



What is in the Hussif?

In this [#TallShipTuesday](#), we learned about the Hussif (Housewife), and how it would be used by men in the 18th and 19th century aboard ships to do the traditionally feminine jobs when women were not there. [The Hussif](#) was generally constructed by the mother, sister, wife, or girlfriend of the sailor, and acted primarily as a sewing kit.



The pocket of a Hussif

Generally, women would find loose, old, or leftover fabric that they could fashion into the kit itself. [These kits](#) were generally 12 to 24 inches long and between 3 to 8 inches wide, so sometimes they would need to patchwork several pieces of fabric together for it to work. Then they would figure out what tools they had to stow, and how they would lay out the kit.

Tools one may find in a Hussif:

- Eating Utensils
- Needles
- Thread
- Spare Buttons
- Bees Wax
- Scissors

The use of the hussif in colonial times was one of the ways gender norms were bent at sea. Men commonly would do the cooking, cleaning, and sewing repairs on a ship, since women rarely had a place there. This small sewing kit is what allowed for men to be able to take on these traditionally feminine rolls.

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