

# ROMAN MEN - THEIR CLOTHING

## Men's clothes

A man's only underwear was a loincloth. He probably slept in one as well. Over this he wore a tunic, made from two rectangles stitched at the sides and shoulders, and tied with a belt. Augustus is said to have worn four tunics at once when the weather was cold.

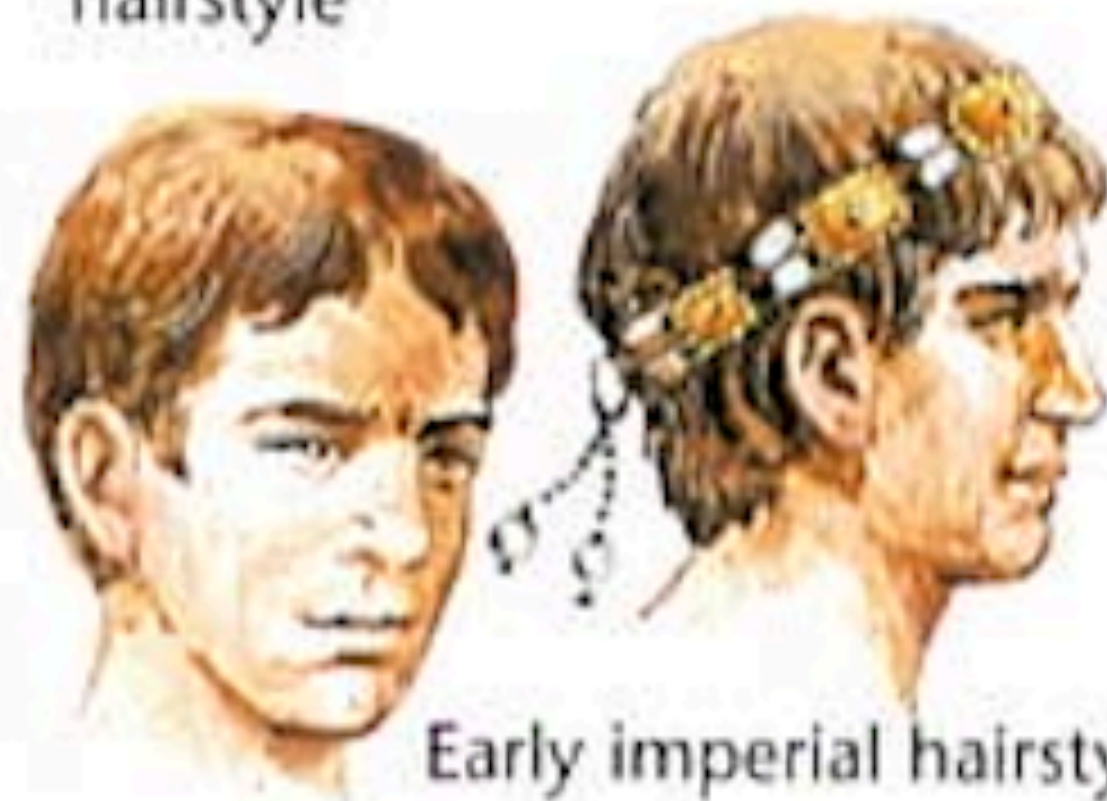


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## Men's hairstyles

During the early republic, many men wore beards, but it later became the fashion in Rome to be clean-shaven. Most Roman men wore their hair short, but during imperial times some fashion-conscious men had longer hair which was oiled and curled. Some popular hairstyles are shown here.

Republican hairstyle



Early imperial hairstyles



Later hairstyle



The barber's shop was a place to meet friends and gossip. Being shaved was painful. Although the razor was sharp the barber used no oil or soap, so cuts and scars were frequent.

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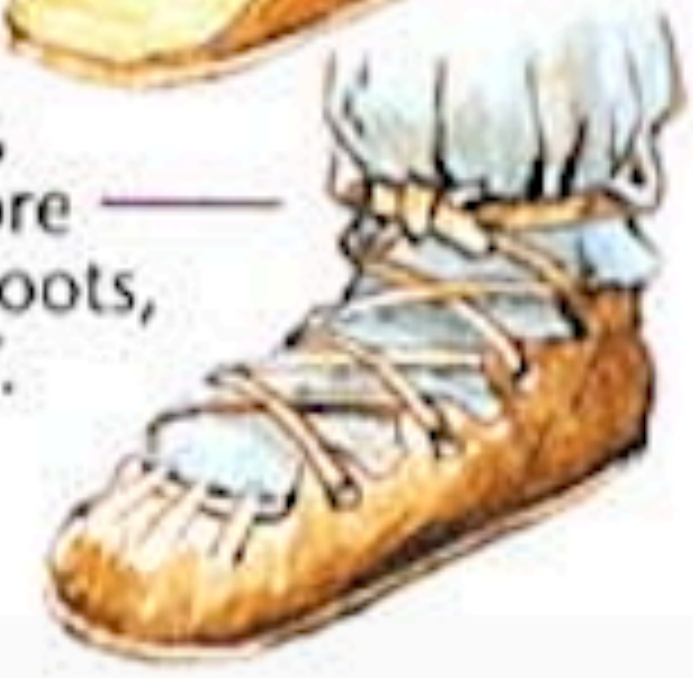
## Shoes

During the early republic, many Romans went barefoot most of the time. Outside they wore leather sandals. Later, footwear became more elaborate, and shoemakers became skilled at creating ornate footwear out of canvas and leather.

Leather sandals



Outside, men wore heavy boots, or *calcei*.



Soldiers often wore boots that had soles studded with nails.



Slippers were made of soft leather or cloth.



Women wore elegant sandals like these.



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## The Tunic

This was worn under the toga by men. It was made by sewing two pieces of wool together to make a tube with holes for the arms. It was belted at the waist and just covered the knees.

## Underwear

Both men and women wore a simple loincloth (like the one worn by Tarzan) under their clothes

## Shoes

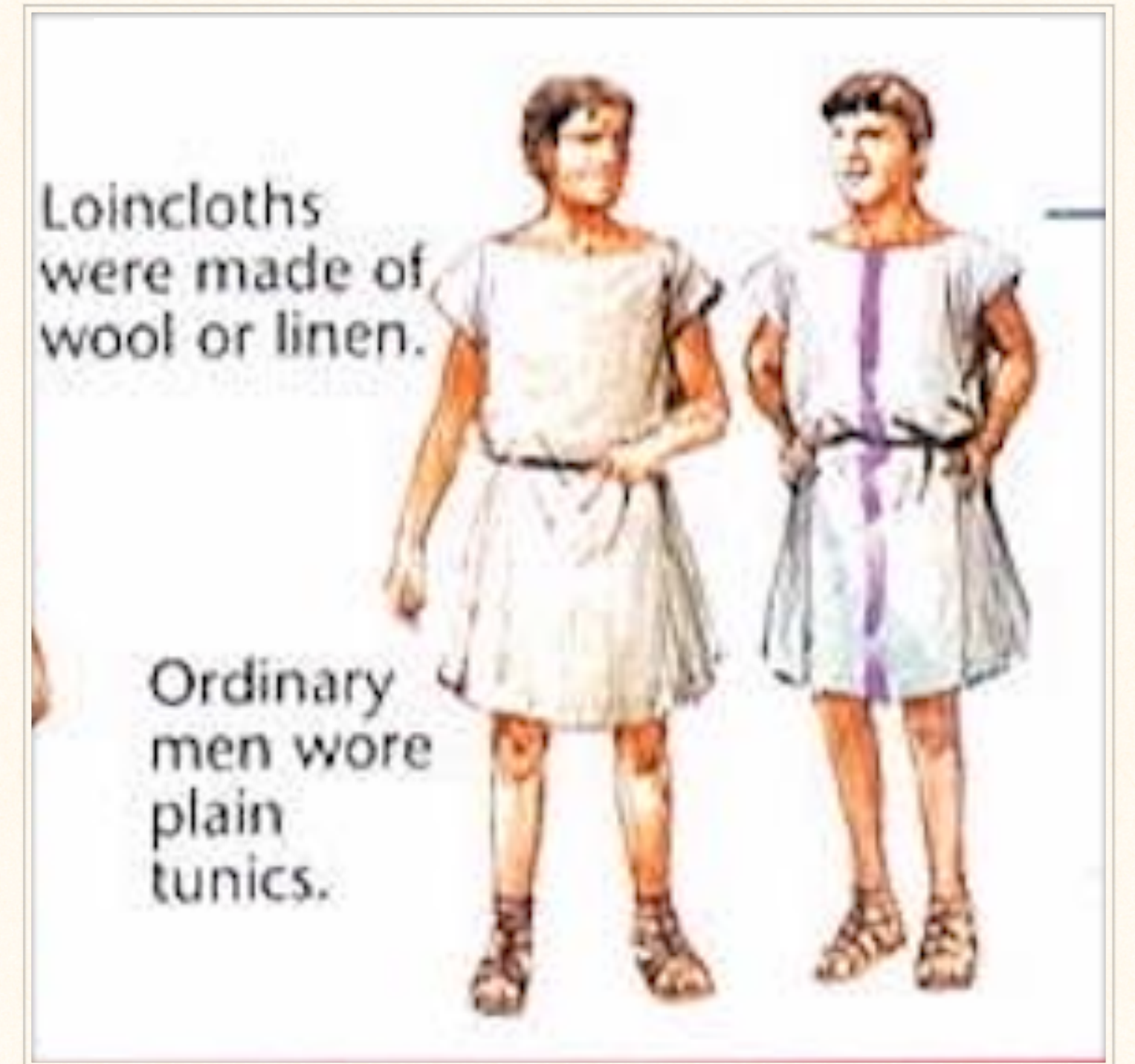
Indoors, the Romans wore open-toed sandals. However, outdoors they preferred to wear shoes that covered their toes.

## Jewellery

Men were only allowed to wear one piece of jewellery - a ring that was used to make a mark in wax for sealing documents. However, many ignored the rules and wore several rings and brooches to pin their cloaks.

## Hairstyles

All men had their hair cut short and shaved. After the time of Hadrian some men began growing beards.



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## The toga

Originally only citizens could wear the toga. Worn over the tunic, at first it was just a large wool blanket wrapped around the body. Later it became more elaborate with complicated folds. Many people disliked the toga because it was heavy and awkward, and hard to keep clean. But emperors tried to keep it in use because it was so distinctive. Senators' togas were decorated with a purple stripe.

It seems likely that the *toga* was folded from a semicircular piece of cloth 5.5m (18ft) long.



The left-hand end was thrown over the left shoulder.



A fold was made from the middle of the right-hand section, gathered into a roll and thrown over the left shoulder.



The rest of the right-hand piece was folded and thrown over the left shoulder.



A section of the left-hand straight edge was tucked into the belt.



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## The Toga

Only male citizens of Rome were allowed to wear togas. They were made out of wool and were very large. The material was not sewn or pinned but was draped around the body and over one arm. Togas were very expensive because of the large amount of material needed to make them and very heavy. It was the law that all citizens wore togas for public events. They were even told which colour of toga they had to wear:

- A plain white toga was worn by all adult male citizens
- An off-white toga with a purple border was worn by magistrates and upper class boys
- A toga made of dark coloured wool was worn after someone had died
- A bleached toga was worn by politicians
- A purple toga with gold embroidery was worn by a victorious general and later by emperors.



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## The Toga

For formal occasions a man by tradition wore a toga. This distinctive Roman garment was made of fine wool: it was in shape a segment of a circle, about 16 feet from point to point, and seven feet deep. It was slung under the right arm, and draped round the body, with both ends finishing on the right shoulder. Despite many statues of men wearing it, and a long but perplexing account in Quintilian, we cannot be absolutely certain of the details of the fastenings and folds. We do know, though, that even the Romans found it extremely difficult to drape it elegantly, and it was awkward to keep in place when walking, that it was very hot and heavy, that it was easy to make dirty and difficult to clean. Nevertheless, it was so distinctly the Roman garment (see quote on p. 175–6) that great efforts were made by the emperors to preserve its use. However the wishes of the ordinary people won, and they wore simpler cloaks or tunics over trunks, or even trousers. Most citizens of the Empire wore the toga only once – on their last bed on the day of their funeral.



# Home learning

For Tuesday 19th September



**GOOD IF**  
I INCLUDE DETAILS OF AN OVERVIEW  
OF THE DAY IN A SEQUENCE/ORDER  
OF WHAT A ROMAN MAN WOULD DO

**EVEN BETTER IF**  
I AM ABLE TO DESCRIBE HOW A  
ROMAN MAN WOULD DO THESE  
THINGS

**BEST IF**  
I CAN SHOW MY UNDERSTANDING OF  
ROMAN CULTURE BY EXPLAINING WHY A  
ROMAN WOULD DO THESE THINGS AND IN  
THIS ORDER

- Read the sheet of a day in the life of Caecilius
- Write your own diary entry, pretending you are a rich Roman male
- You should include details of your daily routine, how you would go about these activities, people you interact with, things you would eat etc.