

Shakespeare's ruffs and collars

A ruff is an item of clothing which was worn around the neck from the mid 1500s onwards. Ruffs were worn by men, woman and children. They started as a simple collar but grew more and more elaborate throughout Elizabeth's reign. People often think of ruffs when they think of that time in history.

Ruffs were a circular collar made from a pleated frill. The quality of the ruff was a sign of status. Very rich people would have ruffs made of expensive linens and decorated with lace, gold, silver and silk. Poorer people, if they had a ruff at all, would wear one made of cheap, rough and rather scratchy material.

Now it is time for you to have a go at making your own 'ruff' creation using the template below. Be as elaborate and colourful as you like!



