

Clara's 1850s Play Dress

Fashion in the 1850s is generally dominated by the crinoline, sometimes known as a hoop skirt. However, the large skirts would not be practical for a little girl to wear every day, so Clara has a fun little dress to wear when she doesn't have to dress up. Clara's Victorian play dress has box pleats on the bodice, a fairly full skirt, and butterfly sleeves. Clara also has a plain bonnet for everyday use, with only simple pleats and a wide ribbon tied in a bow. Clara's boots are a little awkward in shape, since both shoes are exactly alike – there is no left or right shoe. Shoes such as these, known as "straight soles" were made for several hundred years up through the end of the 1800s. They were less expensive than pairs of shoes made for the right and left feet, since they could be produced more easily.

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