contests
costumes
collaboration
community
creativity

ALL AGES

SEATTLE

to benefit teen programs

arts CORPS

ROLLATHON

FABULOUS TEAM COSTUME GUIDE

5 STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL TEAM COSTUMING

1. USE VISUAL & OTHER REFERENCES

Know that all good costumes begin with some kind of a visual reference to work from. If you're doing cartoon characters, print out an image or two of the cartoon. If you're doing 70s disco kings, find some actual photos of actual people from the 70s who were actually involved in disco and use that as a reference. Making up your own costume concept? Recruit the most artistically inclined member of your team to do a quick color sketch of the concept and work from that. **See page 3 for detailed visual examples of how to work with a visual reference.**

2. KEEP YOUR TEAM IN THEME

A team of five people wearing unorganized costumes won't look like a team, they'll just look a group of attendees to a very small costume party. A little bit of thought and communication by the team captain can make the difference that will wow the crowd and help you take home the trophy. So get organized! **See page 4 for specific advice on how to keep your team in theme.**

3. BE REALISTIC

Have you already begun your costume making? Do you have a degree in costume arts, have been sewing and foam-modeling since age 6, and are taking time off your busy and highly lucrative career in Hollywood to attend the Rollathon? If not, your vision of turning your team into the lifelike rollerskate version of Muppets on Ice with only 5 days left before the Rollathon might not be a very realistic plan. Know exactly what your resources are in terms of time, money, and skills, and plan your costumes from there. Especially for a team costume, **a well-executed but extremely simple to make costume will be much more impressive and fun than an extremely poorly executed costume** that came from an overly-elaborate and impossible-to-achieve plan. Also remember that elaborate costumes can take lots of time, planning, and shopping to make. Do you have that kind of time/energy/money? If not, maybe it's time to dial it back to white t-shirts with painted-on muppet heads and matching fuzzy mittens.

4. MAKE IT A TEAM EFFORT

Getting everyone on your team involved in the costume-making will lighten the workload, help your team bond, and be more fun. Besides, **this event is about fun, community spirit, and involvement**. Giving even the least-skilled person on your team some part of the costume they can help out with will make sure everyone has the opportunity to feel like they're participating.
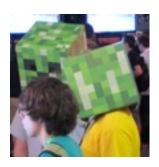
5. LIGHTEN UP

Remember, the ultimate goal of the costume part of this event is to have fun, and to make it fun for others. So maybe your best-laid plans didn't work out as fabulous as you were hoping. **The point of wearing a costume isn't to win or be the best, it's to make sure everyone is having a good time.** However your costume comes out, know that you gave it a go and you can have fun with it no matter what happens.

USE VISUAL & OTHER REFERENCES

Pretty much all good costumes begin with at least one good reference image to work from. Unless you have a photographic memory & are a superfan of your subject, you'll miss key details that will leave people guessing why you look so "wrong" if you don't work from a reference. Knowledge of your subject is also good, so if you're not already familiar with the type of thing you are trying to be, try watching some youtube or reading up a little to get things right. Do a Google image search or go straight to the source, and use those image(s) when choosing costume items & when dressing.

LOOK FOR KEY DETAILS YOU CAN DUPLICATE
Even though these were just simple cardboard box costumes, these guys nailed it by choosing perfectly square boxes & getting the paint colors perfect. They probably worked from several photos, or moved a character around on a computer to get it right.

KNOW WHAT ELEMENTS YOU CAN LEAVE OUT
I worked directly from this image to choose/alter a dress, find appropriate shoes, & pick my tights. But I knew from being familiar with the show that this particular belt wasn't an essential item for this character, and didn't sweat not matching the photo exactly.
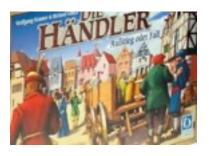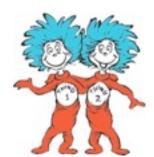

FIGURE OUT WHICH DETAILS ARE IMPORTANT
A quick look at this image shows the merchants all have socks to their knees, loose shirttails/jackets, and no collars on their shirts. We didn't copy any of the men exactly but still ended up with a costume that looks like he fits in to the town, just using those key details to put together a quick outfit from my husband's closet, tucking his pants in and his shirt collars under.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR SUBJECT CAN SAVE EFFORT
This lady obviously knew her Daleks so well she didn't actually have to look like a Dalek to look like a Dalek. She pared things down to the essential elements she knew she could duplicate and feel comfortable wearing, and then made sure she assumed a proper attitude to match her subject.

COLOR PALETTE CAN BE KEY
Some costumes are flexible, but in general it's important to match your color palette. If you don't have a good eye for color, take your reference pic with you when you shop or dig thru your closet, and use it to match colors. Even something simple like a hippie costume won't really look like a hippie with the wrong color palette.

BEST ATTENTION TO REFERENCES = BEST COSTUMES
I don't even know what characters these two are supposed to be, but they look like they just walked off a movie set. You can bet that even if they made these characters up themselves, they had extremely specific reference images, and kept to them religiously to create these costumes.

Basic team theme: Clowns & Jesters

Pieces of a whole: Tetris

Group costume: Care Bears

Team color

Identical costumes: Penguins

TEAM COSTUMES FTW!

HOW TO KEEP YOUR TEAM IN THEME

Making a costume for one is one thing, but how do you make sure your whole team looks good, and looks like the team they are, especially if you have one or two members who don't really want to play?

CHOOSE A TEAM COLOR
The most basic way to go is choose a color or colors, and tell everyone on your team to wear that color(s). Then whether some of you go all out and some of you just wear regular clothes, you will still look like a team.

CREATE A BASIC TEAM ELEMENT
People can dress however they want, but everyone on the team must wear some particular element that is exactly the same as everyone else on the team. Like, maybe 5 identical hats, or 5 identical t-shirts with a team picture, or everyone wears the same kind of gloves.

CHOOSE A BASIC TEAM THEME
Create a theme for your team, possibly based on your team name. It could be simple like "disco" or complicated like "contemporary art". Tell everyone on your team the theme, and let everyone interpret their own costume based on the theme.

DO A GROUP COSTUME
Choose a group costume like The Beatles or The Mariners or Nintendo characters. Each person on the team should be a different character in the group.

CONSIDER A TEAM UNIFORM
Decide on a uniform for your team. Everyone on the team would then wear that exact uniform.

IDENTICAL COSTUMES
Choose one basic costume. Everyone wears the same costume

EACH IS A PIECE OF ONE WHOLE "COSTUME"
For example, everyone is each one segment of a snake, or each person is a different part of a clock.

Team uniform