

# Methods of Disguise

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Choosing how you appear to others is integral to your autonomy as an [individual](#). We already portray ourselves differently to people in a variety of contexts. Is it really that much of a stretch to consciously choose ahead of time how we appear in the minds of those who automatically pigeonhole us into preconceived stereotypes anyway?

As the author says, there are two reasons why anyone would want to disguise themselves: either to make yourself less recognizable or to impersonate someone else. Pretending to be a particular individual is dramatically harder than simply assuming the archetypical characteristics of a class or type of person. Simpler physical disguises are preferable to elaborate ones, for the obvious reasons that it attracts less attention and is much less likely to fail on you when you are utilizing it.

Facial hair, significant weight loss (or gain), eyeglasses, and head hair are all easily understood ways of physical disguise, yet, there are lesser known methods, such as dental inserts, nostril inserts, and shoe lifts. If you need to transform into an older, fatter archetype, perhaps padded clothing and age lines could give you some credibility (as well as practicing to *perfection* your gravelly voice). Artificial scars and sunburns could back up an alibi of being an injured construction worker or mechanic.

The pocket disguise kit was especially intriguing given his versatility. The contents were:

- *Comb*
- *Hairbrush*
- *Fake hair (i.e. mustache, sideburns, wig)*
- *Adhesive for fake hair (such as spirit gum)*
- *Hair spray*
- *Scissors*
- *Disposable safety razors*
- *Roll-up hat*
- *Mirror*
- *Foundation*
- *Liner stick*



- *Black wax crayon*
- *Paper towels (not an entire roll!)*
- *Moist towelettes*
- *Eyeglasses (sunglasses ok too)*
- *Container for the kit (such as a tackle box, briefcase, or plastic bag)*

Most of these items are available from your local pharmacy, the pharmacy section of your local grocery store, and your local costume store. What I will say is that from my experience, the black wax crayon is the absolutely hardest to find; considering its utility relative to the other items, I personally wouldn't bother with it.

A voice recorder is absolutely vital towards *perfecting* your assumed accent. Just as [Edmond MacNaugh recommended video recording yourself in order study your behavior and appearance with the goal of altering it to suit your assumed persona](#), Sample advises doing the same with audio recording your voice in order to achieve the same end. For instance, if you want to acquire a temporary hoarseness (the proverbial "whiskey voice"), shouting loud and long enough in an isolated place will give you a sore throat (of course, you could kill two birds with one stone by "singing" cadence during your daily PT runs, [which you should be doing anyway](#)).

Blending into a crowd requires two basic principles:

1. *Fitting in with the crowd or locale, and*
2. *Not doing anything to stand out from the crowd.*

"Chameleon disguises," coupled with common vehicles and nondescript living quarters, can provide a truly comprehensive cover ID that can last as long as you need it (or at least until it's been compromised). What is required beyond this is the behavior that is complimentary to such an elaborate setup.

Sample concludes his observations about plastic surgery by stating, "From this discussion, we can see that plastic surgery has limited benefits and is always expensive." While he examines everything from nose jobs and hair transplants to eye lifts and face lifts, nothing even begins to compare with "foreskin restoration." Needless to say, I'm not a big fan of getting tattoos or even piercings due to their permanent features; however, if you are an actively hunted fugitive with some spare cash lying around, then this is an option that is available to you.

In terms of seriously taking on a new (legal) identity, Sample is completely on point when he says, "Paperwork is everything." [Since we now know that the government can become pretty lackadaisical in terms of their own official documentation](#), that can be taken advantage of in the sense that it can be used to protect individual privacy; however, it would be immoral to fraudulently use someone else's legal identity. Low-profile techniques are also pivotal in keeping your assumed identity intact, since any behavior contrary to what is expected of your archetype could expose you.

[John Sample's \*Methods of Disguise\*](#) is a must read for political dissidents and anyone else with an interest in the ways that people can alter themselves. It is also very illustrative for understanding how ridiculously easy it is for [controlled opposition to infiltrate political dissident groups](#) . I would suggest instead that the tables be turned on the enemy rebel government by playing the mini-game of "Spy vs. Spy" better than they do.