



Unleash your creativity to create costumes for yourself or others. Whether you're interested in creating costumes to proclaim your fandom for something, wow your friends at Halloween, help people on stage look the part, honor your heritage, or travel back in time, this project will help you make your dreams a reality.



## Exploring Costume Design

### Spark Activity: Design a Character Costume

#### SUPPLIES:

- Paper
- Crayons, markers or colored pencils

#### DIRECTIONS:

Design a costume for a character from your favorite book, show, or film.

- Choose a character you like from a book, tv show or film.
- On a piece of paper, brainstorm what you know about the character. Where do they live? What do they do? What is their personality like?
- Choose a setting to place your character in (like a forest, a city, or a school).
- Brainstorm what that setting is like. Is it warm or cold? Is it dull or colorful?
- With your character and setting in mind, choose the colors you will use for your character's costume.
- With your setting in mind, sketch a rendering of a costume for your character using colored pencils, markers, or crayons.
- Share your sketch with friends and family!



## 4-H Project Levels and Goals

### Beginner

- Learn the process of costume design
- Work on sketching and planning costumes
- Explore basic construction techniques like modifying existing clothes to create costumes

### Intermediate

- Explore color theory
- Do background research to help maximize authenticity
- Explore intermediate techniques sewing, working with EVA foam, and more

### Advanced

- Learn about historical costuming
- Create your own patterns
- Explore advanced sewing and construction techniques
- Learn about careers in costume design

## Put Your Project Into Action

### Show Your Skills

- Exhibit at your local 4-H Show or county fair with costume you created
- Wear your creations to local events, like fan conventions, and enter their event costume contests
- Demonstrate a costume-making technique
- Teach others about the history of cosplay
- Present on costume history

### Service and Leadership

- Organize a costume donation drive around Halloween
- Organize a community craft supply or fabric exchange
- Organize a costume fashion show for a local senior center
- Help with activities at a local library comic convention
- Assist in organizing a 4-H Costume Design SPIN Club

### Entrepreneurship

- Produce custom costumes or costume accessories
- Teach others costume creation techniques in classes

### Technology Connection

- National Institute of Fashion Technology
- LEDs or microcontrollers in clothing
- 4-H WearTec project

### Connecting with a Mentor

- 4-H club leader or U of I Extension volunteers
- Local cosplay groups
- Local sewing group or costume design guild
- Local theatre costume departments or clubs
- Local fabric store
- High school Family & Consumer Science teachers

### Events

- Exhibit at your local 4-H Show or county fair
- Technique classes at your local fabric or craft stores



### Careers for People Interested in Costume Design

Costume Designer      Fashion Historian  
Historical Interpreter      Seamstress or Tailor  
Fashion Illustrator

## Start a Conversation

What are different ways people use costumes in society? What can you tell about a person or character from their costume?

Does your culture have any traditional costumes, and if yes, what are they used for?

What movie or show do you think has neat costumes, and why?

## Want to learn more?

[go.illinois.edu/4Hcostumedesign](https://go.illinois.edu/4Hcostumedesign)

## Explore more at Illinois 4-H!

[4-H.extension.illinois.edu](https://4-H.extension.illinois.edu)



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**Credits:** Pitts, N., & Sweet, J. (1995). Creative costumes. The Ohio State University : The Ohio State University Extension. | Arden Theatre <https://ardentheatre.org/programs/arden-online/education/education-kids/let-s-create/theatrical-design/> | Authored by Amy Henschen, 4-H Senior Program Lead | 4-H Spark Sheets are a collaborative effort of 4-H staff, volunteers, alumni, and teens from across Illinois. A big thanks to the many contributors and reviewers!