

Woven Thread Buttons

Lady Cecilia du Lac d'Argent
ladycecilia@hotmail.com

Background:

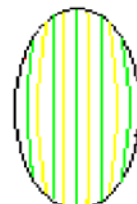
Beads have been decorations for clothing and accessories since primitive times. Later in our period, buttons become more prevalent as tailoring techniques improved. In the 14th century and onward, buttons were used to achieve the popular tightly fitting clothing.

One method of constructing periodesque buttons, is to wrap an inexpensive bead with thread which either contrast or match the garment. The technique below produces a button which is very similar to those found on surviving extant 16th century Turkish kaftans. (Rogers, 1986) This method can be used on late period European fashions as well as seen in Janet Arnold's *Periods of Fashion: the Cut and Construction of Clothes for Men and Women c1560-1620*.

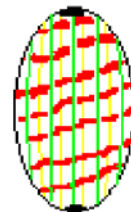
Making a Woven Thread Button:

Take a wooden bead approximately the size of the desired button. The larger the bead, the more time and thread will be needed to complete. For demonstration purposes, four different colored thread are used: red, green, yellow and light brown.

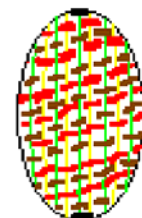
1. To make the buttons, two colors green and yellow were wrapped in parallel to the bead hole.



2. Next, the red thread was wrapped to spiral around the circumference, woven under the green thread, but woven over the yellow thread.



3. The light brown thread is then wrapped around the circumference of the bead in between the red spiral, woven under the yellow thread and over the green thread.



Naturally, the closer the threads are together, the tighter the weave is. The threads must be close enough together to cover the wooden bead. With wear, the threads will compact, so the weave must be tight enough to not move when being pushed through a button hole or loop. The buttons may then be sewn on to the garment.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arnold, J. (1985). *Periods of fashion: the cut and construction of clothes for men and women c1560-1620*. Hollywood, CA: Quite Specific Media Group Ltd.

Jones, H. R. (2001). Archaeological sewing. Retrieved January 24, 2004 from www.virtue.to/guest_authors/archaeological_sewing.html

Rogers, J. M. (1986). *The Topkapi Saray Museum: costumes, embroideries and other textiles*. London: Thames and Hudson.