

# The Dos and Don'ts of Wearing a Kilt

Men who plan to wear the kilt should recognize that a kilted man inevitably attracts admiring spectators, drawn like moths to a sporran, or termites to a caber. These admirers, who often are often given to calling out endearments like "Kiltie, kiltie cauld burn, cannae keep a warm one ..." or "Donald, wheres your troosers ..." see a kilted Scot as an adventurer who walks the thin line between Presbyterian and prurient, between bard and barbarian, between tradition and tramp. They hope to glimpse, even fleetingly, that element which separates our kilted clansmen from trousered trash. However, to avoid inadvertently offending the delicate sensibilities of spectators (and some are more delicate than others), men should observe the following rules of kilt etiquette:

Walk, **do not** run for the departing airplanes, supermarket blue-light specials or last call at the pub. If you must, walk quickly, and keep both hands on your sporran. If your sporran is up around your neck, you're walking much too quickly.

**Do not** go up stairs, especially in an escalator, a lighthouse, or Sir Walter Scott monuments. Likewise, you should avoid open balconies and glass-fronted elevators. Neither should you go down the stairs. If you find yourself upstairs, make sure that all the spectators have left the premises before you descend.

**Do not** stoop, crouch or squat to pick up anything from the floor. Have a friend pick up the object for you. If your friends will not oblige, kick the object to a secluded area before you retrieve it. If you have no friends, then stooping, crouching or squatting in a kilt may only worsen your lonely condition.

**Do not** wear shiny new Wellington boots. Dull them a little (perhaps with mud or mince). Or wear spats with your wellies and establish your credentials as the fashion trendsetter you are.

**Do not** stand at the edge of reflective pools, unrippled ponds or mirror-like puddles. And on those formal events when you must wear silver-buckled shoes, do not stand still for longer than five seconds at a time. Dance instead.

Dance nothing more boisterous than a waltz. Reserve wild reels, jigs, and the twist for family gatherings where your identity needs no further elaboration, or for those occasions when your anonymity is assured. Limbo dancing in a kilt at any time definitely breaches kilt etiquette.

Respond only with an enigmatic smile to any questions about what is worn under your kilt. Avoid responding with the cliché "nothing is worn under my kilt; everything is in working order." Similarly, do not offer any demonstrations of what is worn under your kilt. And an offer such as "I'll show you mine if you show me yours" can be misconstrued as the opening salvo in an ever-escalating series of challenges and exhibitions that might be illegal in public places, even between consenting adults.

Shaving your legs is unnecessary. However hirsute highlanders elect to wax the hair from their legs and not just the knee area displayed between kilt and hose. These false economies only contribute to the myth of the cheap Scot. Also, it's considered bad taste to suggest private viewings of your "kilt line."

**Do not** sit with one leg crossed over the other. This position requires you to uncross your legs later, a trick maneuver mastered by only a select few after years of training. Always sit with your knees no more than six inches apart, thus creating enough shadow for mystery and discretion. Avoid soft recliners and rocking chairs where the sitter's knees may move above shoulder level.