

Elroy Elk Questions & Answers



Q: HOW COMFORTABLE IS THE ELROY MASCOT TO WEAR?

A: We make performer comfort our #1 concern, before, during, and after the creation of your mascot! Kincaid Karacter Mascots feature lightweight, breathable materials in their construction, and have ventilation holes placed at strategic spots on the costume. Most Kincaid Karacter Mascots feature battery powered ventilation systems as standard equipment.

Any Mascot costume, though no matter how well designed, will still have certain comfort limitations. It is vital that the costume performer realizes this and practices with his costume in order to minimize & overcome this limitation. All mascot costumes may feel heavy, bulky, etc., at first. But the beginning mascot performer should not be discouraged; with time and practice, the character performer will be moving around with ease. The key words to remember here are **practice** and **perseverance.**

Q: HOW HOT DOES THE ELROY ELK MASCOT COSTUME GET?

A: The answer to this question depends on several factors, including the individual wearing the costume, the type of materials used in the costume, and the temperature on the particular day the costume is worn. **Kincaid Karacter Mascots are designed with as much open space on the inside as possible and ventilation holes and openings are strategically placed to**

facilitate air flow. And your Elroy Elk Mascot costume is equipped our built in battery powered ventilation system as a standard feature.

We are often asked if more elaborate **"air conditioning"** systems- like the type used by astronauts & firefighters- are available for Elroy. The answer is yes but **we don't generally recommend them because benefits of such systems are far outweighed by their cost, weight, and complexity.** And even the best systems won't prevent a costume from feeling warm if the weather is hot. A performer wearing a Mascot on a hot, sunny, humid day is going to experience some discomfort, and nothing is going to prevent that. If you happen to perform in costume on a hot day, and you probably will sooner or later, **make sure to drink plenty of cold liquids before, during, and after performing** (no alcoholic beverages, though-sorry, you college Mascots!) Also, try to schedule more break time between appearances on hot days.

Undoubtedly, the greatest variable when speaking of costume comfort/discomfort is the individual who wears the costume. **Some people are more sensitive to heat than others;** many people are more claustrophobic than others and may not like being in costume; and remember that almost all beginning mascot performers- and many veteran performers-will complain about the heat of the costume on a hot day. **Mascots will always feel hot on a hot day; it just comes with the territory.** As a Mascot owner, experiment with different performers for your costume to see who's best equipped to deal with the heat. And a helpful tip to all you performers- if you'll acclimate (gradually adjust yourself) to hot conditions, you'll have an easier time in costume. **Spend time outdoors in the summer, drive around without the car's AC on all the time.** If you so this, your body will have an easier time in costume.

Q: WILL IT BE EASY TO SEE OUT OF ELROY? HOW RESTRICTED WILL THE VISION BE?

A: The nature of mascots is that normal vision will inevitably be somewhat restricted (they are, after all, basically giant costumes & giant masks). Every effort is made during the design & creation of your mascot to create & maintain the best possible sight-lines and vision. **The best way to overcome restricted vision in a mascot is by allowing plenty of practice time for the performer with the costume before any public appearances are made.**

Q: WILL IT BE HARD TO WALK AROUND IN THESE BIG FEET..AND PASS OUT THINGS WITH THESE BIG HANDS?

A: Although **oversized feet and hands** are not a necessity on mascot costumes, most mascots feature them because the overall character looks **"cuter"** and more appealing with these design elements (and more cartoon-like, thus attracting more attention!). As discussed previously with overcoming vision limitations, **the best way to compensate for big feet and hands is by allowing plenty of practice time for the performer with the costume before any public appearances are made.** With patience and practice, diligent mascot performers can dance, run, and pass out brochures, etc., with no problems at all. Having said all this, we can, of course, make your mascot's hands & feet any size you want (but we'll strongly encourage you to go with the exaggerated features for the best possible mascot appearance).

5. A "fanny pack" that zips up & straps around your waist (so that you can keep your wallet, money, keys, and valuables with you at all times, even in costume, without having to leave them in an unguarded dressing area).

(**NOTE-** We didn't mention bringing water, ice, cooler, etc., because, unless you are making a mascot appearance in the middle of Death Valley, you can usually obtain these things relatively easy on location wherever you are- and so therefore why lug them all the way from home?).

Q: HOW DO I DEAL WITH UNRULY PEOPLE WHO WANT TO PICK ON ME WHEN I AM WEARING ELROY?

A: Always bring a mascot "lead" with you (someone to lead you around while in costume and watch your back, etc.). If you have to appear alone, back yourself into a corner or up against a wall where people cannot come up behind you; if someone decides to hit, punch, or otherwise molest you, chances are they'll do it by coming up behind you, where you can't see. **When shaking hands while moving- especially in parades- curl your mascot hand fingers in towards your palm and let folks shake the balled, top portion of your hand** (otherwise, troublemakers have a tendency to grab your individual fingers with the intention of pulling your hands/gloves off).

DANGER! Special groups to watch out for (and avoid at all costs if possible while in mascot costume):

1. Young boys from age 8-13 (Cub Scout Age) **who are unaccompanied by adults;**

2. Teenagers from age 13-18, who are unaccompanied by adults (the exception being teenage girls- just girls by themselves- who are safe & sweet to approach in costume at any age.) Teenage boys at this age, however- in a group with just other boys- are bad news for mascots, as are teenage boys in the company of teenage girls (they are going to show off for & impress those girls by beating up on you).

3. Anybody of any age or sex that has a beer bottle/alcoholic drink in hand and/or smells strongly of alcohol.

Q: HOW DO I CLEAN MY ELROY ELK MASCOT?

A: Complete cleaning instructions were included with your Elroy Elk Mascots, and, for your convenience, **our mascots are designed to be 95% machine washable.** We also offer extensive professional mascot cleaning services, both for our own products and for mascots made by other people, so we're always happy to do it for you. **WARNING-** Always avoid dry cleaning any type of mascot costume! Contrary to popular belief, dry cleaning is about the harshest way to clean mascots and the dry cleaning chemicals can easily damage character fabrics and adhesives, especially synthetic fur. If you have lost or misplaced Elroy's original cleaning instructions, give us a call **636-916-1133** or send an email to elroy@kincaidcharacters.com & we'll send you a copy.

Q: HOW DO I REPAIR MY ELROY MASCOT?

A: If your Elroy Mascot requires repair, your best course of action is to send him to us for a check-up. **Never let an unqualified individual attempt to perform extensive repairs on your Elroy.** Mascot costumes are not like ordinary costumes- they can be far more complicated than they look, and haphazard repairs can quickly turn small problems into large problems.

If you must make emergency **"in the field"** repairs (which sometimes happens), try to use **"temporary"** materials that will hold things together for the time being until such time as you can send your Elroy into our mascot shop for proper repair/refurbishment. By **"temporary materials"**, we mean things like safety pins, duct tape, needle and thread, wire ties, self-stick Velcro, etc.- things that can be easily removed later when it's time for professional repairs. **Avoid using** things like hot glue, contact cement, expanding foam, etc. - materials that will be next to impossible to remove once they're attached. **DANGER**- avoid using staples or steel wire for temporary repairs! These materials have sharp edges which can easily scratch or cut your performers.

Q: WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO TRANSPORT/SHIP/STORE MY ELROY MASCOT?

A: With respect to local site-to-site transportation, soft bags are adequate, and sometimes are easier to maneuver in & out of small vehicles, but offer less overall protection for your mascot (especially if the person handling the costume isn't being particularly careful), so we recommend rigid cases whenever possible. **WARNING** **When transporting your mascot, never stuff the shoes inside the head (very unsanitary) to save space, and always place the head in the case last, on top.** With respect to shipping, cardboard boxes (padded well in the inside) are adequate for shipping once or twice, but they quickly wear out, and so if you're going to be shipping your mascot on a regular basis, we recommend a well-constructed rigid shipping case. We offer an excellent **Elroy Elk carrying/shipping/storage case** for your costume if you don't have one...it's listed in this section under **"Special Mascot Products & Accessories Currently Available for your Elroy Elk Mascot"** and in our website store.

When considering the topic of mascot storage, **it's always better to store your mascot in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area, off the floor, out of the box, and on a stand if possible,** so that fresh air can move in and around the costume. If your mascot has a battery powered ventilation system, remove the batteries if you're storing him for an extended period of time, and never place a costume that's still wet from perspiration inside a box and into storage for an extended period of time- dry him out first.

3. Elroy Elk Mascot Costume Hints, Tips, & Advice

* When you receive accept delivery of a brand new Elroy Elk mascot for the first time, you'll want to **read all his accompanying paperwork first**- especially his safety, operation, and cleaning information. Next, carefully examine & become familiar with each individual part of him and how it relates to the others- all before using him in public for the first time. Along these same lines, you or your performers will want to practice **"Suiting Up/Suiting Down"** in the costume (putting the costume on & off) as well as moving around, going up and down stairs, etc., in a clean, dry, quiet, well lighted, and relaxed/non-rushed environment several times before making any public appearances.

* **Avoid picking up Elroy's head** by grabbing any part of his glasses.

* When you pack up Elroy for travel or storage, **always put the shoes in first and the head in last**, on top of everything else...and never put the shoes inside the head.

* **Never pack Elroy away in a box or case for storage when he is still wet** with perspiration; allow him to dry out thoroughly before packing him away.

* If you have to wear an Elroy Elk mascot costume on a hot day, and you probably will sooner or later, **make sure to drink plenty of cold, non-alcoholic liquids before, during, and after performing.** Also, try to schedule more break time between appearances on hot days.

* A helpful tip to all you mascot performers- if you'll acclimate (gradually adjust yourself) to hot conditions, you'll have an easier time in costume. **Spend time outdoors in the summer, drive around without the car's AC on** all the time, and so forth. If you do this, your body will have an easier time in costume.

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* **WARNING- Remember that mascot costume shoes/feet- being oversized-** require special care and caution. Always practice thoroughly with your mascot shoes/feet, out of costume, before attempting any performance in full costume. Practice negotiating stairs and curbs, and never attempt activities where these large shoes might impair your ability, such as driving a car or operation any type of machinery.

* **WARNING- Wearing the Elroy costume will restrict your vision-** use caution when walking! Avoid walking without a lead/escort's help as your vision may be restricted. Never attempt activities such as driving a car, boat, bicycle, etc.

* When you ship Elroy, always **affix a permanent "return to" label/note/message to the inside top lid of your mascot shipping case,** featuring your company/organization name, address, phone #, email, etc. . Should your case ever be lost in transit and end up in a major carrier's "lost and found", the first thing they will do is open the case and look there (in the top of the lid) for some sort of return address.

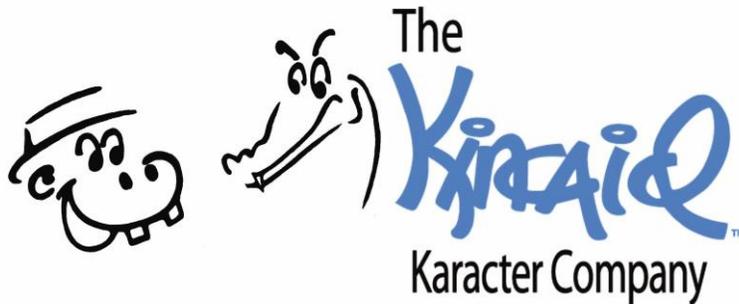
* For the safest possible mascot performances, **limit your time in costume to no more than 1 hour at a stretch,** even in an air conditioned environment, with a 15 minute break on the hour. If

you're performing outdoors in the Spring and Summer, limit your costume time to 20-30 minutes at a time, with a 15-20 minute break in-between sets. **WARNING!** Performing **more than an hour in a mascot costume in extremely hot weather** can be hazardous to your health, resulting in dehydration and/or heat exhaustion/heat stroke.

* **Dress for success-** Perfect mascot performer wardrobe consists of a pair of loose fitting shorts, a loose fitting T-Shirt, a headband to keep hair and perspiration out of your eyes, a towel, and good thick athletic quality socks. Remember to bring several of each so you can change out of the damp/wet shirts, etc., throughout the day- changing into dry clothes makes you feel better.

* When performing in Elroy, remember to **stay focused and active- i.e., greeting people, moving around, etc.**, rather than just standing in one spot and waving. If you keep yourself occupied with doing something while in costume, time will pass more quickly, and being hot and uncomfortable won't be so noticeable.

Thank you again for being an Elroy Elk owner! Please visit again soon...and be sure to call 636-916-113 or send an email to elroy@kincaidkarakters.com with any questions. We are here to be of service!



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