

Make a ruff

These portraits show Mary, Queen of Scots and Lord Darnley. Paintings like these can tell us much more than just what somebody looked like.

Look at their clothes: even if we didn't know who these people were we could tell they were wealthy and important! You can see that they both wore ruffs around their necks made from expensive, pure white linen. Ruffs were very fashionable at the time and they were a status symbol: the bigger the ruff, the more important you seemed!



Fun fact

Clothing and ruffs were often dyed different colours. Some colours (like purple) could only be worn by royalty.

What you need

- 6 pieces of white A4 paper
- 50cm of ribbon, string or wool
- a pair of scissors
- a hole punch

Instructions

- 1) Fold your pieces of paper in half lengthways and cut along the creases to make strips of paper.
- 2) Pleat your strips of paper. For each strip make a fold so you have a pleat 1cm wide then turn the paper over and make another fold to create another pleat the same size. Repeat until the end of the strip.
- 3) Using a hole punch, make holes in the middle of each pleat along one side of each strip.
- 4) Using a piece of ribbon, string or wool, thread together all your pleated strips.
- 5) Put your ruff around your neck and ask someone to fasten it for you by tying a bow.

