

WHAT RE-ENACTING WITH THE NWTA LOOKS LIKE

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Find a Unit to Try an Event With & Give Living History a Shot!



Photo by David Burns

When someone wants to try reenacting, there is no upfront cost. Guests are provided a tent, tableware, a musket and accoutrements (if applicable), and clothing (although it's bring-your-own-shoes). They can guest at 2 events before joining the NWTA (which is \$20 for individuals, \$25 for families, annually), and *then* they put together their own reenacting kit. Many units have recruitment steps, such as being voted in to their specific unit, so if you're happy with the unit you are guesting with, make sure to ask what those steps are. Whether you are an individual, a family, or a whole group of people, here are some details for what guesting at a reenactment looks like.



To Arms!



NWTA's Mission Statement is to be "an educational organization composed of volunteers who strive to present, as accurately as possible, a realistic portrait of military and civilian life during The American Revolution. "

Event Details

Most people arrive Friday to set up...mostly Friday evening. Some eat on the way there, while some get situated and then leave to eat. Everything inside your wedge tent is hidden so the bedding you bring is completely up to you, as are your personal items such as your sleeping bag, suitcase with toiletries, pajamas, etc. For example, most of us have cots or blow-up mattresses (a queen size will usually fit but it will be snug).

The event runs from the opening ceremony (we call it 'colors'), usually at 9 or 10am, until the closing ceremony (also 'colors'), usually at 5pm Sat/4pm Sun. During that time, everything the public sees in camp needs to be authentic to the Rev. War time period (so we try to hide anything modern). Soldiers generally participate in one or two battles daily, as well as the opening and closing 'colors' ceremonies. Outside of battles, soldiers and civilians may participate in a wide array of demonstrations, competitions, and answering the public's questions.

Speaking to the Spectators

If you are interested in some easy talking points, feel free to watch this 9 minute video, "[Simple Soldier Cooking Without Utensils](#)," by Townsends (used with permission)...or for camp followers, this 6 minute video, "[Women Of The Revolutionary War: Camp Followers](#)," by George Washington's Mount Vernon (used with permission).

Cheers!

Most units provide water for drinking, and generally, individuals bring any other drinks that they like in their own coolers (hidden in your tent). We recommend bringing a lot of ice to hot events. We also recommend discussing the types of drink welcome in your host unit's camp.



Food

Each unit handles the preparation and cost of meals, drinks, and snacks differently, so check with the unit you are guesting with to make sure you understand how they handle things ahead of time. This includes an understanding of how authentic they would like meals, drinks, and snacks to be.

Family-style pitch-in / bring-your-own food / a combination of both are all common in the various NWTA units. This means the way each unit has individuals pay for or contribute to food is something you need to know.

Typically, individuals bring their own snacks as well. And the meals themselves can vary greatly among units, so make sure to mention any allergies you might have.



18th Century clothing can be very foreign to guests, especially when they're handed a bag Saturday morning and told to put it all on. Before you guest with us, you may want to know how to dress yourself...

Clothing

For men and boys, please take the time to watch this 4 minute video, "[Dressing a Soldier at Colonial Michilimackinac](#)," by Mackinac State Historic Parks (used with permission).



Soldiers will be provided with either a regimental or a hunting shirt, while civilian men and boys will most likely be provided with a hunting shirt. Hunting shirts are worn as a coat and tied around the waist with the included tie or belt.

You might ask the unit you are guesting with what type of hat you will be borrowing from them, as these vary widely (and they are easy to forget).



Photo by Aaron Pea

BYO Shoes

Shoes are one of those things that are personal. Plus, there are modern shoes that are close enough for temporary use in the hobby when starting out. So it's recommended that guests bring their own shoes (when paired with the black stockings or the leggings we will lend you, they're not very noticeable). Shoes should be as follows:

- For men**, black dress shoes.
- For women**, plain black mules or flats.
- For boys**, black dress shoes (without ties if you have them).
- For girls**, boys black dress shoes (see above) are probably the best, but plain black mules/ flats will also work.

Soldiers will also be provided with some sort of shoe/stocking covering (such as spatterdashes shown in the video, or a taller version called gaiters, or wool leggings to be worn over the legs and fastened as in the video with the stockings—below the knee with the leather garters).



Photo by David Burns



Clothing Continued

For women and girls, please take the time to watch this 7 minute video, "[Getting Dressed in 18th Century Working Class Women's Clothing](#)," by Samantha Bullat of The Couture Courtesan (used with permission).

Neither women nor girls will be provided with stays, as these are only comfortable if they fit your body correctly. Without stays, women's gowns and fitted jackets don't fit correctly. Therefore, women will be provided with a bedgown and petticoat combination that will be closed by an apron and a pin. You may be provided with a large safety pin rather than 18th century pins, simply because of logistics, and we ask that you use the safety pin on the inside of the bedgown so that it can't be seen. We suggest wearing a sports bra underneath to give you something closer to an 18th century silhouette.

Girls will be provided with a back lacing gown that is all one piece and is simply worn over the shift and laced up the back.

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