

Dress like a Roman

Make your own Romano-British costume



Brighton Museum & Art Gallery's Elaine Evans Archaeology Gallery displays some wonderful treasures excavated during the late 19th and 20th centuries from the remains of a Roman villa found at Springfield Road, Brighton. Other evidence of Roman life has been discovered in West Blatchington, Hove and Wild Park, Brighton.

In 43CE, the Emperor Claudius of Rome sent an army to invade Britain, and it became part of the Roman Empire for over three and half centuries. There was a mixing of Roman and Briton cultures – people here were known as Romano-British.

In this activity worksheet, you can make Roman sandals, a laurel leaf headdress and a tunic to dress like a Roman.

How does it feel to move around as a Romano-British person?

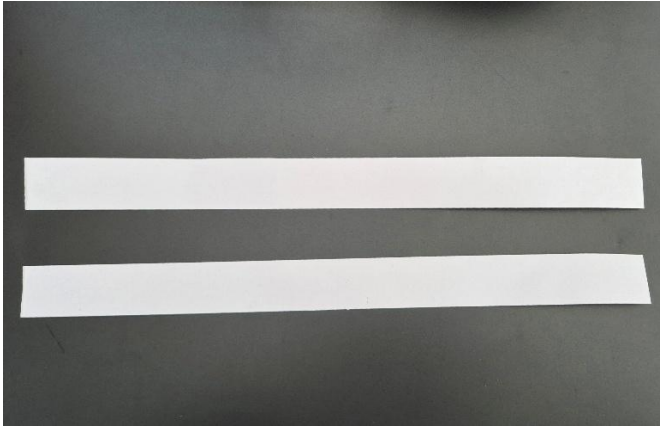
Make your own laurel leaf headdress



For the Romans the laurel leaf symbolised victory, high status, and achievement.

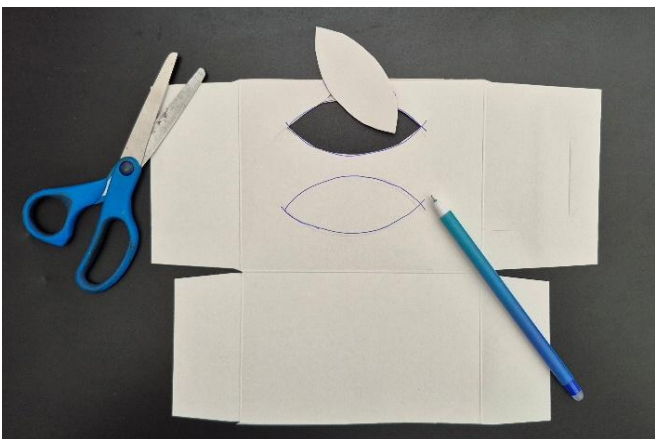
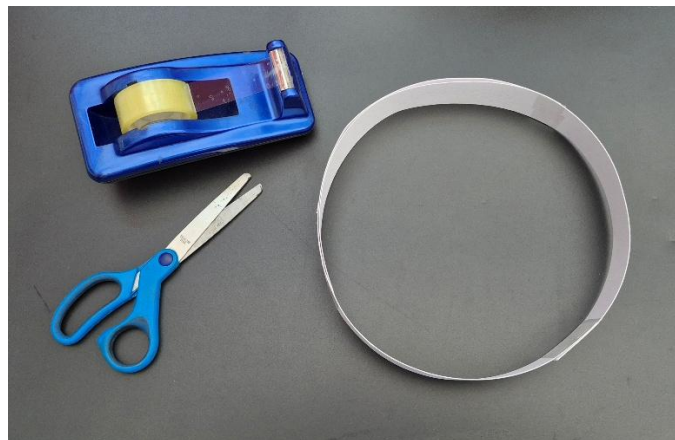
You will need

- A pair of scissors
- A large sheet of white thin card or thick paper
- 3 sheets of yellow, light green and dark green paper. Choose other colours if you prefer
- A long piece of ribbon
- Sticky tape
- A glue stick
- A stapler



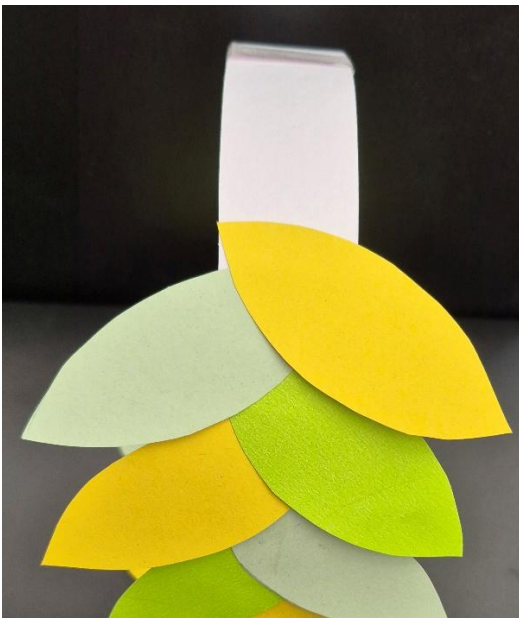
1. Measure two long strips out of the white card, 2.5cm wide. Cut out with scissors. Stick one end of each strip together.

2. Ask someone to help hold the strip around your head so that it fits nicely. Hold the ends together and stick with tape to form the circle for the headdress.



3. Draw out a laurel leaf shape on the white card.
TIP: the leaf looks a bit like an eye. Cut the shape out. This will be your template.

4. Take the laurel leaf template and trace around it on your coloured paper. You will need between 30-40 leaves, depending on how big your head is. **TIP:** make sure you don't leave big spaces between tracing each leaf, otherwise you'll quickly run out. Carefully cut out each leaf.



5. Use the glue stick to attach your leaves to the headband, overlapping each leaf as shown in the picture. Go only halfway.

6. When you get halfway, start gluing the leaves in the opposite direction. Cover the remaining headdress.



7. Take your piece of ribbon and make a bow. Ask a friend or adult to help you staple the bow to the back of the headdress.

Your headdress is now ready to wear. How does it feel?

Roman Sandals

Romans wore sandals made from leather and wool. The soles had hobnails. These were short nails with thick heads, which helped make the sandals last longer.

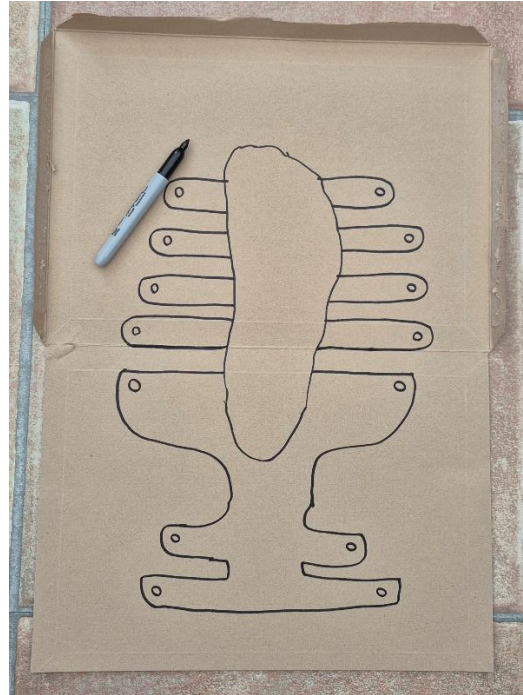
You will need

- A pair of scissors
- A black felt-tip pen
- A red felt-tip pen
- 2 pieces of cardboard, such as an old box
- 2 shoelaces or strong string
- A small ball of plasticine or Blu-Tack
- A knitting needle, bradawl, or hole punch.



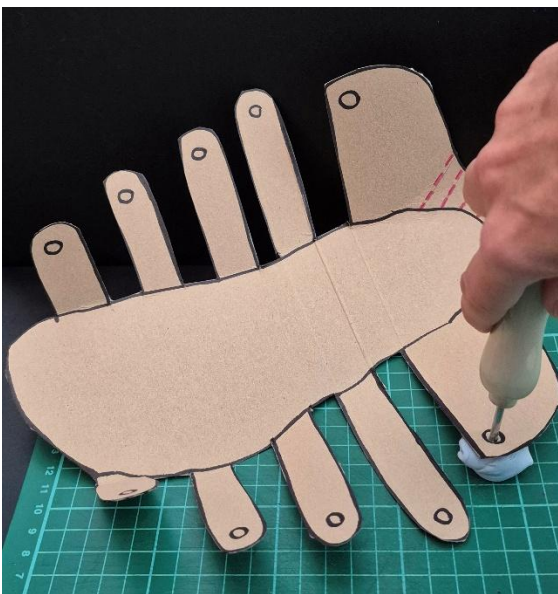
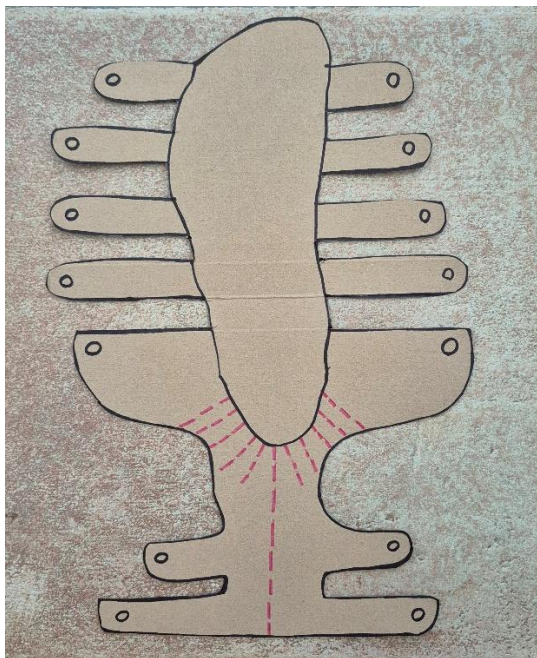
1. Take your black felt-tip pen, and in turn place each of your feet on the centre of the cardboard, so there is enough space for the rest of the design. Trace around each foot.

2. Complete the sandal design around each of your traced feet. You can copy the design from this photograph.



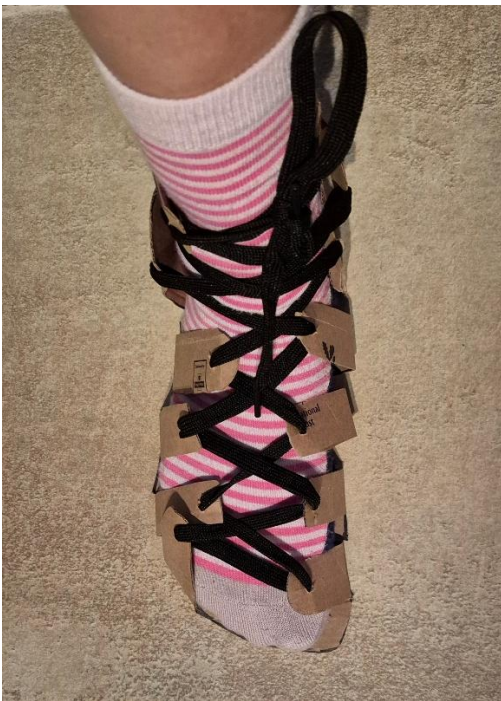
3. With your scissors, carefully cut around the design, or ask an adult to help you.

4. With the red felt-tip pen draw dotted lines, where the sandal will need to be scored along. Ask an adult to help with using the blade of the scissors to make the scores along the red dotted lines. These will help make the sandal form its shape for your foot.



5. Take the knitting needle, bradawl, or hole punch to make holes for the shoe lacing holes. You may need an adult to help you with this. If using a knitting needle or bradawl, make sure to place a small ball of plasticine or Blu-Tack under the cardboard where you are going to make the hole, so you don't damage your worktop.

6. Turn over each sandal and add dots with the black felt-tip pen to look like hobnails. They gave extra grip when walking and, if you were a soldier, could make a menacing sound when you marched.



7. Carefully lace each sandal. They are now ready to wear.

Tunic

Roman tunics were made of wool or linen. They were basic garments for both men and women.

You will need

- A pair of fabric cutting scissors
- A white single bedsheet
- A black felt-tip pen
- Coloured cord for a belt



1. Fold the bed sheet in half and lay onto a flat surface.

2. Fold the bed sheet in half again, longways. With your black felt-tip pen, draw a semi-circle at the point where all the folds meet



3. With the scissors cut out the semi-circle. This will form the hole for putting your head through for the tunic.

4. Unfold the bedsheet to reveal the hole for your head. Pick up your coloured cord. You are now ready to try on your tunic.





5. Ask a friend to help you put the bedsheet over you. Place your head through the cut out hole. Tie the coloured cord around your waist.

Finally...

Put on your sandals, headdress and tunic.

You are dressed like a Roman.

Congratulations!

