

A group of people in traditional German folk costumes (Lederhosen and Dirndl) are dancing in a large, decorated tent. The tent is adorned with green garlands, blue and white checkered banners, and circular emblems. The dancers are wearing white shirts, dark suspenders, and dark shorts or skirts. The scene is festive and captures a traditional cultural event.

An Introduction  
to Germany's  
Traditional  
Dress



**Lederhosen**



# 1

## Lederhose

which means “leather trousers” in German, are the short leather pants worn by men. These are usually knee-length and are the historically worn by working-class German men with rustic shoes and wool socks. Lederhosen worn in the Bavarian region had features such as suspenders and front flaps, and these were quickly adopted by other countries. These pants were worn with shirts and sweaters made of coarse linen or wool. Other clothes teamed with the pants were wool stockings and country shoes. Jackets and hats vary according to region and occasion.

# Tips for Buying Lederhosen

Splurge for traditional accessories.



Authentic lederhosen is made of deer or goat leather.

Underwear is optional beneath your lederhosen.

Suspenders come in a V or H.

Traditionally buttons are made out of antlers.

Never wash your lederhosen.

Lederhosen come in long and short options.

## Facts about Lederhosen

### **LEDERHOSEN GAINED POPULARITY IN THE ROCOCO PERIOD**

Although almost everyone knows that Lederhosen were first worn in Europe and particularly Bavaria, very few people know exactly when they gained popularity. Historically, Lederhosen were worn by the peasant class of Bavaria but during the Rococo period, the affluent decided to emulate the lifestyle of the peasants and started wearing the German Lederhosen as well.

### **EMBROIDERY ON LEDERHOSEN SIGNIFIES REGION**

There are plenty of aspects that set Lederhosen apart, yet the embroidery may be the most notable. Although it wasn't always fashionable, but embroidered Lederhosen soon caught on and became a prevailing trend. But there's more to the embroidery than meets the eye because each pattern and design of embroidery on the men's Lederhosen signifies a particular region or a location from where the person wearing it belongs

## **QUALITY OF LEDERHOSEN REFLECTS RESPECT**

Whenever you wear Lederhosen to Oktoberfest (or to any Bavarian event for that matter) never think the quality of the Lederhosen does not matter. The locals of Munich actually put a lot of importance in the quality of the Lederhosen. Many people do not know that the quality of leather used in the Lederhosen reflects your understanding and appreciation of the Bavarian culture.

That's why it's important to wear the best quality Lederhosen to Oktoberfest.

## **THE OLDER THE LEDERHOSEN, THE BETTER**

Lederhosen are made of leather and the really good Lederhosen are made from cowhide or deerskin. Such fine quality of leather makes Lederhosen more of an investment than a purchase. In fact, the true testament to the quality and authenticity of Lederhosen lies in how old they are. The older the Lederhosen, the more authentic they are considered. So you might want to wear your grandfather or father's Lederhosen to Oktoberfest if you want it to be regarded as authentic Lederhosen.



# DIRNDL

## 2

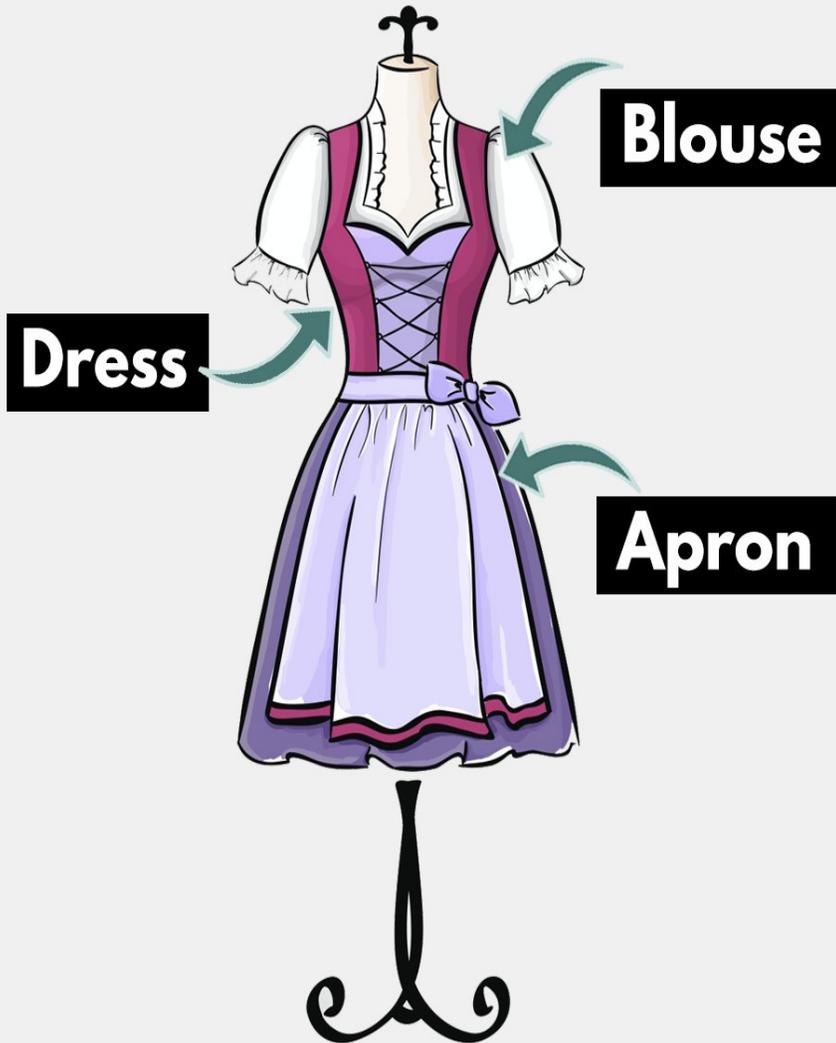
The dirndl is a ruffled apron dress worn by German women that consists of a bodice, or blouse, and a skirt. In the 19th century, the dirndl was the standard uniform of servant girls, but today it is mostly worn in Bavaria and Austria, and like lederhosen, usually for celebration. Each of these garments is a type of tracht, which historically was used to help identify people as members of a certain status (social, political or otherwise). Wealthy women in Bavaria and throughout the Alps had dirndls made of silk and other fine materials and wore them to church, weddings, funerals and other community events to show how in touch with the common people they were. Unwittingly, these appropriating ladies saved one of the most flattering garments ever constructed.

As for comfort, the dirndl is basically the yoga pants of years gone by. Intended to be worn for difficult labor, the outfit was often made from easily washable and breathable material like cotton, and without a corset or hoops.

In the last 10 years, the dirndl has undergone a sort of renaissance. It is not uncommon in Bavaria to see young women wearing one on the weekend, to a wedding or to family birthday party. Modern material and patterns and a whole slew of new, young dirndl designers are breathing new life into the garment yet again.

# Meet the Dirndl

a traditional dirndl is usually sold in three parts:



Tie it on the left side if you're single and ready to mingle!



The right side if you're taken

# Facts about Dirndl

- The term 'Dirndl' means in the German language 'little girl'. Therefore, women who wear a dirndl dress are perceived as more feminine ladies or young girls. Since the late 1800's, the dirndl dress has been a cultural icon and national dress for women in the entire Alpine regions of Germany and Austria.

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The secret behind the flourishing of this Austrian-Bavarian dress is simple: It makes every woman look fantastic! This eye-catching traditional dress is one the most attractive and daring décolleté ever designed. With the particular cut and low-cut neckline, the dirndl dress emphasizes the woman's beauty in the most stunning way. Moreover, the dirndl small waist further emphasizes the femininity of its wearer.

- For traditional costume admirers in Germany, Austria and the rest of the world, the Oktoberfest festival is the best place to watch the most beautiful and elegant dirndl dresses. Each year, millions of visitors attend the Oktoberfest festival in Munich. Most of these visitors like wearing traditional clothes and costumes. In this case, Oktoberfest dirndl dresses are the most popular dresses worn by many female visitors.

For those ladies visiting the Oktoberfest and who do not have a dirndl dresses yet, it is very important to acquire this amazing outfit. The Oktoberfest dirndl dress can be either rented or bought. There are many reputable cloth dealers that sell genuine dirndl costumes. It is important to look for a reputable dealer before making any purchase. Most customers will choose traditional dirndl costumes in a local shop and try different dirndls before settling on the ones they like best.

# There's more to German traditional dress, or trachten than meets the eye —

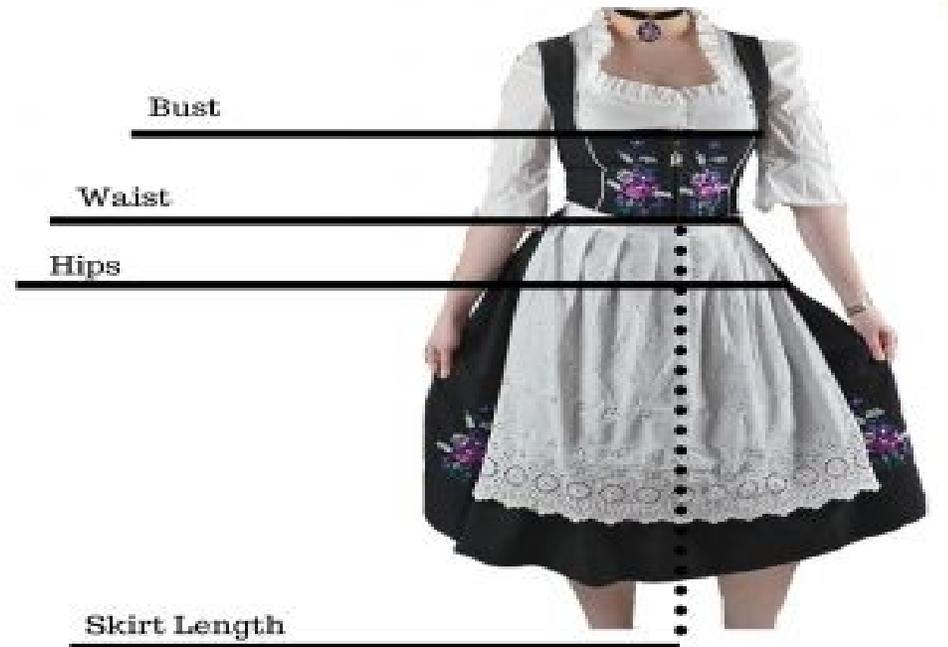
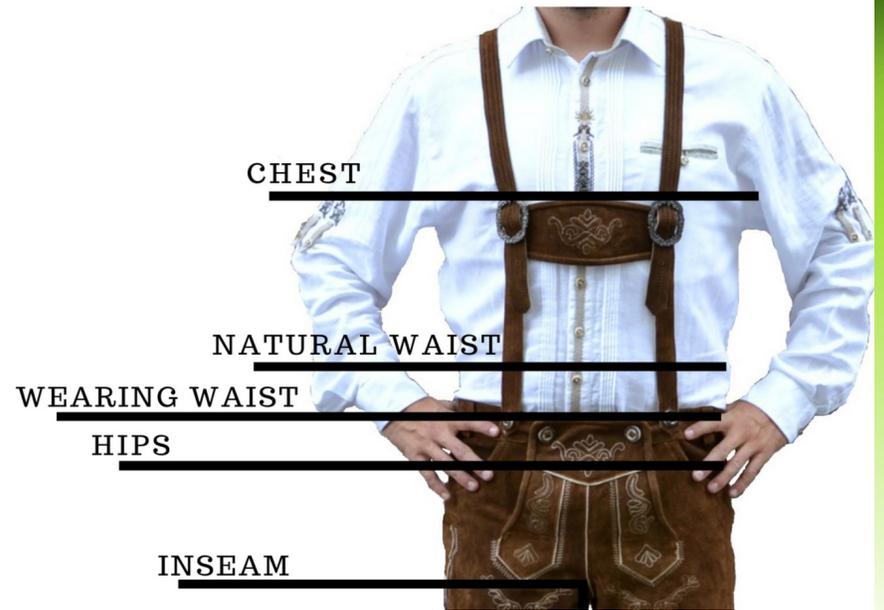
## The bow code

The German reputation for efficiency also applies to traditional dress. To save unwanted suitors from investing time in someone who is taken, the way a woman's apron bow is tied shows her relationship status. On the left is a green light — single, while a bow tied on the right means she's taken. Finally, a bow at the back means you're a widow or a waitress. People in Germany grew up with this, but tourists should get into the habit of glancing down for a quick bow check before turning on the charm.



## Dress Length matters

For women, dirndl length is about modesty; for guys it's more about style preference and whether you can cope with chilly legs — below-the-knee lederhosen can be worn with long socks when it's cold out. Traditional advice states that a dirndl should be a modest one measuring jug from the ground, however, knee-length dresses are now also popular with the younger crowd. Don't get one that's above the knee... very few tourists wear them and they stick out like a sore thumb. It gets awkward when dancing on benches too.



## The shirt

Straightforward for guys, you'll need a checked shirt with no embroidery, usually in green or red. Done. For women it's a bit more interesting — it's not actually a full shirt but a Britney-in-the-90s-style cut-off shirt that ends just below the bust.

# The shoes

This is where the girls finally have it easier than the guys! Nowadays most women just wear flats, low-heeled mary janes, or even wellies if the weather is terrible. You'll be on your feet walking or dancing so avoid high heels. Guys have a difficult choice to make: should you wear something that doesn't really fit the look, or invest in the ugliest side-laced clogs you've ever seen? If you don't have some chukka or desert boots, or just really want to complete your outfit, you can pick up some thick-soled haferlschuhe for around €20.



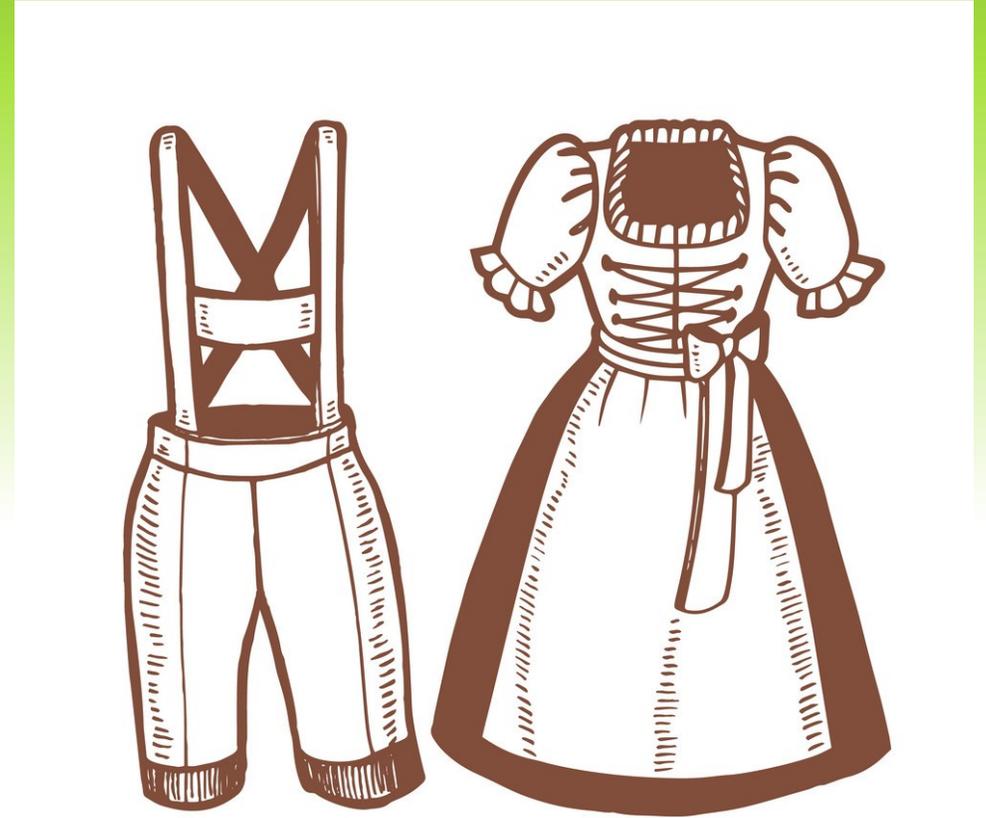
## What Shoes Do I Wear with My Dirndl!?



[blog.raredirndl.com](http://blog.raredirndl.com)

## The cost

Though it's associated with drunken beer festivals outside Germany, trachten is not a joke — it's part of traditional German culture and worn throughout the year to festivals and celebrations such as weddings. That means it's priced to match. A low-quality Oktoberfest dirndl will still set you back €40, or €25-30 if you buy it out of season. Considering you only get half a shirt, it's weirdly expensive at around €20 for a basic one. Though men may already have a suitable shirt, lederhosen aren't cheap starting at around €50 on eBay and from €80 in most stores.



# Optional extras

Still got some budget left over? There are a full range of accessories to complete your German look. The hats are particularly brilliant ranging from trilby-style with a feather, to elaborate felt numbers with what appears to be half a broom on the top — to pull it off, you really need a moustache to match! Feel the cold? There is a range of wool vests and cardies you can buy. They look like something out of a Scottish mail order knitting catalogue, but some people manage to pull it off. For the more style conscious, smart blazers are available, but at several hundred euros they're beyond the budget of most tourists looking for a good photo opp!



# OKTOBERFEST

The Oktoberfest is the world's largest Volksfest (beer festival and travelling funfair). It is held annually in Munich, Bavaria, Germany. It is a 16 to 18 day folk festival running from mid- or late September to the first Sunday in October, with more than six million people from around the world attending the event every year. Locally, it is called d'Wiesn, after the colloquial name for the fairgrounds, Theresienwiese. The Oktoberfest is an important part of Bavarian culture, having been held since the year 1810. Other cities across the world also hold Oktoberfest celebrations that are modeled after the original Munich event.

During the event, large quantities of Oktoberfest Beer are consumed. During the 16-day festival in 2013, for example, 7.7 million litres (66,000 US bbl; 1,700,000 imp gal) were served. Visitors also enjoy numerous attractions, such as amusement rides, sidestalls, and games. There is also a wide variety of traditional foods available.



THANK YOU