

QUARTERMASTER REFERENCE FILES

Classification: Costuming/Headpiece Construction
Subdivision: Making a Headpiece from Beginning to End
Source: Keve/Steve Clelland

The Imperial Klingon Head “The Claytex Method”

The Claytex headpiece is the most comfortable, easiest, and longer lasting design yet discovered for around \$20.

Here are the materials needed in order of importance:

16 oz. Can of liquid latex (purchased from any hobby/craft shop)

Mold Release Compound (from the same source)

5 lbs. Of any cheap clay or clay-like substance

3 oz. Of water based make-up (color is your choice)*

A cheap wig (or a good wig, if that's your preference and you know what you're doing)

A Styrofoam wig head (from a wig dealer if a local Halloween shop doesn't sell them)

A couple of cheap, disposable paintbrushes (various sizes up to a 2")

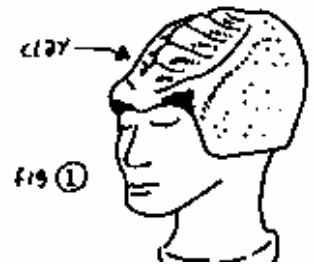
And finally a needle and thread

*QM note- I personally suggest you try to match your own skin tone. Klingons on the show range in skin tones as much as we do, and it's much easier to throw on your headpiece for a quick appearance than having to constantly fool with loads of make-up every single time you wear your headpiece, not to mention the constant touch-ups needed and the damage make-up can do to your skin.

STEP 1: MAKING A MASTER MOLD

Buy or borrow a Styrofoam wig head. Measure your head with a tape measure. Try to find a wig head as close as possible to your own dimension. Cover the head in clay (figure 1) until it matches your head size. Next, build up the brow line like a Neanderthal. Use Ron Perlman in “Quest For Fire” as an example. This allows the finished bald cap to fit snugly under your own brow line.

Now you are ready to build the ridges. No two Klingons have the same cranial ridges so don't worry if you're not exact. If you have some pictures of Klingons, you can draw from them for inspiration. One thing you must remember is to overemphasize the details in your headpiece. The reason for this is that the latex will wash many of these out.



Now that you have finished your clay master mold, it's time to thoroughly cover it with the mold release compound. Take a decent sized brush and spread it over the clay, painting about two coats. If the mold isn't completely covered, oils in the clay may leech into the latex and weaken it. Make sure you cover ALL of the clay.

STEP 2: MAKE THE BALD CAP

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Put on some old clothing and set everything up in a well-ventilated area. Liquid latex has a 6% ammonia dryer and can smell quite unpleasant. If you get any of it on your clothing, it doesn't come out. Using a cheap, disposable brush, carefully paint the liquid latex over the clay. Be careful to avoid bubbles and running. Also, paint a half an inch more at the edges. This will ensure enough "flash" for trimming. Once it's covered, let it dry in a warm place for a few hours. However, if you're totally impatient, like me, you can go over it with a blow dryer. If you do that, it will be ready for another coat in about 5 minutes.

Repeat this process about 10 times until the clay is obscured by the latex. This will ensure a good, thick, durable bald cap. (QM note- As you put on each layer, the latex will take slightly longer to dry. Don't get impatient and try to add more latex before the previous coat is dry, you might cause smears or lumps.)

The final step is to mix 3 oz. of water-based, liquid make-up with a half a cup of you liquid latex. If you can find liquid make-up that matches your own natural complexion, you won't even need to wear make-up! Using your colored latex, paint on the bald cap as before, painting on two coats. A great trick to make the bald cap look like real skin is to pat the color latex on with a piece of foam rubber (QM note- or a stipple type sponge, make-up section of a drug store). This trick also helps get rid of shininess and brush lines. Once finished, let the whole thing dry for one full day in a warm, dry place. Keep a little pre-colored latex back in reserve, you'll need a bit more for adding eyebrows and highlights.

STEP 3: CUSTOMIZING TO FIT

Carefully peel the latex bald cap off the mold and put it on your own head like a shower cap. Now even though you've made a custom piece to fit your own head, there is an occasional misfit. If the cap fits too tightly, use your scissors to cut out an upside down "U" shape in the center back of the headpiece. Make the "U" about 1" wide and about 1" high to begin with. You can increase the height gradually till the piece is just loose enough not to cause discomfort. If the cap is too loose, put the piece on and pinch the center back until the slack is removed. Use a safety pin to pin both sides of the pinch to keep it in place (figures B and C).

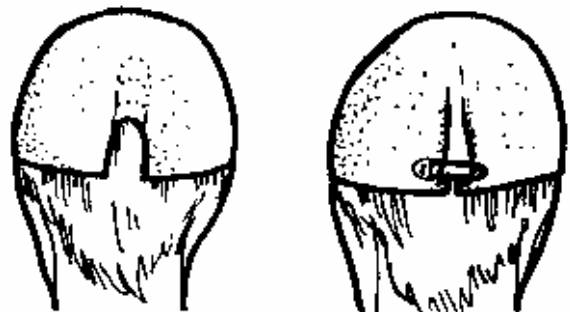


Figure (B) & (C)

Next, using a mirror and a water-soluble marker, draw a line just under your eyebrows and over the base of your ears (figure 2). Once that's done, use a sharp pair of scissors to cut off the "flash" under the line. Note: Be conservative and don't cut off too much. It's far easier to trim a little bit at a time then to try to replace a mistake. Now put the bald cap back on and mark the position of your own eyebrows onto the front of the cap. Be sure to draw just on and slightly below your eyebrows so they will remain covered and follow along around and over the ears so they will not be covered. Put the cap back on the mold and mark where your Klingon hairline will be.



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STEP4: ADDING EYEBROWS AND HAIR

For the eyebrows, you can either use crepe hair (purchased from a costume supply shop) or snatches of trimmed hair from your wig. Using a dry pencil (NOT a grease pencil), mark the shape of the eyebrows over the previous marks (figure 3 and A). This will be a guide for building the crepe hair eyebrows so draw them the thickness and length that looks most natural. Now if you're lucky, you will have a little of your pre-colored



latex left over. Take a little brush and paint the latex over the eyebrows on the headpiece. Then take snatches of crepe or wig hair and brush them down over the eyebrows (figure 3) in the direction shown, working towards the nose on either side. You may want to use the edge of your scissors or some other tool to hold the hair in place. Work the crepe hair into a natural direction. Eyebrows grow horizontally out from the center. You don't need to worry about the length or bushiness of the brows. They can be trimmed later.

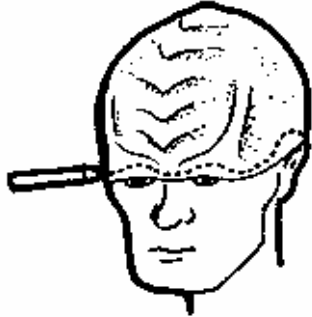


Figure (A)

Repeat and let dry for thicker brows. Let dry thoroughly. Note: Just brush down the base of the eyebrow hair so you won't get hair and latex all over the place. When the eyebrows are finished and dry, trim and shape them to get them neat and orderly.

Another option is to buy a thin moustache from a theatrical supply shop, cut it in half and then trim it to make excellent eyebrows. Sometimes these stores even have ready-made eyebrows, but not often. If you don't have facial hair and want to add some, these are also the places to get these items.

If all of these pre-made hair goodies aren't available to you, you can make them all out of crepe hair. It's inconvenient, but is cheaper.

When acquiring a wig, there are several ways to go. If you're working within a budget I recommend you stay away from wig shops because they have a high overhead (pun intended) and high prices in accordance. You should look in costume and theatrical type shops for cheaper "theatrical quality" wigs. If there's nothing reasonable in your area you can order one from a wig suppliers. Here's one to start with:

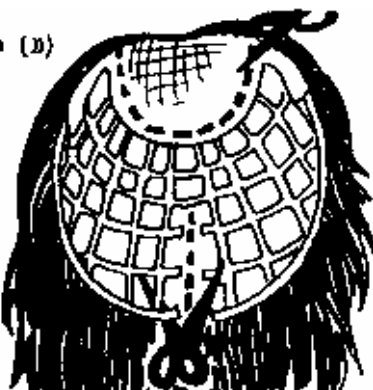
Lacey Costume Wigs
505 Eighth Ave. (11th Floor)
NY, NY 10018

(212) 695-1996
(800) 562-9911

No minimum orders and they accept major credit cards.

There are two types of hairlines you may wish to create. They are the crest and the fringe. The crest

Figure (D)



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only exposes the forehead. Place your headpiece firmly on a headstand and carefully line up the wig where it looks best. The sides of the wig need to come forward over the ears to meet the temples. Most wigs won't accommodate this so you'll need to loosen the back of the wig up. To do this take the scissors and cut up the back of the wig netting a little at a time till you get the effect you want (figure D).

With a needle and heavy thread sew the wig in place along the hairline. To prevent the thread from tearing the latex rubber in places you may want to sandwich the inside of the head with a swatch of material along the sewing line. This way you'll be sewing through the wig through to the material beneath with the latex in between. Line up the wig to match the hair line marks and pin it in place by sticking hair pins or the like through the headpiece, then carefully sew the wig down all along the hairline. It will be tough going sewing by hand through all of this so be patient and work carefully. (QM note- It will help immensely if you get a leather thimble to push and rubber grips to pull the needle through. You should find these at a fabric store.)

If you have a full headpiece with ridges all the way over it you may want to show them off by

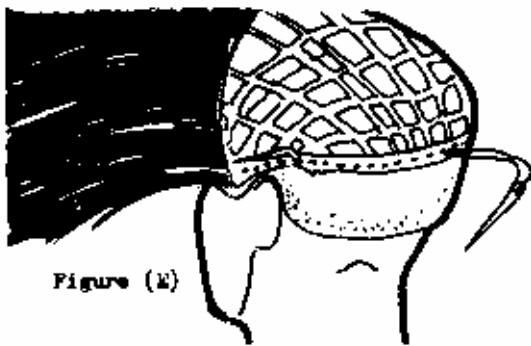
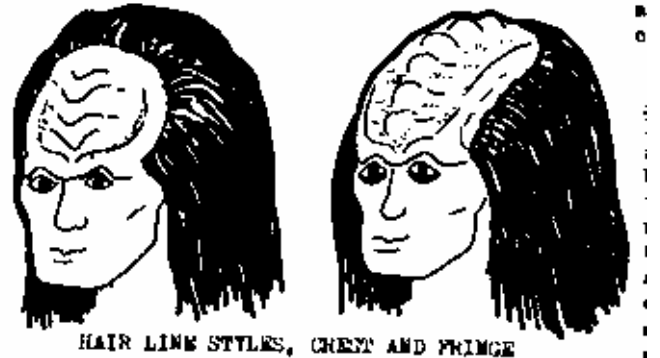


Figure (E)

fringing the wig along the back and sides. This is the fringe look and it looks quite spectacular when done right but when done incorrectly it's a great way to destroy your wig. Refer to figure D for the placement of your cut. Cut the front plate of the wig out leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ " border. Be careful not to damage the border or any of the netting and also try not to cut out any of the hair if you can help it. To get the wig to stand up naturally you'll need to sew the wig on inside out (figure E).

Once the wig is finally in place, you're ready for the final stage: highlighting. Either mix a little darker liquid make-up in our pre-colored latex or experiment with a drop of non-oil paint. Using a snatch of foam rubber, pat the slightly darker pre-colored latex in the contours between your ridges. Go slowly and be careful to blend for the best effect. Then blow-dry the whole thing thoroughly.

Now pop the finished headpiece off the mold and try it on. You shouldn't need any glue. It should fit comfortable and snugly. Best of all, you can put it on and take it off as easily as a shower cap. No fuss! No muss! And with reasonable care, it will last for a very long time, about 3 years of continuous use! You will sweat while wearing this blasted thing, however you can take it off when no one is looking, cool off, and stick it back on in just a few seconds! (QM note- I have heard people say they put a little something like a small hand towel, paper towels, or even, er, a maxipad under the headpiece to keep the sweat from running down their

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face. You can do this, just keep it small, and remember that it's important to keep cool. You don't want to be remembered as the Klingon who collapsed from heat stroke!)

Some further tips on care and maintenance: Never expose your headpiece to extremes of heat or cold. Never leave it out in the sun. Never expose it to excesses of moisture or dryness. And remember that a good quality wig should be washed every once in a while with shampoo, while cheap wigs can be taken off and replaced.