

**1820 - 1829**

**CLOTHING TRENDS**

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## 1820 - 1829 MAJOR FEATURES IN CLOTHING.

Modified from Wikipedia. See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1820s\\_in\\_Western\\_fashion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1820s_in_Western_fashion)

**NOTE: Many public domain images are found on Wikimedia Commons under “1820s fashion.”**

### MEN-

OVERALL - Men's fashions changed: by the mid-1820s coats featured broad shoulders with puffed sleeves, a narrow waist, and full coat-skirts. Trousers were fashionable day wear, while breeches were still in use at court functions and in the country.

By the mid-1820s, men's fashion plates show a shapely silhouette with broad shoulders emphasized with puffs at the sleeve top, a narrow waist, and very curvy hips.

For upper-class men, excellence in fabric, fit, and finish were of utmost importance as opposed to ornamentation. Padding was usually necessary for the stylish silhouette. To achieve a small waist, many men of middle and upper classes began wearing corsets, usually referred to as "girdles", "belts" or "vests" Men of lesser wealth followed the styles, but with less expensive fabric and tailoring. The poor bought 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> hand clothing, which lagged in style.

SHIRTS - were of linen or cotton, with tall standing collars and silk cravats tied in a soft bow.

COATS – The upper coat body was cut straight across the waist, with tails or skirt added below. Tails on coats were of varied styles and lengths. Frock coats had very full skirts below the same nipped-in waist. All Coats were padded at the chest and shoulders. Very fashionable sleeves were gathered or pleated at the top into a slightly puffed "leg of mutton" shape, all these features to make a man's figure look more “hourglass.” Double-breasted coats were very much in fashion, and waistcoats were buttoned higher on the chest.

TROUSERS - became more full and loose, gathered or pleated at the small waistline, and often strapped under the foot as “stirrup pants.” The straps held the trouser legs smooth. Light-colored trousers were worn for day, tapering toward the ankles.

HATS - Tall, silk hats again came into style but flared out from the hatband to the top. Curled hair and sideburns were fashionable.

FOOTWEAR - included boots for outdoors and shoes or slippers for indoors.

## WOMEN-

DRESSES - During the 1820s in America and greater Europe, fashionable women's clothing styles moved away from the classically influenced "Empire"/"Regency" styles with their very high waistlines and rather straight, draped skirts. 1820s skirts flared to cone-shape, increasingly wider at the bottom, and with more ornamentation around the skirt hem. Corsets lowered the waist a few inches, with belts accentuated a defined waistline. There was visual emphasis on wide sloping shoulders achieved by huge puffed-top sleeves and outward-extended collars. Bolder colors were in vogue as well as fabrics with large bold checkerboard or plaid patterns.

HAIR - In the early decade, hair was parted in the center front and styled into tight curls over the temples. As the decade went on, these curls became more elaborate and expansive. The bun on the back became a looped knot worn high on top of the head. Hairpieces were added to augment curls, loops, and braids.

HEAD-WEAR - The decade also saw ornate bonnets and elaborate large-circumference hats. As the Prince Regent became enamored of eastern design, women also adopted turbans. Conservative or older women wore indoor caps of fancy linen or lace (descended from the earlier mob cap), which covered the ears and often tied under the chin. Usually called day caps or cornettes, they were worn under bonnets when out-of-doors.

OUTERWEAR - Shawls remained popular. Cloaks and full-length coats were worn in cold or wet weather.

FOOTWEAR - Women wore flat-soled slippers. Later, cloth booties up to the ankle laced on the inside.

## CHILDREN-

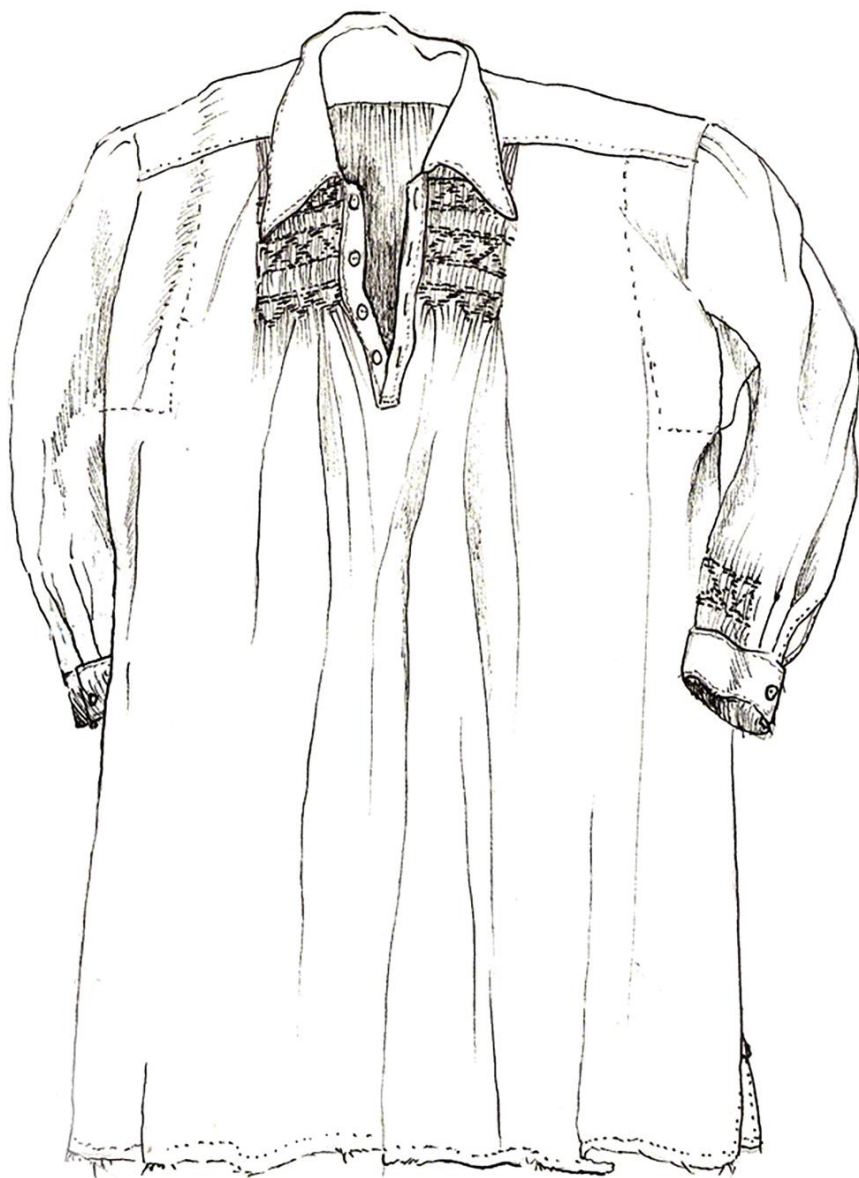
Infants wore extra-long dresses and knitted or crocheted caps. Toddler boys and girls both wore little dresses to make changing diapers and potty training easier. Generally, as children grew, their clothing was styled after what their parents wore, though if young boys had skirts or tails on their coats, those features were much smaller in proportion than their elders.

**NOTE- Images have been cropped to best show the clothing, rather than the overall portrait, photo, or illustration.**

## 1820 – 1829 - MEN, WORKING - CLASS CLOTHING.

(Working smocks and breeches continue from 1700 through 1900.

Duplicated from 1800 - 1819 for convenience.



**American Smock with less smocking than European styles, and no additional embroidery. 1700 – 1900 on.**

DESCRIPTION: Smocks were the most common working man's clothing of the 1700s & 1800s in both the old world and the new. This is a linen smock from America with smocking in front and a placket of four buttons. There is a little smocking at the collar line in center back. (It is not a "round smock," which would have a placket on the back neck as well, to allow wearing it reversed.

On the shoulders are double layers of linen that cover all raw edges, and are called the "straps," for reinforcing the smock. Sometimes, a strongly made smock could be used for future generations. Nothing went to waste or was thrown away if there was still some use in it.

American smock fronts have varied smocking designs, with only two inches of smocking on the cuff-lines of the sleeves. Note that the smocking does not go all the way around the cuffs, but is centered, and is there simply for beauty's sake. Other pleats in the sleeve fabric attach to the side of the cuff opening.

Under the rectangular arm sections are the usual seven-inch squares sewn into the sleeves and body as folded, triangular gussets. On the shoulders, the long "straps," and  
(continued ▼)

(continued from above ▲)

the facings inside the smock, cover the raw seams of sleeve insertions and are pressed inward toward the neckline. This completely covers the raw edges of the sleeves and straps.

All raw edges of the fabric are turned under with small, hand whip-stitching that is hardly seen on the outside of the smock, This adds strength to the garment. Such construction will survive generations of work and washing.

At the bottom of the side seam (French-seamed) is a tiny gusset at the top of the side slit to prevent side-seam tearing. There is plenty of room within this smock for a farmer to comfortably lift hay, drive a team, etc. The smock could be any neutral color of linen or dyed to a dark navy blue or brown for little boys' smocks. In New England, Nova Scotia or Canada smocks could even be wool, subtly striped, and much longer. Wool would protect men better than linen from cold, rain, snow, and dirt.

SOURCE: Drawn by Carma from a smock made by a Nauvoo missionary's wife using Carma's measurements and sewing tutelage. Free use.

**SMOCK PATTERN IN APPENDIX.** (Many pattern companies have a ready-made smock pattern listed under *Historic Costumes*.)



### **A farmer wears a work smock and trousers. 1800 – 1900 on.**

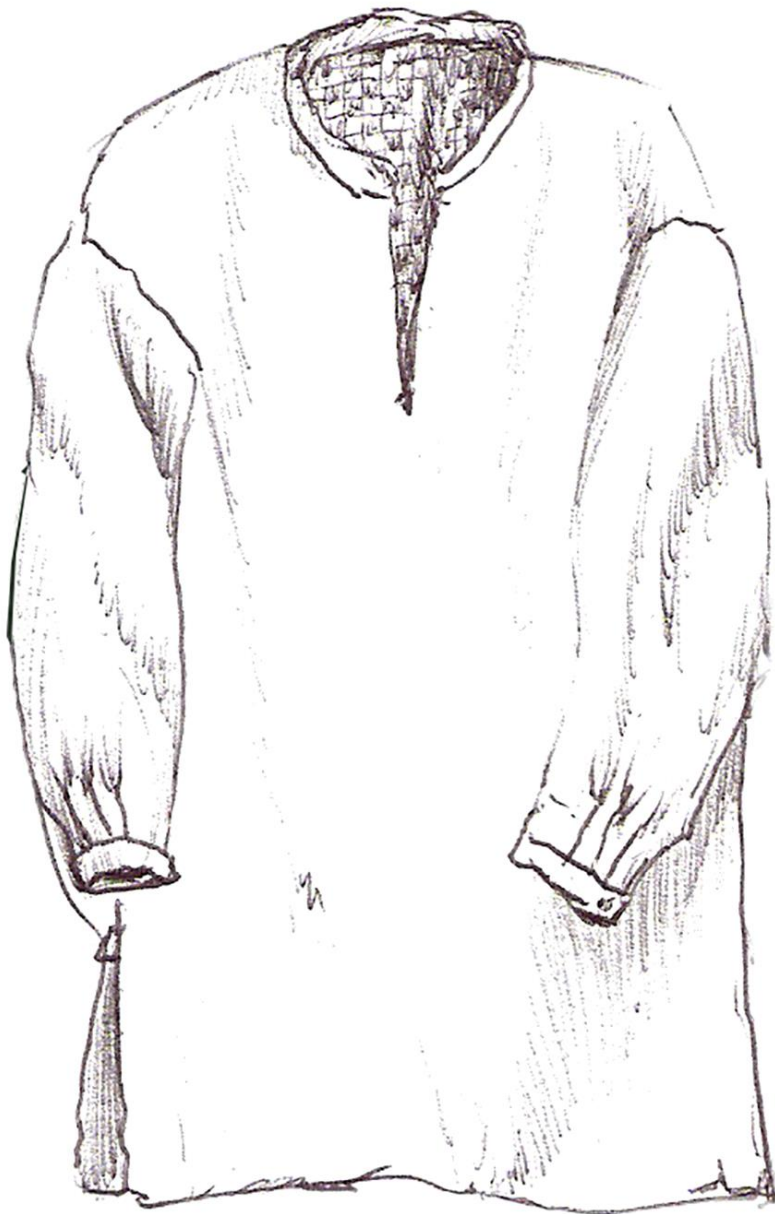
DESCRIPTION: Of the large Germanic Whitmer family in Fayette, New York, David Whitmer had a strong mind and body. Here he wears the usual American linen smock to cover his clothing while working. If the day were hot, a farmer might wear nothing on his torso except his tough linen smock. He also wears a broad-brimmed, low crowned hat and heavy leather work shoes.

David's family hosted Joseph Smith, Jr. for one month while the Prophet used this safe place to get away from life-threatening mobs while translating the *Book of Mormon* from ancient gold plates into English.

SOURCE: This ink drawing, a portrait by Robert Barrett, is displayed in the Grandin Print Shop, Palmyra, New York. The clothing was carefully coached by Carma for the artist.

Photo by Carma; free use





**A very simple man's woolen work smock is fully lined. 1700s to 1870s**

**DESCRIPTION:** This drab-colored woolen smock has no fancy stitching on it, but is a straight, hanging tunic with broad shoulders. It is fully lined with yellow and brown plaid fabric for warmth. Its sleeves have small sleeve pleats at the *narrow*, sewn-on cuffs. A simple 1 inch binding at the neck is of the same tunic fabric. This over-smock was used as an additional two layers of fabric that could be conveniently pulled on over the head for cold farm work.

**SOURCE:** Drawn by Carma when this American smock was a recent acquisition at Old Sturbridge Historic Village in Sturbridge, New York. Free use.





**Smock from Old Sturbridge Village collection, 1830s to 40s, but typical of 1700-1900.**

**DESCRIPTION:** This man's calf-length smock had been repaired, as we can see a carefully reinforced seam just left of bottom center. A tear had taken place from the front hem and upward about 15 inches. Perhaps that split in the fabric was there when the smock was *first made*, many years before, and had been sewn up to prevent fraying. Then the fabric could still be used as good linen to create a long-sleeved smock for a man.

This design has only a square of smocking stitches in top front, no wider than the flat collar spreads. All stitching and openings are identical on front and back, making it a reversible "Round Smock."

The sleeves have the expected section of smocking near the narrow cuffs, but not all the way around the cuffs. It had lasted a long time by being used on both, reversible sides for many years, or more than one generation. The owner donated it to the historic village. It is definitely a New England type of smock and is badly tacked up for this display. The shoulder width would have dropped a little off the farmer's shoulders when worn.

**SOURCE:** Old Sturbridge Village, a wonderful national park in Massachusetts showing historical





**A blue and white striped smock over regular clothes, 1830s to 40s.**

DESCRIPTION: A woolen smock with a squarish neckline binding added protection and warmth when worn over everything a man normally had on, even his coat, shirt, and tie. He could then go about his business in town or around his lands in very cold weather in Britain, Canada, or Northern U.S. and still keep his underneath clothing clean.

SOURCE: Booklet from Old Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge, Mass.