

Making Victorian Costumes for Women

Heather Audin

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Heather Audin : Making Victorian Costumes for Women before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Making Victorian Costumes for Women:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. pretty good.By C. F.Overall, pretty good... great resource material, very well done. Absolutely love the layout-- big clear color pics, walks you through things, spans several 19th century style eras. Aimed more at beginners than the intermediate to expert historian/enthusiast, but still plenty of fun stuff. Includes basic pattern diagrams, which I always love. Bit plain, but they're decent. The meh-- wish there had been photos of the bustle pad dress improver described in a brief tutorial rather than just instructions. Some of the repro dresses are terrific, and some seem a bit off. The torso is really long on the midcentury ones, the elliptical crinoline in

particular. Not sure if that was just how it sat on the mannequin, but the skirt could have been moved up at least 4 inches. Not sure if a modern-silhouette dress form was used, some it could pass, others the modern proportions were obvious. My biggest pet peeve was the picture of the repro corset. It was a modern fashion piece, shaped like a tube, barely boned and made in red/black fashion fabric. Just, no. Borrow a period one for the photo. I didn't agree with some of the fabrics chosen for the repros and some of the material was a bit uneven [not enough about petticoats/underpinnings, later era dresses way too plain], but most had a good aesthetic. Overall I think this book is a yes for someone starting out in re-enacting or costumers. Good overall summaries with period reference pictures shown, and walks you through basic construction of the garments. Looking forward to the Edwardian version of this that comes out soon.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Focussed on "Costume" rather than "Reproduction"

By meFirst of all, I agree with C.F.'s excellent review of the book. The book is put together in a similar format to Jean Hunnisetts Period Costume for Stage Screen. A representative style is chosen for 7 different periods from the 1840s to the 1890s shown in both finished form a pattern layout, with extensive illustrated instructions for each step. The author had access to the costume collection of Hull Museum Victorian fashion periodicals for her clothing sources. The book also includes sections on sewing instructions making some undergarments. All of the graphed patterns are sized to fit a 34-24-36 figure. The corset shown as "Victorian" is totally wrong. It's straight, with no gores for shaping the bust hips. I don't think it would give a proper silhouette under Victorian costumes. There are no instructions for making a Victorian corset or crinoline in the book. The author suggests purchasing them. I would look in "Corsets Crinolines" by Norah Waugh for how to make underpinnings. The book seems to be focused on making Victorian "Costume" rather than "Reproduction Victorian Clothing". That's not really a bad thing, but I don't think the book is worth the \$49 price for what is in it. I paid about half that price think it's ok for \$25. I would still go to Jean Hunnisett or Janet Arnold for more accurate pattern drafts.

Starting with the early years of Victoria's reign, this essential book examines the developments and evolution of fashionable dress as it progressed throughout her six decades as queen. From the demure styles of the 1840s to the exaggerated sleeves of the 1890s, it explores the ever-changing Victorian silhouette, and gives patterns, instructions and advice so that the amateur dressmaker can create their own versions of these historic outfits. Other topics covered include: information on tools and equipment; a guide to transferring pattern pieces; a concise guide to the various layers of Victorian underwear; step-by-step instructions with colour photographs to help construct the patterns and advice on how to personalize the outfit. Illustrations of fashion plates, Victorian carte de visite photographs and original surviving garments provide visual inspiration and reference.

About the AuthorHeather Audin is a museum curator, social historian and dressmaker. She also runs her own small replica costume business. She is passionate about researching and recreating historic dress, with a special interest in the Victorian period.