

Of the Uniform

The Grand Commandery each jurisdiction likely has a "Uniform Regulations" section in its constitution that describes the various uniforms in use in that jurisdiction. These regulations can be at bit hard to decipher, so the intent of this section is to help clear up the basics that you need to equip yourself properly. Note that if you choose to move up in the ranks, some of the insignia and accessories may need to be updated but the basic uniform will remain largely unchanged.

Each Sir Knight should review the **Uniform Regulations** and seek guidance from his Commander or Recorder if questions arise. Remember that this is a UNIFORM, akin to a Military Uniform, and should be treated as such. The regulations exist to assist Sir Knights in maintaining their correct appearance. A neat and well-groomed appearance by a uniformed Knight Templar is of fundamental importance to the Order and contributes to building the pride and esprit de corps to furthering the objectives of the Order. It is the duty of all Knights Templar to take pride in their appearance at all times.

Note: When wearing the uniform, some insignia may be optional but the uniform is NOT open to interpretation or modifications with bolo-ties, tennis shoes, black shirts, extra awards and other items, perhaps from other jurisdictions but not specified or authorized in the Arizona regulations.

When do I need a Uniform?

Basically, Knights Templar are in uniform for every function that they participate in, from Stated Conclaves to Observances to Official Visits.

Two Basic Uniforms

Depending on the Commandery that you join, your basic uniform will be either a Dress Uniform (commonly called a "Class A") or a "Cap and Mantle". Either is the acceptable uniform for Convocations, Conferrals, Public Events and Official Visits by Sir Knights to or from a Constituent Commandery. There are Winter and Summer variations of these two uniforms as well as other uniform combinations in the "Uniform Regulations" but if a Sir Knight has the basic Winter version of his uniform and wears it properly, he's covered for the majority of situations where his uniform will be needed.

The Uniform Regulations generally state:

"The DRESS UNIFORM shall consist of: Chapeau, Coat, Shirt, Necktie, Gloves, Trousers, Shoes, Hose, Sword, and Sling. Jewels, and shoulder straps, appropriate to the wearer's rank shall be worn. There are Winter and Summer Dress Uniforms, specified in the regulations. The major difference is in the wearing of the Coat with the Winter Dress Uniform.. The Dress Uniform is required for all Grand Commandery Officers.



Fig. 1 - Example of Dress (L) and Cap and Mantle (R) Uniforms

"The CAP and MANTLE UNIFORM shall consist of: Cap, Mantle, Suit, Shirt, Necktie, Gloves, Belt, Trousers, Shoes, Hose, Sword and Baldric. A maximum of three Knight Templar jewels, one of which must be the Malta Jewel or Malta Lapel pin, may be worn centered on the left breast welt. As with the Dress Uniform, there are Winter and Summer versions of the Cap and Mantle Uniform, also. Similarly, the major difference is in the wearing of the Coat with the Winter version. The Cap and Mantle Uniform is required for all Constituent Commandery Elected Officers if that Commandery has voted to use it in lieu of the Dress Uniform.

Generally, all items of a Dress Uniform are supplied by the individual Sir Knight. In the case of a Cap and Mantle Commandery, the Cap and Mantle may be supplied to the individual Sir Knight.

Silver and Gold

When speaking about Knights Templar uniforms, a common phrase is "color appropriate to rank." For metal and embroidery, Silver is used in insignia for all officer ranks in a constituent Commandery. Gold is used for Past Commanders, Grand Officers, Grand Commanders and Past Grand Commanders.

Green, Red and Purple

Similarly, these three colors are used to identify rank, principally on Shoulder Straps. Green is used for all current officers of a constituent Commandery, Red is used for Past Commanders and Current Grand Officers and Purple is used ONLY for Past Grand Commanders.

Individual Articles of a Dress Uniform

Chapeau -

Along with the basic uniform and sword, the Chapeau is one of the most expensive items to purchase. New ones start are available from various Masonic vendors. Used ones may be found online or by asking at your local Commandery.



Fig. 2 - Sir Knight and Commander Chapeaux

Whether you buy new or used ... or are given one ... Be aware that there are regulations for each stat the detail the proper Chapeau to be worn. It's always a good idea to check on these before you start investing in your uniform.

- Plume - can be white or black underneath and white on top
- Sides - can be flat or rounded.t
- Slashings, lace and rosette - appropriate to rank: Silver - up to Commander, Gold - Commander, Past Commander, Grand Officers, Grand Commander, Past Grand Commander
- Rosettes - appropriate to rank, only on the left side. Some states have Commandery numbers on the opposite side. Again, check your regulations!



Fig. 3 - Chapeau Rosettes

(L-R) Sir Knight; Commander / Past Commander; Grand Commander / Officer; Past Grand Commander



Uniform Coat and Trousers –

Black double-breasted suit with two columns of front buttons. May be purchased new. Some vendors have reconditioned Coats and Trousers as well.

A Chief Petty Officer's service dress jacket with a slit for the Sword Sling and Templar Buttons may be substituted.

Note: order this without sleeve crosses. Order WITH shoulder Velcro if you plan on being a dais officer. Of course, that can always be added later.

Trousers are of the same material as the Coat. They are plain-front and have no cuffs. There is no break

Fig. 4 - Dress Uniform

Shirt, Tie, Belt, Hose, Shoes, Gloves -

Some of these items you may already have in your closet.

- Shirt - white broadcloth with attached collar and patch pockets. If you plan to wear it without the coat (Summer Uniform), you'll need one with epaulets. Also, try to find one with removable collar stiffeners, since they make Collar Crosses difficult to pin on.
- Tie - plain black, four-in-hand
- Belt - black leather. Plain or Knights Templar Buckle in Silver or Gold, dependent on rank. Worn under coat. Gold or Silver belts with integrated sword hooks are not authorized ... don't be tempted!
- Hose - black
- Shoes - black, leather
- Gloves - buff (not white) and of fabric or unadorned leather. Only Past Grand Commanders may wear Leather Gauntlets with Templar Cross. Note: some fabric gloves have rubber nubs on the palm so you do not accidentally lose control of the sword.

Shoulder Straps -

Shoulder Straps are worn on the Dress Uniform Coat to designate rank. They are positioned lengthwise OVER each shoulder - perpendicular to the outstretched arm. Don't confuse them with Shoulder Boards, which are worn in line with the outstretched arm. See the Dress Uniform in Fig. 1.

Here is where all of the colors that we've been discussing come into play:

- Gold Border / Silver Embroidery / Green Background - Constituent Elected Officers
- Gold Border / Silver Embroidery / Red Background - Constituent Past Commanders
- Gold Border and Embroidery / Red Background - Grand Officers and Grand Commander
- Gold Border and Embroidery / Purple Background - Past Grand Commanders



Fig. 5 - Shoulder Straps

(L - R) Captain General; Generalissimo; Commander; Past Commander; Grand Officer or Commander, Past Grand Commander

Note: Having Velcro on your shoulder makes removing the straps easier for cleaning the coat.

Note: The outer edge of the shoulder strap should be at the shoulder seam of the coat and curved to fit the shoulder.

Sword –

The sword is one of the most distinctive (and possibly expensive) items that a Sir Knight can possess. Though no longer used in battle, it is required for conferrals and ceremonies. Many swords are passed down through family channels or between Sir Knights and it is a rare privilege to have a family or dear friend's sword in your possession.

Many swords are donated to local Commanderies by Sir Knights or their families after the Sir Knight has passed. These may be available on loan or for purchase by newer members. Check with your Eminent Commander or Recorder for details on this avenue.

If you inherit or are given a sword, the Regulation as to its specifications may be modified. Talk to your Commander about this. Should you choose to buy a sword - new or used - make sure to review the Regulation so that it meets your State's requirements:



- thirty-four to forty inches in length, inclusive of scabbard
- helmet head at pommel
- Check your regs on the cross-guard and chain
- metal scabbard with three hard metal mountings, two metal rings at upper and one at lower mount
- Check your regs on the grip
- color appropriate to rank: Silver - up to Commander, Gold - Commander, Grand Officers, Grand Commander

Depending on the Vendor and the price of the sword, you may have to do some searching to find a sword that will fit you. Many older swords are too short and will be hard to use for taller people. Whether you purchase or borrow, take time to work with

your Commander to find a sword that fits you.

Note: When you hold your sword at the "Carry" position, the tip of the blade should come to just below the lower tip of your earlobe.

Buying a new sword is like any major investment ... it is recommended that you wait until the appropriate time in your Masonic career - usually if you are in the elected Grand Commandery line, or at least when you are elected Commander of your Local Commandery. Vendors also offer less-expensive or practice swords that meet Arizona regulations and are a good starting sword and will serve well for drills and meetings.



There are two ways to wear the sword, depending on your Uniform. The **Sword Sling** – uses the belt as a mounting point. It is used with the Dress Uniform. The attachment hooks are fed through and poke out of the sword slit in your Uniform Coat. The **Sword Baldric** - goes over your right shoulder and across your body. Baldrics may used with the either the Dress or the Cap and Mantle Uniform. Either the Sling or Baldric should have attachment hooks with color appropriate to your rank - silver up to Commander, otherwise Gold.

Notes: Some states use a sword belt in lieu of the Sling or Baldric. Again, check your local regulations before purchasing.

Individual Articles of a Cap and Mantle Uniform

If your Commandery has chosen this uniform, it may have a Cap and Mantle available for your use. You will still need to provide the basics listed in the regulation above: Black or Navy Suit, Shirt, Tie, Belt, Hose, Shoes, Gloves. The Suit replaces the Dress Uniform Coat and Trousers.

The Sword and Scabbard entries under Dress Uniform apply to this uniform also.

Cap -

The Cap is a prayer-cap shape, red in color and of either silk or velvet. The insignia on the front is appropriate to the rank of the wearer. Past Grand Commanders Caps are purple in color

Mantle -

The Mantle is of the style worn by medieval Templars and by members of the Sovereign Great Priors. It is of white material, with hood, reaching to approximately twelve inches from the floor and is tied closely around the neck with cords with tassels. No ornamentation, Templar jewels, or insignia of recognition are worn on the Mantle, unless the Commandery has a unique Commandery Badge, which is permitted.

On the Mantle, the cross, hood color borders and tassels are appropriate to the rank of the wearer and are carried through from the Cap.



• Fig.7 - Caps and Mantles

- (L-R) Sir Knight, Commander / Past Commander, Grand Commander, Past Grand Commander

Note: Grand Officer Mantles have two stripes on their border,