



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Andersonville National
Historic Site

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Andersonville National Historic Site

Living History Program

Union Prisoner of War Standards for Camp Sumter February 1864 – April 1865

These standards apply to any time frame during the prisons operation. Early in the operation of the prison most of the prisoners were transferred from other prisons and they had very few things with them. By the summer of 1864 there were larger numbers some "fresh fish" (new captures) who carried with them more personal items. Keep your gear to a bare minimum. Wear your oldest, rattiest, most threadbare uniforms, pieces of uniforms, and civilian attire that you own. If it is not old and threadbare, you can enhance its look by sewing on patches etc. All branches were represented: infantry, artillery, cavalry, USCT, sailors and marines, military and civilian teamsters, sutlers, sutler clerks, and musicians. Andersonville was for enlisted men so please keep rank to a minimum. We need a lot of privates.

Although stitching is not as important for prisoners as for the other impressions, **all prisoner uniforms and equipment must be of the proper material, weave, and pattern for the period and branch of service being interpreted and must be documented as being used by the Federal Army or by civilians. *The burden of proof resides with the participant.*** If you cannot prove an item or article of clothing was used, you will not be allowed to use it.

1. Uniform coats should be sack coats, frock coats, or shell jackets with any branch insignia. Navy impressions may be winter or summer jumper and Marines may wear fatigue or frock coats.
2. Trousers may be dark or light blue military issue or civilian pattern.
3. Shirts must be Federal Army issue or civilian style and must be of the correct material, weave and pattern.
 - A. Cotton, period flannel, linen, or homespun.
4. Hats may be military forage caps, kepis, broken down and undressed Hardee hats, slouch, or civilian slouch or straw hats.
 - A. All brass insignia must be removed.
5. Shoes and boots must be worn and torn if possible and must be either military issue boots or brogans, or civilian shoes, bootees, brogans, or boots.
 - A. MODIFIED MODERN COMBAT BOOTS, CHUKKA BOOTS, BOON-DOCKERS, OR HUSH PUPPIES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.

6. Socks must be wool or cotton of the correct pattern and weave.
 - A. MODERN "HUNTING" SOCKS CONTAINING ELASTIC OR WITH RED OR ANY OTHER COLORED STRIPES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.
7. Rank must be kept at a minimum. If you have corporal or sergeant stripes on your uniform, you may be asked to remove them.
8. Accouterments for weapons are not required.
 - A. Do not bring cartridge boxes or cap pouches.
 - B. Do bring Federal issue haversacks, knapsacks, plates, cups, knife, fork, or spoon, canteen, etc.
 - C. ENAMEL WEAR PLATES, CUPS ETC, OR OTHER ITEMS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.
9. Tents will be Federal issue shelter halves or dog tents of the correct material and pattern for 1863 and later.
10. Blankets must be of the correct material, weave and pattern for the period.
11. Gum cloth or poncho must be of the correct material and pattern for the period.
12. Suspenders must be of the correct material, weave, and pattern for the period.
 - A. MODERN ELASTIC SUSPENDERS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.
13. Glasses and other eyewear must be of the correct material and pattern for the period.
 - A. MODERN GLASSES, SUNGLASSES, OR OTHER EYEWEAR WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.
14. Extras.
 - A. Do bring one or two of the following items: a gum blanket, tent half, blanket, dice, cards, carvings, diary, testament, newspaper, dominos, chess game, or checkers. Do not bring one of everything! All items must be period in style and material.
 - B. Do bring your great coat to wear after hours. Do not expect to be able to wear it during the scenarios. These were not available to the average prisoner.
 - C. Be prepared to make your own shebang. Shebangs were the names for the shelters the prisoners made for themselves. This is why you need to bring your tents, blankets, or gum blanket. Also, bring any other materials you may need such as poles, sticks, rope or twine. Enclosed are examples of the types of shebangs the prisoners made.

NOTE: Even though our main interpretation is of prisoners that have been in captivity for some time, these standards apply to a prisoner of just about any time frame during the prisons operation.

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