

## FAQ

Dear Sir,

I am very glad to have discovered the Irish Kilt Club web site and to have read about the nature and history of this noble garment. I stumbled upon your site as I was researching the kilt in its various Irish forms. Like so many other Americans, I am of Irish descent, and thus have an interest in traditional Irish dress.

I write to you now to ask for a bit of advice regarding suitable colours/tartans. Simply put, if one is not a direct descendent of a given Irish clan (patrilineal), can one still wear that clan's colour/tartan?

In my case, though my mother is Irish American, her maiden name is an English one, and I

must go back to her grandmother to find a clan name, that of McCarthy. So, can I, with a McCarthy as a maternal great grandmother, still claim the right to wear McCarthy the colours/tartan, or does the distant relation prohibit such affiliation? Should I therefore just adopt the Irish diaspora tartan?

It is my ardent wish to adopt the kilt as not only a garment of formal wear, but of daily wear as well. With your guidance, I may be able to do so with appropriate historicity.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,  
Doby Finn

**I bounced this question to Brian Wilton at the Tartan Authority for his comments:**



Doby,

Francis has passed your enquiry to me and you've really come up with the solution yourself - go back in the family until you find a blood connection that has a tartan! That's certainly what we always suggest. I wear the Fraser tartan and I have to go back to my Mother's Mother to find that Fraser connection. There are some pedants who might insist that you can only wear a particular tartan if you have the surname that's associated with that tartan - we think that's quite wrong and outdated. So . . . if you've found a McCarthy in the family - regardless of their being in the male or female line - then wear what's appropriate to the McCarthy's and be proud of it. Hope that helps.

Best wishes  
Brian Wilton

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