous types of belts produced for the Confederate Military during the Civil War . There were literally dozens of types of buckles used and produced by or for the Confederacy . The buckles ranged from single plates with hooks , to two piece interlocking buckles , to simple roller buckles and countless other variations . Many buckles use plates that bore the state seal or motto of their home states . The vast majority used simple roller buckle plates of the type found on a common

dog collar . As the War progressed , more and more men used captured US belt plates , often wearing them upside down .

= = = Infantry uniforms = = =

= = = Design = = =

The Confederate Infantry , the largest Corps of the Army , had a large variety of uniforms , and the greater amount of records . The initial Confederate Army Uniform consisted of a Kepi , double @-@ breasted tunic , trousers , and Jefferson Bootees / Brogans . The Kepi was not specified until the 1862 Regulations , as a sky @-@ blue kepi , reflecting the Infantry Corps , with a dark blue band , and leather visor . The Tunic was to be of Cadet gray , with two rows of yellow @-@ metal ( brass or gold ) buttons , ' solid ' cuff and collar facings in sky @-@ blue , and lined with a lighter gray fabric . The coat was of the same pattern specified as regulation for the field and company officers , as well as for the artillery and cavalry enlisted men .

These designs for the uniform , however , did not prevail , as the complexity of the uniform proved to be difficult for mass @-@ production . The simpler uniform turned out to be the regulations dictated by Judah Benjamin . He stated that the uniform should be that of : a gray jacket ; a blue , gray , or brown pair of trousers ; any slouch hat or cap @-@ type of head cover ; and any kind of foot @-@ wear to be worn for Confederate service in mid @-@ 1861 . His regulations , however , were overruled by the subsequent set of regulations of June 1861 , stating the Franco @-@ Austrian styled uniform to be issued and purchased to all Corps and by all officers , respectively .

The guidelines set by Judah Benjamin in 1861 soon became the choice of the Clothing Depots across the south as the war went into its second year . This easier to produce jacket , with the loosened hat and trouser regulations , made it easier to clothe Confederate Infantrymen . The typical uniform by the end of 1861 and beginning of 1862 was a slouch hat or kepi , a shell @-@ jacket , and a pair of sky @-@ blue or gray cloth trousers , with brogans .

= = = Jackets and coats = = =

The jacket prescribed for Infantry use was of the same design for all service men . The design itself depended entirely on the region , time , and the source of fabrics . The Eastern Theater uniform jacket was the Richmond Depot design , with three primary types issued throughout the war . The jacket varied from a cadet gray , piped and trimmed jacket , looking much like a pre @-@ war militia jacket , to the jeans @-@ cloth jacket that was worn out in six months . The materials and uniforms imported from England were also issued to the troops through this facility . The Western and Deep Southern facilities manufactured similar uniforms , being jeans @-@ cloth , dyed with vegetable based grays , that would fade to brown or tan . The typical jackets issued had 5 @-@ 7 button fronts , with collar and cuff trim that varied from era , region and source , and an outside pocket on occasion .

The previous styles were the militia uniforms . These consisted of everything from the more sharp @-@ looking jackets and coats , which resembled the French or Northern Infantry uniforms , to the no @-@ flares " Battle @-@ Shirt " , meant for drilling and battles only . The uniform for these militia units varied by each company through a single county or parish , let alone the country itself . The militia uniforms were a menagerie of colors , from Cadet gray , dark blue , and hunter green , to Reds , buffs and gold tones . The other variety of CS Army uniform jackets and coats is the Zouave . This jacket was meant to be loose @-@ fitting and reflect the French @-@ African Zouave units . There were several units to consist of this uniform , including the " Richmond Zouaves " , in the 44th Virginia Infantry Regiment , the " Wheat 's Tigers " , of the 1st Louisiana Special Battalion , and " Coppen 's Zouaves " , of Louisiana .

= = = Buttons = = =

The buttons worn on the Infantryman 's clothing is not as minor a detail as it would sound . The average infantryman may have had his uniform made for him in Richmond , Virginia , however , the man enlisted in Georgia , and is now marching through the former state . In reflection to his loyalties to home , this man , for example , could have adorned his uniform with Georgia State buttons . This would indicate to his fellow soldiers his allegiance to both his state and his military unit . This was common practice during the war for both sides in the conflict .

The regulation infantry buttons for enlisted men described the button as to have a number on the front to reflect the unit designation ; for example , a soldier in the 1st Confederate Infantry Regiment would have a " 1 " on the buttons of his coat . These buttons are rare or non-existent . However , the officer 's regulation button , consisting of the " block I " button , for Infantry , the A for Artillery , etc . ; was very common amongst soldiers , and replaced the efforts to produce the different , numbered buttons for each regiment in service .

As before , the uniform buttons could also reflect the state loyalties of an individual . All of the Confederate States made an effort to supply their respective State buttons to their troops . The states that did not join the Confederacy , but had men within its ranks , such as Maryland and Missouri , also made buttons , that have turned up on surviving uniforms .

The confederacy also implemented ready-made supplies of button , consisting of the U.S. Government stockpiles throughout the war . These consisted of the Enlisted men 's coat button , ( an eagle with the shield of the U.S. , with the olive branch and arrows held in its talons , ) and the officer 's buttons , ( the same as before , but the shield is replaced by a blank shield , with the respective letter for each branch of service , I for infantry , A for artillery , C for cavalry , and D for dragoons ) .

=== Hats and kepis ===

The headgear of the typical Confederate Infantryman was the slouch hat , or the military Kepi . The Kepi is a short fatigue and dress cap that was easy to manufacture for the Army during the war . This type of hat had its drawbacks , however . It provided little weather protection , and was worn out easily after a few months of hard wear . The Infantryman design cap was sky-blue with a dark blue band , but this was rarely seen outside of officer private purchase caps . More typical would be the plain gray / brown cap , with or without the branch of service trim . There are examples of deep-south made caps that were trimmed in red cotton and wool , and issued to Infantry units , showing that any available clothing was issued to the troops as the war progressed .

The slouch hat was the preferred choice of many soldiers , including officers . The hat was normally a floppy , wide brimmed , woolen body head-cover , meant to protect the individual from the sun , and inclement weather . It was normally a civilian hat , of brown , gray , or black wool . This simple hat saw widespread use throughout the Confederate Armies , and even with U.S. Army personnel . Occasionally , the hat was adorned with insignia of the wearer 's preference , and may have been pinned up for the drill in the use of the regular weapon of the time , the Rifled-musket .

=== Cavalry uniforms ===

=== Design ===

The first of the Cavalry uniforms were made by the cavalymen themselves . By 1862 , the Confederate regulations ordered the uniform to become organized , being cadet gray and lined with a thin layer around the sleeve . The pant legs were light blue with a yellow strip rising from the bottom of the leg to the top . Non-commissioned officers of the cavalry wore either regular clothes from home or a variety of different types of uniforms. yellow was the prescribed branch of service color , but surviving uniforms show beyond a doubt that the vast majority of cavalymen who

used any branch of service color , used buff as yellow cloth was virtually non existent in the Confederacy .

===== Buttons =====

According to the June 1861 regulations , and later the 1862 and 1863 regulations , enlisted men were to wear a frock coat with the same button pattern as the Company and Field Grade officers .

===== Hats =====

A cap copying the French Kepi was the prescribed headgear for all three branches of the land service , adorned with the various branch of service colors , but Confederates preferred the slouch hat and surviving photographs show that as many or more men wore some type of slouch hat than wore the prescribed cap , especially as the War progressed .

The Troiani book says , " Although in some units hats seem dominate , the issuance of caps was widespread . For example , requisitions for the 19th Alabama Infantry throughout 1863 and early 1864 show a decided preference for hats , whereas those for the 17th Mississippi Infantry for the same period record only caps being received . One Confederate clothing facility in Charleston , South Carolina , was devoted entirely to the manufacture of caps . These were cut out by government employees at the depot and sent to 1 @, @ 000 to 1 @, @ 500 local " persons of a needy class " for assembly . "

===== Artillery uniforms =====

===== Design =====

The first of the Artillery uniforms were a variety of handmade and personally customized uniforms . By 1862 , the Confederate uniforms became organized . They became cadet gray and were to be lined with a layer of red around the sleeve . The pant legs were light blue . Even after the uniforms were organized many of the artillerymen wore regular clothes due to the heat and discomfort caused by the regular uniforms .

===== Buttons =====

In the Confederate Artillery , a normal junior officer had two rows of seven evenly spaced buttons , grouped into pairs , while a senior officer could have as many as eight buttons in two rows .

===== Hats =====

The kepi was also standard issue to the artillerymen , they were made red to match that of the rest of their uniforms . During the summer months they were also allowed to wear straw hats because of the heat .

===== Confederate States Navy uniforms =====

===== Design =====

The first of the Navy uniforms were made in dark blue , but with the Southern style of rank insignia for the officers . The 1862 Confederate regulations ordered the uniform to be steel gray and lined with a dark black silk serge . They were also made in medium gray and cadet gray . They were made of wool , and these uniforms were not fit for the heat of the lower decks of a ship . Non @-@

commissioned officers wore a variety of uniforms , or even regular clothing .

= = = Shoulder straps = = =

According to the dress code of the Confederate Navy , shoulder straps were to be worn differently by each rank .

Admirals wore a shoulder strap of sky @-@ blue cloth , edged with black , that was four inches long and one inch and three @-@ eighths wide embroidered with gold one @-@ quarter of an inch in width . They had five stars spaced equally , the two on the ends six @-@ tenths of an inch in diameter , and the three intermediate stars six @-@ eighths of an inch in diameter .

Flag officers wore a shoulder strap of sky @-@ blue cloth , edged with black , that was four inches long and one inch and three @-@ eighths wide embroidered with gold one @-@ quarter of an inch in width . They had four stars spaced equally , the two on the ends six @-@ tenths of an inch in diameter , and the two intermediate stars six @-@ eighths of an inch in diameter .

captains wore the same shoulder straps as the flag officers , but with three equally spaced stars , each six @-@ tenths of an inch in diameter .

Commanders also had the same shoulder straps , but with only two stars .

Lieutenants had the same shoulder straps , with a single , central , star .

The shoulder straps worn by masters had the same design , but without any stars .

Passed midshipmen wore a strip of gold lace four inches in length and a half an inch wide .

For a midshipman , no shoulder straps were to be worn .

= = = Caps = = =

Confederate Naval Caps were made of steel gray cloth . They were not to be less than three inches and a half , nor more than four inches in height . They were also not to be more than ten , or less than nine inches and a half , at the top , and had a patent leather visor , to be worn by all officers in their service dress .

For a flag officer , the cap had an anchor in an open wreath of oak leaves , with four stars above the anchor . They were to be embroidered in gold as per pattern .

For a captain , the same as a flag officer 's , except that there were only three stars above the anchor , and the gold band was one and one @-@ half inches wide .

For a commander it was to be the same as for a captain , except that there were only but two stars .

For a lieutenant , the same as that of a captain , except there was only one star .

For a master , the same as for a captain , except that there was no star .

For a passed midshipman , an anchor without a wreath .

For a midshipman , no caps were to be worn .

= = Confederate States Marine Corps uniforms = =

The uniform used by the Confederate States Marine Corps resembled that prescribed for the Confederate Army . However , there is controversy about some of the exact details of the uniform , since the CSMC was not as large , and many of its records were destroyed . In 1865 , right after the war 's end , Lloyd J. Beall , commander of the CSMC , had a fire at his home which destroyed most of the CSMC 's records . It is clear , however , that the Marines were often equipped out of the stores of whichever garrison was nearest their location . One description has the Marines dressed in frock coats of a particular ( and undetermined ) shade of gray , and dark blue or black trousers . It appears that Confederate Marines wore forage caps although it is unclear if there was any ornamentation on the cover . Much of the gear worn by the CSMC was imported from Russia , and from Great Britain and its empire , mainly Canada . This created a fairly unusual look .