

Your First SCA Event

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There is much talk about "events" in the SCA. You've read about them here, you've probably surfed online and seen references, and you assuredly have heard people in your group talking about upcoming events at meetings and moots.

On this site you will learn what an SCA event is, what types of events you will encounter, what you will need to bring to an SCA event, how to find out where and when an event is being held, and what to do when you get to an event.

When you plan to attend your first event, you may want to check with other group members and see who is going. Some new members find it difficult to walk into an event site and encounter a sea of unknown faces. Going with or meeting up with someone you already know from your group, may help make it a stress-free social experience. If a sea of unknown faces is a challenge for you, then by all means, give it a whirl on your own. You always have options in the SCA.

Check out the sections below for further information. If you still have questions on SCA events, talk to others in your group or ask your chatelaine (newcomer liason) for assistance. Just remember that an event is a place to have fun, explore the Middle Ages and Renaissance, eat and be merry, and interact with others who share your interests. Events are the high point of one's SCA experience.

What is an SCA Event?

(Much of the following information was excerpted from Gunnbjorn Gunnarsson's article "Events in the SCA")

IT'S THE REASON FOR BEING...

An "SCA Event" is what we do when we're not having business meetings and fighting practices and dance practices and doing research on the Middle Ages. In fact, events are the reason we do those things. This is where the *BIG* fun starts.

Events are the reason we do most of the other stuff like meetings, practicing crafts and skills, fighting, etc. The Event is the stage on which we perform our personas, display our skills, show off our fancy clothes, dent our armor, fill our stomachs, receive recognition for our efforts, and occasionally have one of those "magic moments" when the medieval fantasy we try to create becomes real for us.

GRAB YOUR WEAPON!

A typical event starts around nine or ten on a Saturday morning. Around eleven, the tourney will be scheduled to start (it will actually start about twelve thirty). The tourney will be fought by twenty to forty fighters until a single fighter remains. No, they don't all fight at once; the tourney will be either single-elimination or double-elimination, or it will be a "bear pit" in which a fighter can hold the field as long as he or she keeps winning. The day's fighting may even consist of two (or more) tourneys featuring different themes or weapon styles. After the tourney there will usually be "melees," and now everyone does fight at the same time!

OTHER PURSUITS

Other things that may be happening at the same time: Games, contests, arts and sciences exhibits, music, drama, dancing, archery, and more.

PUT MONEY IN THY PURSE...HERE BE MERCHANTS!

While all this is going on, merchants have set up their wares in another part of the hall. Items for sale may include weapons, armor, leather goods, jewelry, knives and swords, medieval clothing, materials and trim to make medieval clothing, chain mail, tools to make any of the above, books, music, and just about anything else even remotely related to the Middle Ages. Many merchants will haggle over price. I know people who make their whole living selling stuff at SCA events. Shop till you drop.

EAT, DRINK, AND BE MERRY FOR IT'S FEAST TIME!

Around five o'clock, they will clear the hall to set up for the feast. The feast itself, scheduled to start at six, will start about six thirty or seven. The feast will be everything you imagine a medieval feast should be, and then some. You will be served more dishes than you've ever seen at one meal, or even at a whole day's meals. You will be served things you've never heard of. You'll eat things that you'll have to get the recipes to, and you'll eat things that you'll never, ever, ever want to eat again. All of this in a hall that looks as medieval as the event sponsors can make it (which, unfortunately, may not be that medieval). Bon appetite.

After the feast, the tables will be cleared and removed for what comes next, which will be either dancing or Court.

COURT

If the King or Queen are present (or the Prince or Princess, their heirs), there will probably be a Royal Court. The pageantry and ceremonies of Court are a bit too involved to get into here; suffice to say that this is where awards are given to individuals who have earned them through skill or service, where presentations are made to the Crown, and where proclamations are made by the Crown. Court, scheduled to end by ten o'clock, will end at eleven or eleven thirty.

Note: Court is at the Royals' discretion and is not always held after feast. Sometimes it is scheduled prior to feast. You should check at Troll to see when Court will be held at the event you are attending.

After court, or after feast if there is no court, there may be dancing. The site will usually close at midnight. This is the only thing that will happen on time all day.

WHAT'S THIS TALK OF "WET" AND "DRY" SITES? DO I NEED AN UMBRELLA?

One additional note: An event will be either "wet" (alcohol permitted), "damp" (beer or wine only), or "dry" (welcome to Prohibition). **If you're under age, don't even think about it.**