



## Just the Essentials: Clothing and Equipment of Revolutionary War Soldiers

**Minute men** and **militia** were citizen soldiers and did not have uniforms. When they showed up for duty, they wore their own clothes, over which they carried their weapons and equipment. When they were called out to serve, they had to have enough ammunition, food, water, and other items of comfort (blanket, extra clothing etc.) for at least one day's service.



**No Two Dressed Alike!**

**British soldiers**, on the other hand, always wore uniforms. This allowed them to tell friend from foe - - but why RED? Well, for one thing, it looked good and added to the frightening appearance of the army in battle. ALSO, Battlefields in the 1700's were smoky, confusing places. Red uniforms made it easier for British officers to see their men through the smoke of battle. As a result, they were better able to control the action, and could avoid shooting their own troops!



### What's with those hats?

These British Regulars are **grenadiers**; you can tell by the very odd hats they are wearing. These hats are made from bear fur and add to the ferocious appearance of the grenadiers in battle. During the early 1700's, decades before the American Revolution, grenadiers actually threw grenades (hence the name). In those days, the grenadier hats made it easier for a soldier to sling his musket over his shoulder and throw his grenade without knocking his hat off - thus dropping his grenade and blowing himself and his friends up.

# Colonial Militiaman

**Knapsack: 20 lbs**  
Contains food, clothing, and blanket

**Cartridge box: 10 lbs**  
Contains ammunition

**Musket: 10 lbs**  
This is the principle weapon of Revolutionary soldiers. A trained soldier can load and fire three times per minute.



# Colonial Militiaman



**Canteen: 2 lbs**  
Contains water

**Socket bayonet: 1 lb**  
A special blade that fits onto the end of the musket for hand-to-hand combat. Because of the socket's design, the musket can still be fired when the bayonet is "fixed."

# British Regular

**Cocked hat:**

a very fashionable hat for soldiers and civilians

**Facings:**

The turned back flaps on a regimental coat. They were colored to show which regiment a soldier belonged to. This soldier belongs to the 63rd regiment, whose coats had dark green facings.

**Socket bayonet**

**Cartridge box:**  
Contains ammunition



# British Regular



**Canteen:**  
Contains water

**Haversack:**  
contains food rations

**Second cartridge box**

# Questions For Thought

*Look at the pictures of the Colonial minute man and British regular and answer the following questions.*

1. How many pounds of equipment would a minute man carry into battle?
2. In what ways are the clothing and equipment of Colonial and British soldiers different?
3. In ways are the clothing and equipment of Colonial and British soldiers similar?
4. Equipment and weapons were expensive back in 1775 and not every minute man had all the stuff he needed when he was called to serve. If you were a minute man, what pieces of equipment so you think you could you do without if you had to? How might that affect you while serving as a soldier?
5. If you were going to fight a battle in the Revolutionary War, would you rather dress like a British soldier or a Colonial soldier? Explain your answer.