

The Ancient Kilt

The following are instructions on how to pleat and wear your Ancient Kilt. If your kilt has Cheater Pleats™, carefully remove the white basting stitch(es), which were only necessary for shipping. Lay the kilt out on the floor or on a bed and go directly to “Wearing the Kilt” on the back page.

Modern kilts are generally pleated so that the front apron of the kilt closes from left to right. For years this is how we’ve Cheater Pleated™ our Ancient Kilts. However, many customers brought it to our attention that this makes it difficult to wear the plaid over the left shoulder, which is also customary.

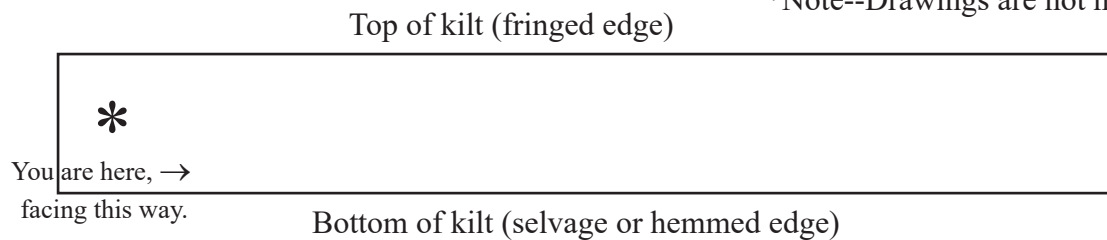
So now we pleat all Ancient Kilts the other way — front apron closing from right to left. This makes the aprons “backwards” compared to a modern kilt, but it allows the plaid to flow up and over the left shoulder. (This is the way Mel wears it in the Braveheart movie.)

Plaid over left shoulder is not a hard and fast rule. It most likely originated as a practical way to keep the plaid off your sword arm. If you are left-handed, you will probably want to wear the plaid over your right shoulder.

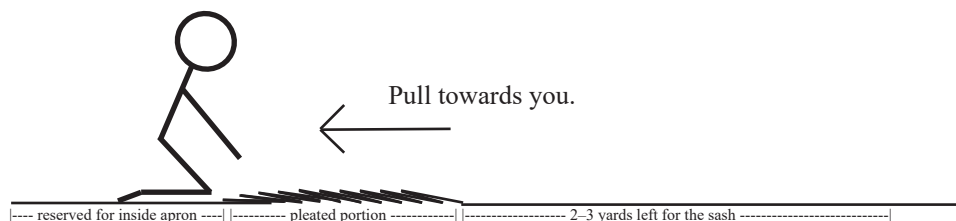
The instructions below are the original. Just reverse the directions if you want to experiment with plaid over the other shoulder. Play with it both ways and see what you like.

Pleating the Kilt — Lay out your kilt on the floor, kneeling down at one end as illustrated below, with the finished edge (selvage or hem) to your right and the fringed edge to your left. If your kilt is hemmed, make sure the outside surface of your kilt is facing down. (If your kilt is not hemmed, it does not matter which surface faces down). Measure from your end a length of tartan equal to half your waist size plus a couple inches. This portion will remain unpleated and will become the inside apron of your kilt. Begin pleating the tartan at this point.

*Note--Drawings are not necessarily to scale.



Pull the tartan towards you, grabbing about 6 inches at a time. You may wish to use the stripes as a guide (this is probably one reason the ancient Celts added stripes in the first place). The pleats should be 1–2 inches apart, the pleated portion should be about equal to half your waist size, and you should end up with 2-3 yards left for the sash. It will probably take some trial and error or a little math to get the correct number of pleats to use up the correct amount of tartan (or you can just wing it).



Example :

If your waist size is 40 inches, you need to leave about 22 inches for the inside apron. Next, the pleated portion of your kilt needs to be about 20 inches. This could be accomplished with 20 pleats each 1 inch wide, 13 pleats each 1 1/2 inches wide, or 10 pleats each 2 inches wide. In order to end up with about a two yard sash, this means you need to pleat about 100 inches of tartan (6 yds. total – 22 in. apron – 2 yds. sash = 122 in). Now lets figure out how deep your pleats need to be in each of our three examples. In each case 20 inches will be visible and about 100 inches will be hidden in the pleats, so simply divide your 100 inches by the number of pleats to determine how much fabric you need to pull for each pleat.

20 Pleats: 100 inches divided by 20 = about 5 inches

13 Pleats: 100 inches divided by 13 = about 7 1/2 inches

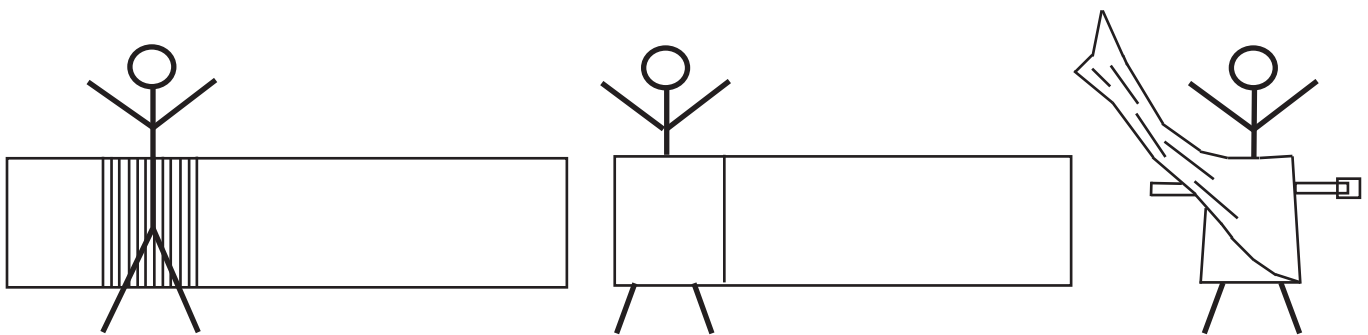
10 Pleats: 100 inches divided by 10 = about 10 inches



Your kilt should now look like this.



Wearing the Kilt — When the kilt is belted on, you should have 3-6 inches of excess tartan that flops over the top of the belt, and the bottom of the kilt should be at about the middle of the knee. Being careful not to undo your pleats, turn your belt wrong side up and slide it under the kilt. Lie down on top of the kilt with the belt at your waist. You can use the backs of your knees as guides. Fold the inside apron of the kilt over your body. Then, do the same with the other side, gathering the sash up above the belt. Fasten the belt to hold it in place. After standing up, you may need someone to help adjust things a bit. **Note** — If you opted for the inside strap and buckle, with some practice, you should be able to put your kilt on standing up.



What you do with the sash is now up to you (and the weather). It looks best worn over the shoulder (either one), but if you like, it can also be wrapped around the waist and tucked into your sporran belt (good for hot weather).

