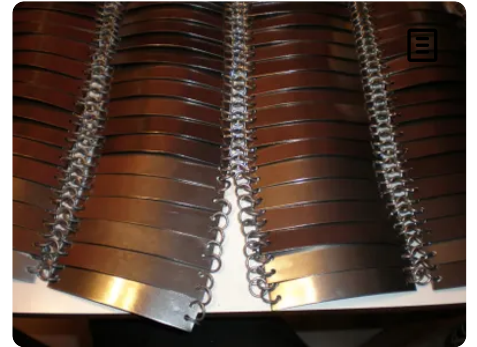


I really cant explain how to measure for this, so use an old cereal box or something similar and test different cutouts with it until you find one that works. look at the pictures for an idea of what shape you are looking for. when it fits right you should be able to touch your elbows in front of your chest without bending the cardboard. it usually works out to be around the width of your chest between your nipples or slightly more.

Once you have your pattern made trace it onto the plates then remove the tape and mark the lines right across each plate. Use your tin snips to cut it along the lines. then punch those edged just like all the others and link them up to a strip of maille.

Step 7: Assembly 3-the Waist and Tassets



as this sits right now, it only comes down to the bottom of my ribs. so I've made another row of 4 columns, again 8 plates tall, then attached it to the bottom of the existing breastplate.

Once it's all attached it's time to test fit it. in this case it comes down to just below my belt buckle, and more importantly, won't let me bend over properly. This problem is solved by putting a split up the center from the bottom to my bellybutton.

The split is done by unlinking one row of rings from the strand of maille, then reweaving the 2 half strands into full strands.

once you have the split in place it's time to add the tassets. I'm making them by adding 2 more columns of 8 onto each side of the split.

simple as that, put it all together and you have your breastplate. congratulations your half finished.

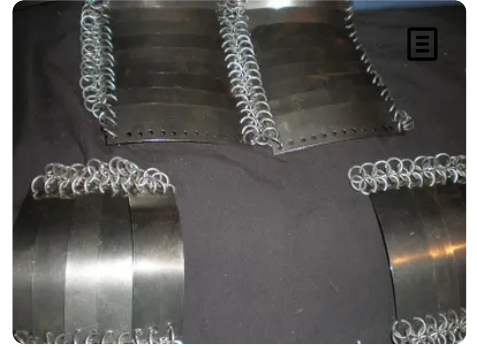
Step 8: The Backplate



assemble the backplate just like the breast plate, only make the center 2 columns a little taller. You probably wont have to make any cutouts on the back.

When you make the slit up the bottom you'll only need to bring it up to about where your belt sits.

Step 9: Shoulders



to make the shoulder plates you are going to need enough maille to make 2 columns that are 5 plates long. a couple things to keep in mind that i didn't, curve these plates extra, your back and chest are fairly flat, your shoulder isn't so much. Also make sure the maille runs the same way on both shoulders, i didn't and had to take one apart and remake it.

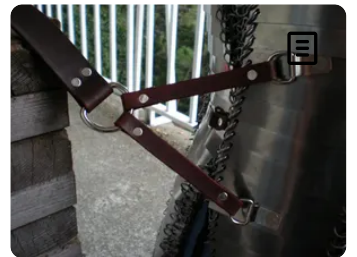
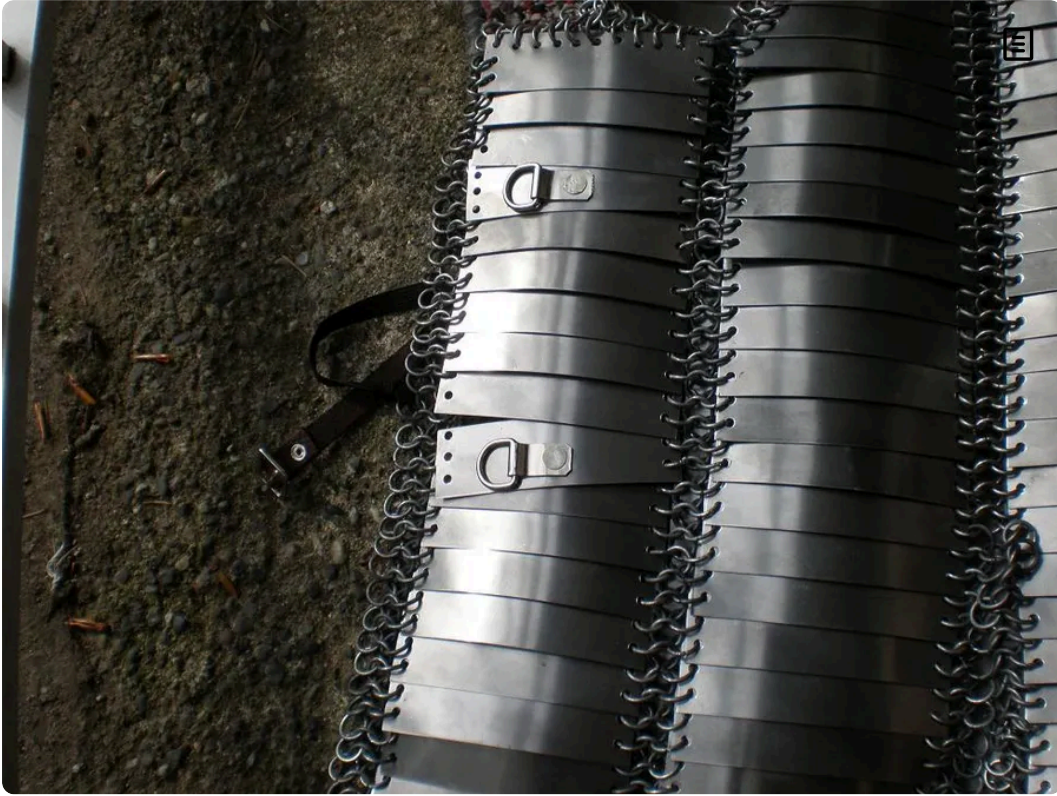
Once you have them made it's time to attach them to the armour, starting on the backplate link them to the first 5 holes from the outside. next add a strip of maille along the rest of the backplate, connecting both shoulders together and edging the top most plates.

now to add the breastplate. start by edging the top of the breastplate like you did the backplate, then knit a piece of maille that reaches down from the shoulder connecting it to the breastplate. it'll probably take a bit of trial and error to get the right length for you. your aiming for the smallest hole you can still get your head through easily while having the top of the breastplate sit just below your collar bones.

it worked out to be 6 rows of maille for me. once you have that done fill out the maille a bit until your happy with how it looks. On mine i came straight down from the shoulder till i reached the breastplate, then came in at 45 degrees to blend it into the breastplate.

On the back side i just came straight down from the shoulder plates.

Step 10: Strapping Your Armour



How you choose to hold your armour shut is up to you, and can range from something as simple(and ugly) as duct taping it to yourself, or as fancy as sneck hooks. I'm going to go for the middle ground and use straps and buckles.

I'm not going to show you have to make straps and buckles here, thats a subject that is better tackled with it's own instructable. Besides, if you've gotten this far I'd hope you can figure out how to make what basically amounts to a small belt.

I will however show you how i strapped my armour, and why.

to start with i ran a strap that goes from the small of my back around my belly under the breastplate. this acts to keep the backplate snug against my back, and in place while I'm doing up the breastplate. once the armour is all done up it doesn't really support anything, so it's only a single half inch strap.

On the breastplate i got a bit fancier. i put the strap mounts just below the top of the side plates and just above my hip bones. from there i ran short straps to D rings mounted on the end of the actual buckle portion of the straps. the pictures should make more sense than my descriptions.

strapping it this way is a bit more complicated than just using 2 buckles on each side, or using 2 straps like the belly strap across my back, but it means that i only have to do up one easy to reach buckle in the small of my back instead of 2 on each side, or 1 easy one in the small of my back and one pain in the ass one between my shoulder blades. also i think it looks cooler.

Step 11: Your New Armour



congratulations, several hundred plates, a few thousand holes and god knows how many rings later you've made yourself some sweet armour.

If everything worked out alright you should have something that looks more or less like this.

i should also mention the manikin is a bit larger than i am, so the armour doesn't fit quite right in this picture.

once i find my digital camera I'll get pictures of me in the armour

Step 12: Upgrades and Reworks



So since i first published this instructable I've completely re-built this armour. A couple of times.

first I added integral neck armour in the form of a brigandine gorget covered by a maille collar and made it front opening. then I re-tailored it, tapering the plates down the sides and adding in an hourglass shaped row of plated down the spine, then I ditched the integral gorget converted the whole thing to riveted maille and built elbow length sleeves. still to come I plan on swapping the tassets with a proper maille fauld.