

Hunting Attire

By Felicity Fieldmember

As a one of the most traditional of all sports, correct turnout is a part of Fox Hunting. While the attire may be seen by some as overly strict, if one views the “old school” form of attire one can see that modern attire has been modified to be considerably LESS strict—while still maintaining the basic goals of honoring the traditions of the sport, and the landowners whose land the Hunt rides across, while also adapting to current safety standards.. (Lovers of arcane trivia may also enjoy reading the “old school insufferably correct” attire column!)

It is certainly not anticipated that all members of the field can immediately outfit themselves as appropriate to win an appointments class. However, an acknowledgement that certain items are more correct than others may allow people to plan future purchases accordingly. If in any doubt, do not hesitate to ask the Masters (John and Barb Anderson, Nelson and Renee Eddy, Barb Lindberg) or other long time members of the hunt for advice. The LCH website (limestonecreekhunt.org) lists a condensed version of correct hunting attire for easy reference and invites you to confer with former honorable Hunt Secretary/ex MFH Toloa Perry or Ex-MFH Barbara Wolff as well.

<u>Item</u>	<i>Old School Insufferably Correct</i>	Modern Correct/LCH	<u>Not Correct</u>
<u>Tack</u> Bridle	Snaffle or Double bridle, all leather flat and brown, Heavy hunting weight, bits and reins sewn in. Caveson required. No rubber reins. <i>(sewn in for safety, flat leather is the most traditional)</i>	Appropriate bit for horse and rider, conservative leather bridle (brown preferred), hook studs preferable to buckles on bit and reins <i>(less likely to catch on brush)</i> . Caveson required.	-Colored browbands -Bedazzled browbands
Saddle & Fittings	Hunting saddle, no pad <i>(your saddle was custom stuffed to your horse)</i> , polished stirrups w/o stirrup pads <i>(thought to trap your foot in stirrup if you fell)</i> , cord girth (anti-slip), Fitzwilliam or 3 fold leather girth (no elastic permitted on girth). Billet guards required.	Modern jumping/AP saddle, white shaped fleece pad (real or synthetic), large polished stirrups (pads allowed), cord, leather or fleece girth (which must be clean!)	-Colored or square saddle pads -Seat covers -Monogrammed saddle pads
Martingale	Irish <i>(Running martingale was considered dangerous, the standing slightly less so, as each could get caught on a branch or possible tangled in a leg if a horse went down. Attaching martingale to the breastplate was considered safer.)</i>	Standing or running (running to have rein stoppers), as needed by the horse.	
Breastplate	Hunting breastplate if needed	Hunting breastplate if needed	-Nylon -Fleece covers
Sandwich case, etc.	Sandwich case and separate saddle flask for a gentleman. Ladies would carry either a combination case or simply the sandwich case. Sandwich case to contain a white meat of turkey sandwich (butter and watercress allowed, no mayo) on white bread, crusts cut off, cut into quarters and wrapped in a white linen napkin. Ladies may carry tea or sherry in their flask, gentlemen may carry brandy in their separate saddle flask. Hunt staff may not carry them. Wire cutters sometimes attached to saddle as well	Same, but all optional. Peanut butter sandwiches in pockets not uncommon	-Leaving wrappers behind -Saddle bags

Item	<i>Old School Insufferably Correct</i>	Modern Correct/LCH	<u>Not Correct</u>
<u>Attire-Formal Season</u>			
Coat			
Gentlemen w/colors	Scarlet frock coat w/hunt colors on collar, brass hunt buttons or plain black melton, or swallowtail coat (black coats will not have colors on collars)	Scarlet w/LCH colors on collar, brass LCH buttons	-Non-conservative color or tweed coats.
Gentlemen w/o colors	Black wool melton, single vent	Black wool melton, single vent most correct	
Ladies w/colors	Black wool melton, frock or shadbelly w/hunt color on collars. Black bone buttons w/hunt emblem The only ladies to wear scarlet are MFHs	Black wool melton w/LCH color on collars, frock or shadbelly. Black bone buttons w/hunt emblem Female MFHs and Huntsmen may wear scarlet	-Wearing of hunt colors/buttons before being awarded.
Ladies w/o colors	Black wool melton, single vent w/plain collars and buttons	Black wool melton, single vent w/plain collars and buttons	
Juniors	Conservative color coats, ratcatcher permissible-shadbelly coats not allowed on juniors <i>(A few hunts had different color coats-confederate gray, navy, etc.)</i> (Note that "colors" should not be worn to an away meet or when visiting unless invited to do so by that hunt's Master)	Conservative color coats, ratcatcher permissible	
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Vest	Canary, occasionally white or various tattersalls (varies by hunt)	Canary	-not canary or tattersall
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Breeches			
Gentlemen w/colors	White if wearing scarlet	White if wearing scarlet	-Dark colors, grey
All others	Tan, buff, canary, rust (varies by hunt) Loose fitting w/3-4 buttons at the knee	Tan, buff, canary Loose fitting	-Riding tights/pull on breeches
Juniors	Tan, buff, canary or rust jodphurs w/jodhpur straps	Tan, buff, canary jodphurs w/jodhpur straps	-Extreme lycra -White w/o scarlet
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Boots			
Gentlemen w/colors	All boots cleaned and WELL POLISHED Black dress boots w/brown tops (sewn on)	All boots cleaned and WELL POLISHED Black dress boots w/brown tops	-Field boots
Gentlemen w/o	Black dress boots (known as "butcher boots")	Black dress boots	-Half chaps/chaps
Ladies w/colors	Black dress boots w/ patent leather tops (sewn on)	Black dress boots w/or w/o patent leather tops	-Brown boots
Ladies w/o	Black dress boots ("butcher boots") Tabs on boots sewn on, but not sewn down All wore boot garters in black, patent (w/patent top boots for ladies) or white (with gentlemen's white breeches) Shined rubber riding boots sometimes allowed in bad weather <i>(Field boot were considered very informal, and weren't often seen in anything but brown until the late 1970's and thus weren't ever considered an option for formal.)</i> <i>No zippers!</i>	Black dress boots <i>(Boot garters now seldom seen)</i> <i>(Zippers OK)</i> <i>(Field boots are considered more of a safety issue during formal season than cubbing as during formal the hunt is often faster and harder. The issue at hand is the possibility of sticks or limbs becoming entangled in the laces.)</i>	-Not clean or polished
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Shirts	White long sleeved ratcatcher shirt, white stocktie (NOT pre-tied) w/plain gold pin worn horizontally, plus small safety pins holding ends of stock tie down under vest. <i>(Men's stock pin 3", ladies 2 1/2". Staff in some Hunts wear their stock pin vertically)</i>	Same as Old School	- Colored shirts or stock ties. -Frilly stockties -Fancy stockpins

Item	<i>Old School Insufferably Correct</i>	Modern Correct/LCH	<u>Not Correct</u>
<u>Attire-Formal Season (con't)</u>			
Gloves	Brown leather, yellow chamois White string rain gloves carried under girth, each on the correct side, thumbs turned against palm of glove, fingers facing forward to peek out from under saddle flap <i>(black gloves were not used as when they got sweaty or wet they would stain your hands)</i>	Optional or brown leather, yellow chamois or white string rain gloves. <i>(Optional-- but recommended to combat blisters!)</i>	Colored, black
Headgear	Note: NONE of this is considered protective headgear! Gentlemen w/colors Top hat (brim over 6") w/scarlet (w/scarlet hat cord), black hunt derby w/hat cord w/black melton coat Gentlemen w/o Black hunt derby w/hat cord Ladies w/colors Top hat (brim over 5") w/shadbelly Black hunt derby w/ hat cord w/black melton Hairnets mandatory, hair up under helmet Ladies w/o Black hunt derby w/hat cord Hairnets mandatory, hair up under helmet <i>(Note that some old school Masters during the 70's required men with long hair to use hairnets as well)</i> Juniors Black Hunt cap, girls allowed pigtails down back <i>(Notice that the only adults allowed to wear hunt caps were hunt staff, ex-masters, farmers and their wives. Professional hunt staff wore the ribbons on the back of the cap down, honorary staff wore the ribbons up.)</i>	Conservative color approved helmet w/harness Conservative color approved helmet w/ harness Conservative color approved helmet w/ harness Hair in hairnets Conservative color approved helmet w/ harness Hair in hairnets Conservative color approved helmet w/ harness	-Non-approved helmet -Garish colored helmets -Hair not constrained in hairnet
Jewelry	Women allowed wedding rings & small studs in ears (pearl). All allowed St. Hubert's medal in pocket No perfume/scent worn <i>(as this might interfere with the hounds and scent conditions. Some Masters also forbade flyspray on horses for the same reason.)</i>	Discrete jewelry St. Hubert's medal	-Hoop or large earrings -Fancy stock pins
Spurs	Plain blunt spurs w/ black straps <i>(These were considered mandatory as you did not want to have to hit your horse with your hunt whip if you needed to get his attention)</i>	Plain blunt spurs w/straps if needed	-Western spurs -Cavalry spurs/straps
Whip	Hunt whip w/thong and popper, held 2/3 of the way up (not at top), thong may be looped but never wrapped around whip. A whip should not be cracked or used towards a hound unless you have been specifically asked by hunt staff.	Hunt whip w/thong and popper	-Dressage whips

Item	<i>Old School Insufferably Correct</i>	Modern Correct/LCH	<u>Not Correct</u>
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Attire-Informal (Ratcatcher)

Coat	Tweed, checked, wool, saltsack in muted colors or earth tone hacking jacket (single vent)	Same, although formal black coats may also be worn	
Vest	Waistcoat-canary, tattersall, or checked	None required	
Breeches	Tan, buff or rust	Same as Old School	-Dark breeches
Boots	Black or brown dress or field boots Newmarket boots	Same as Old School	-Half chaps -Chaps
Shirt	Ratcatcher or light colored shirt Men may wear ties Women may wear ratcatcher collars or ties Silk polka dot stockties traditional for both	Same as Old School	
Gloves	Same as formal	Same as formal	
Headgear	Brown or black hunt derby Brown, blue or black huntcap for staff	Same as formal	

Other Items (Formal or Ratcatcher)

To be carried in pockets	Folding hoofpick (a non-folded one could impale you if you fell on it) Folding knife (ditto) A length of twine.	Designated people with cell phones (for emergencies only) Your own emergency contacts, etc. carried in your pocket or other easily accessible place	-Answering a cell phone -talking on cell phone if not an emergency as requested by staff.
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NOTE: When the fixture designated that the hunt will be hunting over a particular landowner's land, consideration was given to the landowner to allow them more "latitude" in their attire.

Formal Evening Attire

Gentlemen	White Tie	Black tie, White tie
Gentlemen w/colors	Same or Scarlet evening tails (hunt colors on collars, often specific facing colors as well) (noted by the phrase "Scarlet if convenient") White pique vest with Scarlet	Black tie, White tie or Scarlet if convenient (maroon collar and white facings) White pique vest with Scarlet
Ladies	Formal evening attire-colors often determined by hunt	Black or white formal evening attire