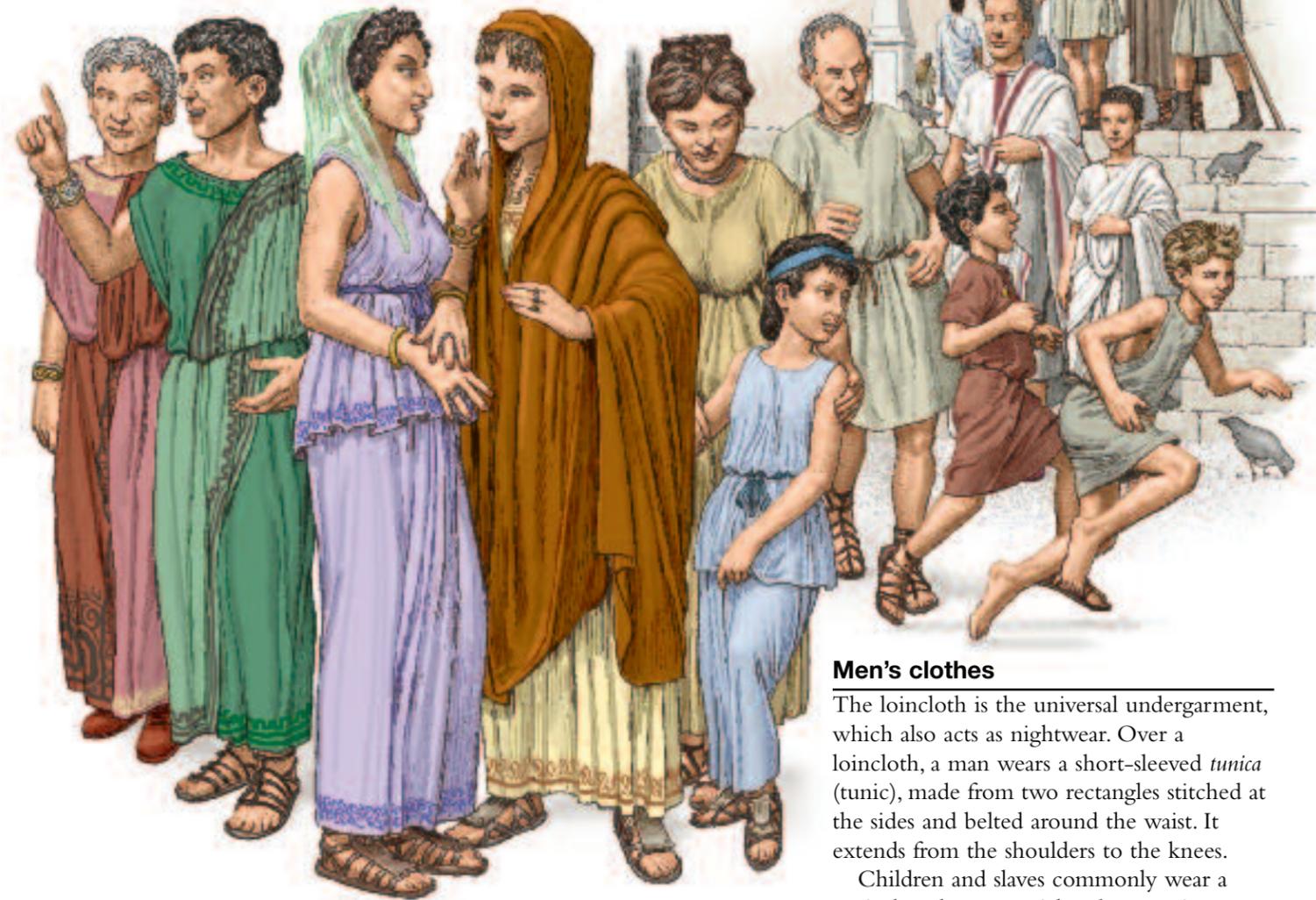


## Roman Clothes and Fashion

Men and women's clothing is very similar, and fashions have changed very little over the centuries. Children tend to wear smaller versions of adult clothing.



### Men's clothes

The loincloth is the universal undergarment, which also acts as nightwear. Over a loincloth, a man wears a short-sleeved *tunica* (tunic), made from two rectangles stitched at the sides and belted around the waist. It extends from the shoulders to the knees.

Children and slaves commonly wear a tunic, but the senatorial and equestrian classes generally wear a *toga* over the tunic when out of doors. A senator's tunic has a broad purple stripe, and a member of the equestrian class has a narrow purple stripe, running from the shoulder to the hem, front and back.

Charioteers wear tunics dyed the color of their team (see pages 84–85).

In rural areas and the northern provinces, people wear cloaks, especially in winter. But the Celtic-style trousers are considered to be barbarian attire. In Rome, if it gets cold, men simply wear two or more tunics—although they never have long sleeves, which is considered to be effeminate.

The basic Roman garment is the tunic, knee-length for men, longer for women. The popular *stola* worn by the matron (front left) can be complemented by a *palla* (front right). The two men heading for a party (left) sport a fashionable *synthesis*. The senator and his son in the background are dressed in formal *togas*.

Most people wear clothes made from wool or linen, and garments are made from large uncut pieces of cloth. These are folded and pinned with pins called *fibulae*, or tied around the waist with belts. Tailors and clothing stores that sell ready-made garments do a little needlework, but clothes that need a lot of sewing are rare because the needles are made of bone and therefore clumsy.

Fine cotton cloth is imported from India and silk comes from the Far East via the traders of the eastern Mediterranean coast. Both are expensive, with silk costing three to four times its weight in gold.

### The toga

The *toga* is a heavy, awkward item of men's clothing, but the *toga* distinguishes a Roman citizen and so emperors insist on their being worn. They are of fine white wool, and require frequent cleaning by a fuller.

The *toga virilis* is a plain white and worn by all ordinary men. The *toga praetexta* (bordered toga) has a purple stripe and is worn by magistrates. Until the age of about 15 or 16, boys also wear the *toga praetexta*. A senator's *toga* has a broad purple stripe (*latus clavus*), while an equestrian's has a narrow purple stripe (*clavus angustus*). An emperor's *toga* is entirely purple. A *toga* made of pure black wool, called a *toga pulla*, is worn at funerals and by those in mourning.

In the country, men usually wear a more practical cloak over a tunic, and for formal evening meals a smart, loose gown called a *synthesis* is popular.

### Women's clothes

Women also wear loincloths (and sometimes breast bands) and tunics. Two-piece garments resembling a bikini are popular when taking exercise at the baths. Married women (matrons) wear a *stola* over the tunic, a long, full dress gathered up by a girdle, usually with a colored border around the neck.

The *palla* is a large rectangle of cloth that can be draped around the *stola* in many ways. Out of doors, women also wear a cloak.

### Footwear

Romans wear a wide variety of shoes—hobnailed boots, slippers, and sandals made from leather. Cobblers make ready-to-wear and made-to-measure shoes ranging from the plain *calcei* (heavy boot) to elegantly designed, open-weave ladies' sandals.

### Makeup

Women use various perfumes and facial cosmetics. A pale skin is always fashionable, and the face is whitened with powdered chalk or white lead.

Eyelids are darkened with ash or antimony (a dark-colored metal). Cheeks and lips are blushed and painted red by using the sediment of red wine, or a plant dye called *fucus*.



A toga is roughly semicircular in shape, about 18 ft in length by 7 ft deep. Drape the left-hand end over the

left shoulder. Gather into a roll a large fold from the middle of the right-hand section and throw over the left

shoulder. Take the rest of the left-hand section and pull it up under the front of the right-hand section.

### Hairstyles

Men favor both the severity of the Republican no-nonsense short hair cut, with closely shaved face, and the slightly longer dressed locks and full beard of imperial times. In any case, most mornings start with a visit to the *tonsor* (barber) for a shave and trim, or a tidy-up.

Women have their hair done at home by slaves who style elaborate creations from their mistresses' hair, or by the addition of hairpieces and wigs. Wigs made from the blond hair of Germans captured in battle are very popular. The whole edifice is held in place by a veritable scaffold of pins, combs, and braided hairnets.

