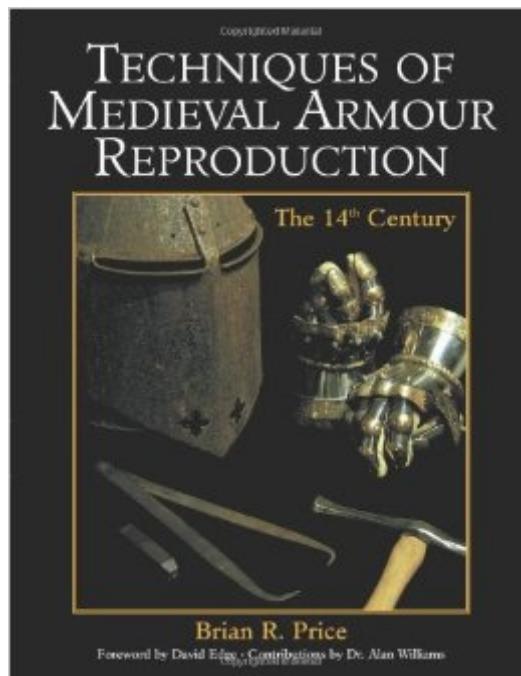


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# Techniques Of Medieval Armour Reproduction: The 14th Century



## Synopsis

Few historical icons can match the evocative power of the medieval suit of armour, and this epic new book is a complete course in the tools and techniques of the modern armourer's art. Through more than 1,000 detailed photos and clear instruction, Brian Price presents a working handbook for aspiring and active armourers who want to develop their skills in the production of medieval armour in the style of the 14th century. The book is divided into four sections: a sweeping history of armour and its production from its medieval roots to its modern revival; a practical introduction to all the tools and supplies necessary to equip a modern workshop; a thorough review of key techniques; and a series of actual courses in constructing armoured defenses for the head, body, arm, hand and leg. Taking the reader through the construction of an authentic medieval harness from conception to completion, *Techniques of Medieval Armour Reproduction* is a vital addition to the libraries of serious craftsmen, historians, collectors and researchers.

## Book Information

Paperback: 528 pages

Publisher: Paladin Press (September 1, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1581600984

ISBN-13: 978-1581600988

Product Dimensions: 11 x 8.4 x 1.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.7 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (61 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #290,702 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #55 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Antiques & Collectibles > Military #674 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Individual Sports > Martial Arts #1819 in Books > Science & Math > Technology

## Customer Reviews

I first joined the SCA about 2 years ago, and took an immediate fancy to the armorer's craft. In the two years that I've been there, I have never fought in anything that I didn't make myself. I began studying armor construction at about the same time I started, but didn't really get started on making anything decent until about a year ago, and this book was extremely helpful in getting me get turned in the right direction. The second half of the book provides a very useful manual for making specific pieces; for example, I absolutely love the thoroughness of his description for making a leg harness. The first half of the book, however, was the most useful; descriptions of the tools, applications,

hammerwork techniques, polishing, strapping, padding, and the like were all covered in very thoughtful detail, which makes this book an excellent source of reference that I use quite often. I don't have any particular gripes about this book, but I will say this: this book is intended for historically authentic designs, so a bit of alteration might be required contrary to the design schemes presented if you're in the SCA. However, overall, I don't feel that that is enough to bring this book down to four stars, especially since I believe that historical authenticity, rather than SCA armor, was his goal when he wrote this book; overall, it ranks at a very solid five (although I would really like to see the author do another on SCA armor design).

I bought this book based on the stellar reviews listed here. For a beginner or someone with general interest this book is certainly a great reference, but for someone who would actually like to try to make their own armour I found this book lacking in several respects. My two biggest complaints were regarding the lack of materials on raising (there is a great description of dishing with many photos and good technical advice) and on thermal treatments. The author gives a short description of raising and then states that it is an advanced technique and beyond the scope of this book. Raising was used extensively to make many medieval helms and is a MAJOR technique for making certain types of reproductions - by giving this process just a cursory overview the reader gets no real useful understanding of the raising process or how to even start (or how much effort is involved). I was hoping to see an example, such as a Norman helm, raised from a sheet, step by step, including a discussion on the pros/cons of working cold with anneals vs. working hot. The other area which is sorely lacking is the chapter of heat treatments. While the various methods used historically are mentioned and the science and metallurgy involved is well described, actual techniques and how-to's of working cold with anneals or working with metal hot were sorely absent. It would have been really nice to see several example projects done with a variety of different techniques. In summary: This is a well written book and clearly the author is well-versed in the history and technical aspects of armor making. The methods that the author wishes to cover in detail are clear, valuable, and educational. In this sense this is probably the best or most comprehensive book on the subject. **HOWEVER**, my main concern is that two major techniques (raising & thermal treatments) used extensively by armourers are virtually ignored. In my humble opinion, if the next edition of this book were to beef up the chapters on raising and thermal treatments (with photos, descriptions of the actual process) as well as include more examples of different styles of armour construction, this book would be a true masterpiece.

This book is incredibly informative for someone like myself when I got it. I had just began to make armour under a master's tutelage. It's considered required reading by most armouring groups that I know of. However, it teaches you slightly less than you might realize, and certainly teaches some biases. For example, Price's personal views are clearly reflected in the book, not as his opinions, but stated as fact. When read by itself, this isn't something noticeable, but when coupled with "The Armourer and his Craft", by Charles ffoulkes (inexpensive book, and definately a must read for armourers) it's quite dramatic at times. However, having said that, I agreed with Mr. Price on a lot of his opinions. There are conflicts of interest though, when he states repeatedly some of the basic tenents of armouring, yet contradicts them with some of his personal choices. Another beef I have with the book is the way in which pictures of armor that are CLEARLY reproductions are touted as being EXTREMELY well made, when quite frankly, they aren't, and certainly shouldn't be used as guides. (For example. dish your cuisses folks.. don't just curl them). Some of these nuances aren't apparent until you immerse yourself in images of the real stuff first, to develop your "eye". If you try to develop your "eye" with repro work, your best work will never compare to the originals. I'm not claiming mastery, or that I'm better than anyone that's gotten their stuff pictured, I'm just saying that you need REAL reference pics of REAL armour. Aside from that, the book REALLY holds your hand and builds a very strong learning foundation. It's also a great place to refer back to as you go through the various stages of making your armour. It's certainly inspiring, I just recommend caution, and suggest that you keep asking questions, and getting second opinions rather than take the whole book at face value.

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