

# 20 Historical Hobbies for \$20 or Less

New hobbies can seem intimidating and—worse—expensive. The internet offers complicated lists and costly supplies for even the most basic of skills. We might feel that we can't invest too much into a hobby—who knows if we'll be good at it anyway?

In reality, many hobbies—particularly those that rely more on building a skill than on collecting items—begin with very few supplies. In fact, there's a wealth of historical skills we can practice for entertainment, self-improvement, and [practicality](#)!

With that in mind, here's a list of 20 historical hobbies that will cost you \$20 or less to try out. They're loosely categorized by masculine and feminine pursuits, according to their historical connotations.

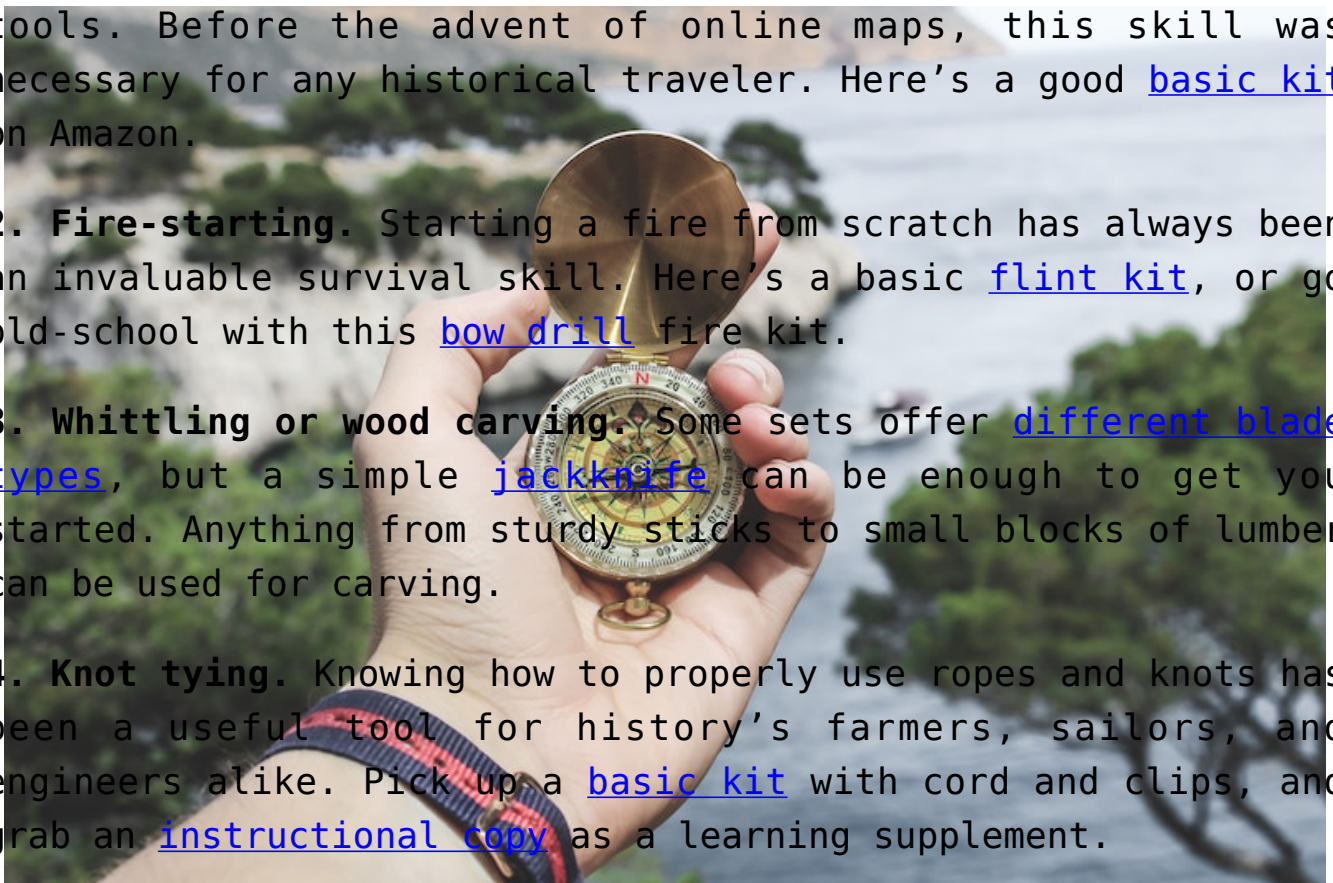
## Masculine Historical Hobbies

**1. Orienteering.** Orienteering is navigation using basic analog tools. Before the advent of online maps, this skill was necessary for any historical traveler. Here's a good [basic kit](#) on Amazon.

**2. Fire-starting.** Starting a fire from scratch has always been an invaluable survival skill. Here's a basic [flint kit](#), or go old-school with this [bow drill](#) fire kit.

**3. Whittling or wood carving.** Some sets offer [different blade types](#), but a simple [jackknife](#) can be enough to get you started. Anything from sturdy sticks to small blocks of lumber can be used for carving.

**4. Knot tying.** Knowing how to properly use ropes and knots has been a useful tool for history's farmers, sailors, and engineers alike. Pick up a [basic kit](#) with cord and clips, and grab an [instructional copy](#) as a learning supplement.



**5. Harmonica.** Maybe you're musically inclined, but a piano is a little out of your price range. No worries! Play your own music on this [simple harmonica](#), using a book like [this](#) to understand the basics.

**6. Shadow boxing.** In ancient Greece, hand-to-hand combat was a [necessary part](#) of young men's education. Pick up [weighted gloves](#) and an [instructional book](#) to explore boxing—you don't even need a punching bag!

**7. Knife throwing.** This skill originated for hunting, gradually [evolving](#) into a warrior skill and then a sport. [Throwing knives](#) often come in threes, and—if you want to up your game—try some [axes](#). Dead trees and stumps make great targets!



## [Feminine Historical Hobbies](#)

**1. Knitting or crocheting.** A snowy winter isn't complete without handmade mittens and hats! Crochet is easier to learn

and uses one hook, while knitting is more technical and requires at least two needles. [Crochet kits](#) often come complete with yarn and accessory tools, whereas [knitting needles](#) are usually cheaper when bought alone.

**2. Bread baking.** Most of us already have the basic pantry staples of flour, salt, sugar, and butter. You might just need [yeast](#), an inexpensive leavening ingredient sold at most grocery stores. And of course, grab a [bread pan](#) or two!

**3. Indoor gardening.** Start gardening by doing it inside. You might find that growing your own flowers or herbs can be surprisingly easy! All you need is a kit like [this](#) and a sunny windowsill.

**4. Penny whistle.** Pursue your musical side by learning the penny whistle! A [basic one](#) is more than enough to start.

**5. Braiding.** Braids are a traditional way to do hair, and they can also be used for jewelry, ropes, tools, cords, and decorations. A book like [this](#) can get you started.

**6. Flower pressing.** Preserving flowers is a great hobby for amateur botanists, particularly because it only requires some simple waxed paper and a few heavy books. Or try a [kit](#) to make personal greeting cards or decorations!

**7. Dancing.** A basic [jazz shoe](#) works for most beginner dancers, no matter the dance type. When you reach a higher skill level, you can invest in a specific shoe for your dance style.



## Historical Hobbies for Both Genders

- 1. Hiking or walking.** This is usually free! Most places have pretty streets, hiking trails, or parks you can frequent for no cost at all. And—in the cold Northern winters, many people enjoy walking in a large department store or mall.
- 2. Reading music.** You might not have a guitar or piano, but you can master music theory. Pick up a [comprehensive book](#), or watch some YouTube videos to get started.
- 3. Learning another language.** Textbooks and [apps](#) offer some easy ways to learn any language's basics.
- 4. First aid.** This is less of a hobby and more of a valuable skill. You can take a course if you like, but you can learn a lot by merely getting a [kit](#) and reading the instructions.
- 5. Letter writing.** Nothing but pen and paper is necessary to start this hobby! But if you want to get fancy, pick up a [wax sealing kit](#) for the envelope.

**6. Chess.** Chess has a long history, [originating](#) from a first-century Indian war game. Many libraries and schools have sets available for in-room use, or you can purchase a basic set like [this](#).

To further save money, remember that many of these supplies can be found secondhand, borrowed from a friend, or handed down from a mentor. I bought my first crochet hook for 50 cents at a [thrift store](#)! We can always invest more when we fall in love with a hobby.

Also, remember that you have many resources at your fingertips when it comes to learning new hobbies. For example, you can try to find someone who already does the hobby and is willing to teach you. Nothing beats an in-person mentor.

Additionally, it's easy to take advantage of video tutorials or local [library](#) books when picking up the basic techniques of a new skill. These resources are usually free, and they can be invaluable for learning your chosen hobby.

Of course, these ideas are merely the tip of the iceberg. The world of historical hobbies has endless opportunities to offer once you begin exploring.

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